

Hinds' Feet on High Places Study Guide

Hinds' Feet on High Places by Hannah Hurnard

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Hinds' Feet on High Places Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter 1, Invitations to the High Places.....	5
Chapter 2, Fearing Invasion.....	7
Chapter 3, Flight in the Night.....	8
Chapter 4, Start for the High Places.....	9
Chapter 5, Encounter with Pride.....	11
Chapter 6, Detour Through the Desert.....	12
Chapter 7, On the Shores of Loneliness.....	14
Chapter 8, On the Old Sea Wall.....	16
Chapter 9, Great Precipice Injury.....	18
Chapter 10, Ascent of the Precipice Injury.....	20
Chapter 11, In the Forests of Danger and Tribulation.....	22
Chapter 12, In the Mist.....	24
Chapter 13, In the Valley of Loss.....	26
Chapter 14, The Place of Anointing.....	27
Chapter 15, The Floods.....	29
Chapter 16, Grave on the Mountains.....	31
Chapter 17, Healing Streams.....	32
Chapter 18, Hinds' Feet.....	33
Chapter 19, High Places.....	34
Chapter 20, Return to the Valley.....	35
Characters.....	36
Objects/Places.....	39



Themes..... 42

Style..... 44

Quotes..... 46

Topics for Discussion..... 48



Plot Summary

Hinds' Feet on High Places by Hannah Hurnard is a highly allegorical novel that traces the steps of the main character, Much-Afraid, from a frightened, deformed, lost soul to a beautiful, spiritually connected, joyful being. Throughout the story, Much-Afraid faces innumerable and seemingly impossible obstacles on her journey. By transcending these difficulties, she takes on a new name and is able to see the world from a fresh, new perspective, enabling her to continue to grow in love. Much-Afraid, an orphan with deformities of her face and feet, lives in the Valley of Humiliation, where she is an unwilling member of the Family of Fearings. Much to the Fearings' dismay, Much-Afraid has become a shepherdess for the Chief Shepherd, a kind and wise man. The Fearings despise the Shepherd, and in an attempt to remove Much-Afraid from his service, they insist that she marry her malicious cousin, Craven Fear. Much-Afraid meets with the Shepherd and pours her heart out to him, wishing that she could leave the Valley of Humiliation forever and travel to the High Places.

The Shepherd brings Much-Afraid to meet Sorrow and Suffering, who are to be her companions and helpers on this journey. Much-Afraid is frightened of the journey and of them, but she loves the Shepherd so much that she is willing to follow through, even when he must leave her at times. Encouraged by the Shepherd's promises, Much-Afraid follows the path he has set before her. Since all who enter the Kingdom of Love must be completely blemishless, Much-Afraid's journey is a series of purifications and rites of passage. Before leading her into the high places, the Shepherd brings Much-Afraid through the Furnace of Egypt, the Forests of Danger and Tribulation, the Sea of Loneliness, the Precipice Injury, the Valley of Loss, and the Grave on the Mountains. During Much-Afraid's passage through these places, her Fearing relatives, Resentment, Bitterness, Self-Pity, Pride, and Craven Fear all follow and taunt her in attempts to sabotage her. Much-Afraid at first calls on the Shepherd to defeat these enemies, but eventually, she is able to call upon her companions and helpers, Suffering and Sorrow, to aid her in sending them away.

Once Much-Afraid has reached the Place of Anointing and the High Places, she is transformed, no longer needing human love because it has been replaced in her heart by something much greater. Much-Afraid's new name is Grace and Glory as a symbol of how graceful she has become and how she arrived at the High Places against all odds. Sorrow and Suffering are transformed into Grace and Glory's handmaidens, Joy and Peace. Finally, the King brings Joy, Peace, and Grace and Glory to part of the High Places that overlooks the Valley of Humiliation and the village of Much-Trembling. Grace and Glory is overcome by thoughts of her family and suddenly realizes that although she had simply assumed them to be evil and malicious, they are actually miserable and in spiritual pain. She immediately brings these thoughts to the King. After careful consideration it is decided that Grace and Glory, along with her handmaidens Joy and Peace, will follow the King down into the Valley of Humiliation to share their newfound happiness and all the possibilities of change.



Chapter 1, Invitations to the High Places

Chapter 1, Invitations to the High Places Summary

Hinds' Feet on High Places by Hannah Hurnard is a highly allegorical novel that traces the steps of the main character, Much-Afraid, from a frightened, deformed, lost soul to a beautiful, spiritually connected, joyful being. Throughout the story, Much-Afraid faces innumerable and seemingly impossible obstacles on her journey. By transcending these difficulties, she takes on a new name and is able to see herself and the world from a fresh, new perspective, enabling her to continue to grow in love. Much-Afraid, an orphan with deformities of her face and feet, lives in the Valley of Humiliation, where she is an unwilling member of the Family of Fearings. Much to the Fearings' dismay, Much-Afraid has become a shepherdess for the Chief Shepherd, a kind and wise man. The Fearings despise the Shepherd, and in an attempt to remove Much-Afraid from his service, they insist that she marry her malicious cousin, Craven Fear. Much-Afraid is horrified, but lacks the strength to stand up for herself. When her relatives finally leave her cottage, she rushes to meet with the Shepherd and pours her heart out to him, wishing that she could leave the Valley of Humiliation forever and travel to the High Places.

To Much-Afraid's surprise, the Shepherd tells her that he has been waiting for her to make that very request for some time. Much-Afraid is thrilled at the prospect of leaving the Valley for the High Places, but sorrowfully says that she is too crippled to make the trip. The Shepherd explains that although the journey is indeed difficult, he will be with her, and will always give her exactly what she needs. He promises that if she allows him to plant the seed of love in her heart, he will make her feet as light as a deer's so that she can run and skip just as he does. The Shepherd tells her that not only will she be transformed physically, but that she will take on a new name because "Much-Afraid" is not an appropriate name for anyone in the Kingdom of Love. He asks her if she understands what it will mean to have the seed of Love in her heart, and she tells him that while she wants it more than anything in the world, she is afraid of the pain that always accompanies love. The Shepherd comforts her by explaining that once she has love in her heart, the pain will not be so unbearable because of the extreme happiness that love brings.

Finally, Much-Afraid says that she is ready. The Shepherd takes the seed from his chest and holds it in his open palm which is scarred from many other seeds of love. Much-Afraid is terrified when she realizes that the seed of love is actually a large thorn and almost decides not to go through with it. It is only when she remembers that one cannot have love without a bit of pain and that the love will more than overshadow the discomfort that she asks the Shepherd to push the seed into her heart. As expected, there is the initial sting, but it is swiftly followed by a joy unlike any other. The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid to return to her cottage and prepare for the journey. He explains that he will walk by her home, singing a song that includes a special sign for her, and that she is to meet him at the trysting place upon his call. While she is walking home, her cousin, Craven Fear, appears and begins to tease her and speak of their impending



marriage. Much-Afraid shrinks away from him in silence, which only intensifies his desire to torment her. Suddenly, Craven Fear releases her and runs away. Much-Afraid realizes that the appearance of the Shepherd has frightened him. She is ashamed that she has fallen so quickly into her old ways and does not look at him to see that he is regarding her with empathy rather than judgment. Without speaking, Much-Afraid hobbles back to her cottage where she is able to calm down and eventually sleep.

Chapter 1, Invitations to the High Places Analysis

The main character of the novel, Much-Afraid, is introduced here. She has been in the service of the Chief Shepherd for several years, but still resides in the village of Much-Trembling, part of the Valley of Humiliation. This has created many internal doubts about herself, her value, and her purpose. She knows the Shepherd and has been going through the motions of working for him, but there is clearly something missing. Much-Afraid believes that a large part of this emptiness is the result of her twisted facial features and her misshapen feet, but her interactions with the Shepherd foreshadow a later realization that her external transformation will only be initiated by changes to her heart and soul. There is discussion of an approaching pilgrimage to the High Places and later the Kingdom of Love. This dialogue leaves the impression that Much-Afraid has been comfortable in Fear because it is all that she knows, and as a result, she has been lacking in spiritual growth.



Chapter 2, Fearing Invasion

Chapter 2, Fearing Invasion Summary

When the next morning arrives, Much-Afraid feels fearless and invigorated. While she completes the various tasks assigned to her by the Shepherd, she sings joyful songs and she can scarcely contain her excitement. She eagerly anticipates the Shepherd's call, and has a feeling that it will be today. Later that afternoon, it is not the Shepherd at her door, but almost every single one of her Fearing relatives. They are at her cottage to convince her to marry Craven Fear, who they left behind so they can speak of him in a kindly light. Due to his nasty demeanor, this would be impossible in his presence. The Fearing Family spends the afternoon badgering Much-Afraid and insisting that she leave the cottage and move in with them until she is numb with fear. They have surrounded her and bolted her door so that she cannot escape. The only reason they do not bodily carry her out of the cottage is because there are many servants of the Shepherd out and about and they would come to her rescue.

When the Shepherd passes the cottage, singing his call to Much-Afraid, she is paralyzed by fear and does not call out to him for help. Her opportunity to escape squandered, Much-Afraid's cousin Coward begins to choke her until she faints. Planning to smuggle a bound and gagged Much-Afraid out after dark, the family puts her in bed and begins to eat the food in her pantry and kitchen. When Much-Afraid wakes up, she realizes that her neighbor, Mrs. Valiant is right outside her window. She calls for help and Mrs. Valiant scares the entire Fearing family out of the cottage by threatening to call the Shepherd. Mrs. Valiant kindly makes Much-Afraid a cup of tea and then comfortingly puts her to bed.

Chapter 2, Fearing Invasion Analysis

In her heart, Much-Afraid has a strong desire to serve the Shepherd, but she allows the opposing voices of her Fearing family to get in the way of her service. She finds herself succumbing to the lies surrounding her and this prevents her from actually following through on what she believes in. Much-Afraid has been in the Valley of Humiliation for her entire life and she permits her surroundings to dictate her perception of things rather than holding fast to what she knows to be true deep in her soul. Her Fearing family, although they present as actual people, might just as well be negative and self-deprecating voices in Much-Afraid's head that prevent her from meeting her potential.



Chapter 3, Flight in the Night

Chapter 3, Flight in the Night Summary

Much-Afraid is unable to get comfortable or relax in her bed. She has this nagging feeling that there is something very important she should have done, but she cannot seem to remember. When she finally does sleep, it is not restful, and she awakes with a start a short time later with an unbearable twinge in her heart. For the first time, Much-Afraid absorbs the full realization that the Shepherd did indeed call to her and she did not even so much as acknowledge him. He had told her to be ready to leave at a moment's notice and she did not answer his call. Terrified that he might have left without her, she dresses quickly and goes out into the night in search of him. While she swiftly walks the deserted streets, she ponders the pain in her heart and wonders if she would have consented to the planting of the seed if she had known how excruciating it would be. Moving so fast that she almost forgets her physical impediments, Much-Afraid reaches the trysting place at dawn and to her delight, the Shepherd is there, waiting for her. He explains that even though he called to her yesterday and she had not answered, he knew she would eventually come to him. Much-Afraid falls at his feet and pledges that she will follow him anywhere. The two of them set off on their journey.

Chapter 3, Flight in the Night Analysis

In her fear that the Shepherd has left without her, Much-Afraid assumes that he responds to situations from a place of fear, as she does. As a result of her failure to follow through on what she has promised, Much-Afraid grieves that the Shepherd's love for her has somehow diminished, projecting her own way of thinking onto him. She does not realize that the Shepherd sees the world from a place of love and would never have left her because he knows that she will eventually come to him. Much-Afraid has quickly forgotten that the Shepherd has promised to always provide for her exactly what she needs. It is simply up to her to take advantage of the tools set in front of her. The pain in Much-Afraid's heart is intense and exquisite. On some level, she seems to be getting in touch with the idea that pain and fear are motivators, nothing more.



Chapter 4, Start for the High Places

Chapter 4, Start for the High Places Summary

As she and the Shepherd begin their journey through the fields to the mountains, Much-Afraid is amazed at all of the beautiful life surrounding them. She is able to hear the wonderful music of the birds, flowers, and streams, which she has never noticed before. The Shepherd tells her that since she has the seed of love in her heart, her eyes and ears are now being opened to the magnificence around her. It has always been there, he explains, but she had been too caught up in fear and self-pity to observe it before. Much-Afraid says that it is a shame that there is such loveliness to behold but most of the time no one is there to appreciate it. The Shepherd explains that there is much value in giving, especially when it goes unnoticed or unappreciated.

Much-Afraid realizes how she has forgotten about all of her ills and feels strong and confident with the Shepherd by her side. He has told her that he will leave her in the hands of two carefully chosen companions who will guide her up the mountain to the High Places, but now she asks if he will be her companion instead, carrying her up the mountain. The Shepherd explains that if he were to carry her the whole way, she would not develop hinds' feet, and therefore would not become a citizen of the Kingdom of Love. He reminds her that he has her best interests at heart and asks her to trust him. The Shepherd tells her that one of her most beautiful qualities, lovelier than any royalty, is her trusting eyes.

When Much-Afraid and the Shepherd arrive at the base of the mountain, there are two veiled figures waiting for them. The Shepherd introduces them as twin sisters, Suffering and Sorrow. They do not speak and Much-Afraid is frightened of them. She begs the Shepherd not to leave her in their hands since suffering and sorrow are two of her greatest fears, but he assures her that they are by far the best teachers for which she could ever ask. The Shepherd reminds her that the other alternative is to return to Much-Trembling and marry Craven Fear. Much-Afraid, overwhelmed by the horror of the choice, tells the Shepherd that she loves him and trusts him more than anyone. He laughs and begins leaping and bounding up the mountain. Much-Afraid follows, much more slowly, with her two companions.

Chapter 4, Start for the High Places Analysis

Much-Afraid expresses her fear of loving and not being loved in return on several occasions. She is not comfortable with sharing herself or her heart without the reassurance of receiving the love she believes that she needs. There is a certain fear that Much-Afraid carries of not being good enough, of not knowing, and of being wrong. This fear has demanded so much of her time and energy that Much-Afraid has had little time to stop and literally "smell the roses." The Shepherd has begun to help her to slow down and pay attention to the things she has not noticed before.



During the trip to the base of the mountain, there are three songs meant to provide Much-Afraid with comfort and direction. Just like the trees and flowers express their love and beauty with humility, without expecting anything in return, the Shepherd encourages Much-Afraid to do the same. The Water Song is an allegory of the happiness associated with the pouring of oneself into giving and love. The song of the birds simply says that giving is the joy above all else. The Shepherd assists Much-Afraid to notice things to which she has never given any thought, in preparation for the life-changing journey that lies ahead of her.

The Shepherd anoints Sorrow and Suffering as Much-Afraid's companions and guides on her climb to the High Places. This has meaning on two levels. First, sorrow and suffering are Much-Afraid's greatest fears. It seems only natural that these would be the two that she would face on her way to self-actualization. Second, and on a larger scale, suffering and sorrow are often the things that demand the most attention when they are present, allowing for focus on little else. This is an opportunity for Much-Afraid to walk hand in hand with suffering and sorrow and still give of her unconditional love.



Chapter 5, Encounter with Pride

Chapter 5, Encounter with Pride Summary

As Much-Afraid continues through the next few days up the mountain, she realizes it is a much more difficult climb than she imagined. Faced with the choice of falling or accepting the assistance of her companions, she grasps the hands of Suffering and Sorrow who easily lift and lead her over the most strenuous pathways. Back in the Valley of Humiliation, Much-Afraid's Fearing relatives are incensed that she has escaped with the Shepherd. They find it unacceptable and unbearable that an ugly, lame simpleton has been chosen by him. Plans begin to be formulated and finally it is determined that Pride, a good-looking, conceited cousin who does not easily admit defeat, will track Much-Afraid into the mountains and bring her back into the slavery of her family. Finding Much-Afraid alone with her companions and the Shepherd nowhere in sight, Pride takes her hand and reinforces her worst fears. Pride asks her that if she is so ugly and misshapen that no one in the Valley can love her, how can she possibly expect to be admitted into the Kingdom of Love, where only pure beauty is allowed? For a brief moment, Much-Afraid agrees with him and almost turns back, but then she remembers the Shepherd and calls to him for help. The Shepherd arrives immediately and frightens Pride away with one swing of his staff. He then turns to Much-Afraid and tells her that if she had been holding the hands of her helpers, Pride would not have been able to hurt her. Immediately, Much-Afraid takes the hands of Sorrow and Suffering and recognizes that once she has been touched by pride, suffering and sorrow are that much more painful.

Chapter 5, Encounter with Pride Analysis

The joy that Much-Afraid feels at the bottom of the mountain is changed once she actually begins the journey. It is almost as if she expected life to be as easy and painless as it was while walking in the field with the Shepherd on their way to the base of the mountain. In this chapter, Much-Afraid experiences a combination of growth and disillusionment with the discovery of three main ideas. First, the climb itself is much more difficult and steep than she ever imagined. Second, her inability to accomplish this on her own, without her anointed companions, becomes very clear. Finally, it apparently had not occurred to her that she has many enemies who do not want her to grow or change. Much-Afraid's growth is demonstrated in two specific instances. First, unlike when she is trapped in her cottage by her Fearing relatives, she calls for the Shepherd's assistance almost right away. Second, despite the fact that she is both physically and emotionally uncomfortable, she continues on the path she knows to be right.



Chapter 6, Detour Through the Desert

Chapter 6, Detour Through the Desert Summary

A few days after Much-Afraid's confrontation with Pride, she and her companions come upon a great desert. Sorrow and Suffering motion to her that she is to follow them down into the desert, but Much-Afraid is horrified. The desert appears to be in the exact opposite direction of the High Places, and this seems to be a direct contradiction of the Shepherd's promise to her. She calls for the Shepherd and he is immediately at her side. Much-Afraid asks him why he is not following through on his promise to take her to the High Places and he gently tells her that although this detour may seem purposeless, there are many things she must learn in this place. The Shepherd asks Much-Afraid if she loves him enough to trust that he has her best interests at heart. Although she is fearful, she concedes that she loves him enough to follow him anywhere. That morning, Much-Afraid creates an altar on the mountainside on which she sacrifices her rebellious will to the Shepherd. Her will burns down, leaving behind a small pebble. Although Much-Afraid is so impassioned that she feels she will never need another reminder, the Shepherd tells her to keep the pebble in memory of the sacrifice.

Upon reaching the desert, the Shepherd tells Much-Afraid it is also called the Furnace of Egypt. He explains that this is where all his followers must go to learn things impossible to learn elsewhere. As a result of these lessons, all of those who go through the Furnace of Egypt become the Shepherd's royalty. Suddenly, Much-Afraid realizes that the desert is full of many of the Shepherd's followers, including the biblical figures of Abraham and Joseph. When the Shepherd takes Much-Afraid inside a great pyramid the next morning, she is amazed at what she sees. First, she sees different kinds of grain being threshed and pounded in preparation for baking, each type being handled in the way that will produce the best product. When they arrive at the second floor of the pyramid, Much-Afraid watches a potter working with clay and cannot help but notice how the clay is completely pliable in his hands. Finally, the Shepherd takes her to the top floor where there is a furnace containing precious gems and gold. Much-Afraid sees the beauty of the jewels and gold after it has been cleansed by the fire. They remain in the desert for several days while Much-Afraid takes in these lessons. On the final day, Much-Afraid notices a little golden flower that appears to be the only growing thing except cactus for miles. She asks the flower its name and the flower says it is called Acceptance-with-Joy. Much-Afraid is thrilled at the beauty and strength of the little flower and decides that she, too, will tell the Shepherd that she is Acceptance-with-Joy. In memory of this event, Much-Afraid picks up a pebble and places it in her satchel next to the pebble of her will.

Chapter 6, Detour Through the Desert Analysis

Much-Afraid has made assumptions and has expectations of what her journey will be like. When the Shepherd leads her in the exact opposite direction of where she is



expecting to go, those assumptions and expectations are shattered. It is only when she rids herself of the baggage of those assumptions that she is able to sacrifice her will to the Shepherd and follow him with blind trust. She discovers that when she focuses on his will rather than her own, the outcome is greater than she ever could have expected.

The three floors of the pyramid are fairly straightforward analogies of the heart and soul being broken down in the precise manner that will allow the creation of something greater than the sum of its parts. The grain, the clay, and the gems and gold are symbols of the before-and-after experience that this journey provides for Much-Afraid.



Chapter 7, On the Shores of Loneliness

Chapter 7, On the Shores of Loneliness Summary

The Shepherd stays with Much-Afraid and her companions until they reach an abrupt crossroads where he tells her that although he must leave her for now, he will always come to her aid when she calls to him. Much-Afraid, along with Sorrow and Suffering, begins to walk along the Shores of Loneliness with the High Places seeming so close behind her. Since the Shepherd has just left her side, Much-Afraid feels she has never been so lonely. As the days pass, she begins to notice all kinds of beauty, even in the dismal presence of the scorching desert on one side and the grey sea on the other. Much-Afraid realizes that a major change has taken place within her and that she is embarking upon a new era of her life. Carrying the stones of her sacrificed will and the memory of the golden flower, Much-Afraid comes upon an empty cove with just sand and seaweed that seems ensnared, far from the cleansing and refreshing water. The empty cove brings up in her a sadness, but when she goes back to view it later, the tide has risen, and the waves are lapping gladly all over the cove. This complete change in the cove makes Much-Afraid realize how much like that empty cove she has been and she builds an altar right there in gratitude that the Shepherd has come to fill her with love, much as the water has come to fill the cove. In memorial of this moment, Much-Afraid takes a rock of quartz from that spot and places it next to the other altar stones.

Meanwhile, when Pride does not return to the Valley of Trembling with Much-Afraid in tow, the Family of Fearings decide that reinforcements must be sent to assist him. Resentment, Bitterness, and Self-Pity join Pride in his attempts to defeat and collect Much-Afraid. It does not take long for her Fearing relatives to realize that she has begun to change into a different person, and that capturing her will be a much more difficult task than originally anticipated. Still, the four of them try their hardest, each of them using different tactics to try to manipulate Much-Afraid into seeing things their way. Pride, as before, tells her that everyone knows how the Shepherd has lied to her and that they are even now laughing at her. Resentment asks how she can stand to allow herself to be treated this way. Bitterness tells her that the Shepherd only takes and never gives anything back to her. Self-Pity, whom Much-Afraid finds the most difficult to resist, says that she has been more than kind and giving to the Shepherd, and that all he offers in return is "wounding and bruising." It is at this point that Much-Afraid remembers how the grain in the Furnace of Egypt was bruised and thrashed, but only until it is fully prepared for its best use. Much-Afraid throws a rock at Self-Pity, and later, when she is trapped by the four of them, she calls to the Shepherd for help. Immediately, the Shepherd is by her side, and throws Pride off a cliff, which scares the other three into hiding. Much-Afraid asks how she could have allowed her enemies to get so close to her again, and the Shepherd explains that instead of wholly focusing on the path he has given her, she has become distracted by impatience with him. Sheepishly, Much-Afraid admits that that is indeed the case, and at the Shepherd's urging, she places another stone in her bag to memorialize the fall of Pride.



Chapter 7, On the Shores of Loneliness Analysis

Much-Afraid feels terribly lonely once the Shepherd leaves her to return to the mountains, but it is this solitude that allows her to once again pay attention to what is going on around her and to see the beauty in all of life. It is only when she becomes impatient because she cannot see an end in sight does the loneliness seem unbearable and her enemies are able to touch her. Once she has developed an attitude of impatience, Much-Afraid forgets that the Shepherd has told her "there is really no distance at all separating us."

It is at the Shores of Loneliness that Much-Afraid faces some of her worst demons. Pride, bitterness, resentment, and self-pity all rear their ugly heads at the same time, providing her with a crash-course on the pitfalls of listening to negative and self-deprecating voices. As when she was residing in the Valley of Humiliation and she listened to the voices of her other Fearing relatives, Pride, Resentment, Bitterness, and Self-Pity might as well simply be voices in her head, for although they are represented here as people, they are nothing more than Much-Afraid's internal struggle.



Chapter 8, On the Old Sea Wall

Chapter 8, On the Old Sea Wall Summary

After continuing to walk on the path along the sea, Much-Afraid and her companions arrive at a turn in the path that directly faces the mountains and the High Places. Much-Afraid is overjoyed, begins to clap her hands and run ahead of Sorrow and Suffering. While alone on the path, she arrives at a place where it is quite clear that it does not point at the mountains any longer. Suddenly, Bitterness appears some distance away and laughs at Much-Afraid's predicament. She feels terribly sad and disappointed. When Sorrow and Suffering catch up to her, a biting, whirling sandstorm surrounds them. After the storm subsides, it is quiet and Much-Afraid humbly calls to the Shepherd, saying that she will listen to anything he has to say to her. The Shepherd appears and instructs her to create another altar on which she is to sacrifice her entire will. She follows his directions and places the stone of her whole will in the bag with the other memorial pebbles. The Shepherd leads Much-Afraid to the entrance of the Old Sea Wall and tells her to cross the sea. He blesses her and leaves her with Suffering and Sorrow.

While on the Old Sea Wall, Much-Afraid begins to realize how difficult and frustrating it must be to have the Shepherd as an enemy. She reflects on how every single time her Fearing relatives have attempted to snare her, the Shepherd thwarts their evil plans. Much-Afraid imagines it must be quite exasperating to continually fail at your own plans. Although the walk across the sea is quite cold, windy, and rough, Much-Afraid finds it to be invigorating and she sings songs praising the Shepherd while she walks, standing as tall as she can. When she and her companions reach the other side of the sea, it is obvious that spring is just beginning and Much-Afraid is overwhelmed by the beauty of all the new life surrounding her. This reminds her that she has the seed of love planted in her heart and she cautiously looks down at her chest to see leaves and a small bud growing right out of her heart. Upon closer examination, Much-Afraid realizes that the tiny golden flower that she found in the desert is blooming with the leaves. She begins to build another altar to memorialize the growing of Acceptance-with-Joy in her heart and after a moment's hesitation, she places her heart on the altar. Although the altar and the sticks she places upon it burn up instantly, her heart and the tiny bud of a flower are still fully intact. After placing the remaining pebble in her bag, Much-Afraid runs to the end of the path where the Shepherd is waiting for her. He tells her that she is now ready for "something new," and when she asks him if he will soon lead her into the High Places, he says yes, and then cryptically tells her that she will see what he will do.

Chapter 8, On the Old Sea Wall Analysis

To Much-Afraid's chagrin, Bitterness is waiting for her at the moment of her disillusionment with the path which appears to turn toward the mountains and then unexpectedly away again. Having dropped the hands of her supporters, she is left alone



and humbled by her choices. It is only after a powerful sandstorm that she asks for guidance once again. When the Shepherd responds to her call, immediately and faithfully as always, he does not remove her fear, nor does he shame her for doubting him. He simply tells her to move forward from this point in his love.

Just when it seems things are hopeless and lonely, Much-Afraid is able to draw upon her newly-discovered internal strength and find great joy in the path the Shepherd has laid out for her. Even though the Shepherd reiterates that there will indeed be yet another detour on the journey, Much-Afraid continues on faithfully, demonstrating the growing closeness between herself and the Shepherd. This foreshadows the fact that the negative voices in her head are being replaced by the Shepherd's loving direction.



Chapter 9, Great Precipice Injury

Chapter 9, Great Precipice Injury Summary

Alone once again with Suffering and Sorrow, Much-Afraid continues along the path with joy in her heart. She can barely contain her excitement at the prospect of finally climbing to the High Places. When they finally arrive at the foot of the mountain, Much-Afraid loses much of her momentum and simply feels overwhelmed by the steepness and the height of the precipice. Much-Afraid looks up at the path and realizes that it goes to the top of the precipice and simply stops. She begins to cry and is absolutely positive there is no way that a lame, weak thing such as she will ever make it to the top. Suffering points out a hart and a hind leaping over the path, clearly showing the way. For the first time, Much-Afraid hears the voices of Suffering and Sorrow encouraging her to go on, but she feels she cannot. During this awful moment of weakness, Craven Fear, of all people, appears out of nowhere and begins to taunt her. He tells her that she will indeed be his wife and slave and she will never escape again. Craven Fear describes in great detail what will happen to her body should she fall from such great heights. Sorrow and Suffering tell Much-Afraid to call on the Shepherd for help, but she is so angry with him and fearful that he will tell her that she must scale this horribly steep mountain that she refuses.

Finally, in an exasperated attempt to encourage her to call on the Shepherd, Suffering pricks Much-Afraid's arm with a knife. Overwhelmed by fear and shame, Much-Afraid eventually calls to the Shepherd for help. As always, he appears in an instant. Much-Afraid cowers in fear of the Shepherd's rebuke, but he simply laughs at her in a loving and kind way. He explains this is the only way for her to develop hinds' feet, and though there are many paths up the mountain to the High Places, this is by far the best for her. Much-Afraid tells him she is as nimble as a jellyfish and the Shepherd laughs at this as well. The Shepherd explains it is his greatest joy to make transformations such as from a jellyfish to a hart. He tells her that she will undergo such a transformation, but it is not yet time for her to know the details. She has learned the first letter in the alphabet of love, the Shepherd tells her, which is acceptance-with-joy. After looping a safety rope around the three travelers, he gives Much-Afraid a cordial filled with the Spirit of Grace and Comfort, which she is to drink every time she feels dizzy or faint. Following the instructions of the Shepherd, Much-Afraid, Sorrow, and Suffering begin to climb the steep mountain to reach a safe cave where they will rest for the night.

Chapter 9, Great Precipice Injury Analysis

Much-Afraid is exhausted by the constant growth and transformation required by this journey to the High Places. It is inferred that the reason for this exhaustion is because fear is an intellectual phenomenon, and fear is the main motivating factor in each crisis Much-Afraid faces. This is a journey of the heart and soul, not of the mind. Whenever



Much-Afraid is able to get in touch with her heart, her fear is replaced by peace because the heart does not know fear.

The sense of impending doom experienced by Much-Afraid upon her arrival at the base of the precipice is the demonstration of her inability to trust in what she knows to be true in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Rather than looking at the big picture, Much-Afraid cannot see past the huge, steep mountain looming in front of her. With the help of the Shepherd, she is able to connect with her heart and become, once again, willing to bear the pain associated with great love and even begin to find some joy.



Chapter 10, Ascent of the Precipice Injury

Chapter 10, Ascent of the Precipice Injury Summary

When Much-Afraid and her companions begin the climb, she is pleased to find that it is not as difficult as it had originally appeared. Supported on either side by Sorrow and Suffering, Much-Afraid is held safe from slipping and falling. As she looks over the edge, she sees all five of her pursuing relatives looking up at her in hatred, and Self-Pity even throws a rock at her. Much-Afraid is grateful that they are out of their reach, but she knows that, as the Shepherd has warned her, she will meet them again when she reaches the top of the Precipice of Injury. When they arrive at their resting place for the evening, they find the cave to be most hospitable with a small stream from which to drink and warm sheepskins on which to relax. Upon awaking the next morning, just when Much-Afraid is thinking of how barren and depressing everything around the cave looks, she comes upon a bright red flower jutting out of the rocks. She asks the flower its name and the flower whispers that its name is Bearing-the-Cost, also known as Forgiveness. The flower explains that it has been brought here and left all alone, but has managed to poke out through the rocks to connect with its greatest love, which is the sun. It occurs to Much-Afraid that this must be the second letter in the alphabet of love and while she kneels in gratitude, a piece of stone that surrounds the flower falls right out of the rock. She picks up the pebble and places it in her bag.

After eating the food given to them by the Shepherd at the foot of the precipice, they once again rope themselves together and resume the climb. Much-Afraid trips and gouges the flesh on her knees. Although Suffering and Sorrow are on either side of her, keeping her from falling, this gives her quite a fright. Suffering gives her a few drops of the cordial and suddenly Much-Afraid finds she is able to go on, albeit slowly and whining all the way. Although Suffering and Sorrow patiently move along at the pace set by Much-Afraid, it soon becomes clear that if they do not begin to travel faster, they will not reach the precipice by nightfall. Suffering asks Much-Afraid about what she found that morning outside of the cave. Suddenly, Much-Afraid realizes that while she found the second letter in the alphabet of love, her current behavior is completely disregarding this discovery. With the assistance of Suffering and Sorrow, Much-Afraid places drops of the cordial on her injuries and finds that she can now move at a much faster pace. When they reach the top, they find themselves surrounded by beautiful trees and they hear the Shepherd's sweet voice singing as he approaches them.

Chapter 10, Ascent of the Precipice Injury Analysis

For Much-Afraid, each small step forward has been a leap of faith. She has found that when she keeps her eyes on the prize and continues on what she knows to be her path, that path becomes surprisingly easy to follow. Much-Afraid's tendency is to constantly

project the images of the worst possible outcomes in her mind. This is a paralyzing habit she is learning to avoid. It is becoming increasingly clear to Much-Afraid that her fears are never as bad as her anticipation of them.

The discovery of the little red flower is an appropriate illustration of Much-Afraid and her circumstances. Bearing-the-Cost did not ask to be brought into the middle of nowhere and left alone, but regardless of whose fault that is, the choice still lies with the flower whether it will grow into the light or shrivel and die. In the same way, Much-Afraid did not ask to be disfigured, or for a cruel and malicious family, but it is up to her to take responsibility for her own life. She can choose to realize her full potential, transcending her challenges, or she can wither away.



Chapter 11, In the Forests of Danger and Tribulation

Chapter 11, In the Forests of Danger and Tribulation Summary

Much-Afraid and her companions sit with the Shepherd joyfully as he tells them about the next phase of their journey. After laying his hands on Much-Afraid's injuries and healing them completely, he explains they will be traveling through the Forests of Danger and Tribulation. As she has been at the beginning of every other lap of the trip, Much-Afraid feels she cannot possibly take anymore and begins to question the Shepherd's ability to do any of the things he has promised her. Sternly, he reminds her how he has carried her when she could not walk, and also how he has gotten her this far. The Shepherd asks her if she truly believes he is a liar, and she finally agrees she has no reason not to believe him. He tells her that the more she imagines how horrible things will be, the more difficult it will be for her to face them. The Shepherd gives Much-Afraid a stone to keep so that she will remember not to project the future before it arrives and she and her companions start into the forest.

Shortly following their entrance into the forest, all five of Much-Afraid's pursuing relatives begin to taunt her. Hand-in-hand with Sorrow and Suffering, Much-Afraid cannot help but hear what her cruel cousins say and if she covers her ears with her hands, she loses the support of her helpers. With the assistance of some cotton from Suffering's first aid kit, Much-Afraid is able to plug her ears from most of the jeering. As they continue to walk, a storm begins to develop in the distance, and Craven Fear shouts that she had better make a run for it out of the forest before she gets herself killed. It would appear that Much-Afraid decides to put a stop to the shouting because after asking Sorrow and Suffering to help, she throws a stone right at Craven Fear. For the first time, Sorrow and Suffering both laugh and the three of them begin to hurl rocks at the evil five as they disappear from view. They are able to reach a cabin in the distance just as the vicious storm begins to blow and no sooner have they locked the door than they hear pounding and shouts to let them in. Much-Afraid shouts back that they had better make a run for it before they get themselves killed.

The storm lasts for days, but Much-Afraid, Sorrow, and Suffering are safe and warm in their cabin haven. There is a stash of firewood as well as food supplies apparently provided by the Shepherd's servants who keep the cabin ready for travelers such as themselves. While in the cabin, Much-Afraid relaxes and actually finds much joy in spending time with Suffering and Sorrow as well as time in silence, listening to the power of the storm or the crackling of the fire. Sorrow begins to sing a song about fast, agile feet. The song just came to her while she was walking and she teaches it to Much-Afraid. For the rest of the time in the cabin, Much-Afraid continues to sing the song to herself, overjoyed at the prospect of someday having hinds' feet herself.



Chapter 11, In the Forests of Danger and Tribulation Analysis

As much as her heart welcomes it, Much-Afraid dreads change and challenge and is quite comfortable with being complacent. Some might call this "resting on their laurels." The Shepherd will not hear of it. As soon as her wounds are healed, Much-Afraid is sent quickly to follow the path again. It is through this process that Much-Afraid grows closer to the Shepherd and sees the beauty that can come from struggle.

Not only does Much-Afraid pout that she is not allowed to rest, but she suggests that the Shepherd is a liar, directly insulting him and his promises. Although he speaks to her sternly, he does not judge or rebuke her. He simply reminds her that he will always protect her and provide her with exactly what she needs. This is almost immediately demonstrated by the appearance of the waterproof hut and its fully stocked pantry, in the middle of the dangerous storm.



Chapter 12, In the Mist

Chapter 12, In the Mist Summary

When the storm dissipates, Much-Afraid and her companions leave the cabin to continue on their journey. Although there is no more wind or rain, there is a thick mist that hangs over everything, making it very difficult to see far and keeping the path muddy and slippery. Much-Afraid begins to realize that although she was terrified by the desert, the precipice, and her relatives, there was a certain thrill to the drama that she misses. Much-Afraid is bored with this trudging walk that almost seems to go downhill. She feels that she should constantly be moving upward toward the High Places. When she finally voices how she wishes the mist would lift, she suddenly hears the voice of Resentment telling her that the mist will be staying with her for the duration of the journey and that it is even thicker higher up in the mountains. Resentment points out that the path Much-Afraid and her companions are following is not even an uphill climb. He suggests they have taken a wrong turn, or even worse, that the Shepherd has sent them on the wrong path.

Much-Afraid asks Suffering and Sorrow if they think Resentment might be right and as they are quite annoyed with her for even paying any attention to him, they answer in monosyllables. They tell her that this is the path the Shepherd told them to take and they will not stray from it. Bitterness and Self-Pity chime in with Resentment's voice and Much-Afraid begins to doubt the path. She slips and falls repeatedly and, as a result, she is muddy and chilled. Much-Afraid is well into a nice little pity party when the thought occurs to her that if she sings, she might be able to block out the voices of her evil relatives. This works quite well and no sooner has she sung the first verse than the Shepherd appears behind her, asking about the song. She explains that Sorrow taught her the song while they were staying in the cabin. The Shepherd tells her that he loves that she sings and he teaches her the next verse. In no time at all, the mist has cleared and at the Shepherd's suggestion, they all rest in the sunlight.

Ashamed of the fact that she has been slipping so much, Much-Afraid does not look into the Shepherd's face. Gently he reminds her that when he looks at her, he does not see her imperfections, but visualizes her with hinds' feet, running and skipping with joy, the way that she will be when she is truly transformed. The Shepherd asks how well Sorrow and Suffering have guided and helped her and she tells him that although she had been frightened of their strength in the beginning, she has certainly grown to love them through the journey. Much-Afraid tells the Shepherd that not only have they been incredibly kind to her, but that she gets the sense that they love her in return. Stifling a laugh for some reason, the Shepherd solemnly says that he is sure she is correct. The Shepherd asks Much-Afraid very seriously if she loves him enough to trust him completely, even when all the proof, and everyone around her is telling her otherwise. Much-Afraid tells him that she loves and trusts him that much. The Shepherd then asks her what would happen if he actually did deceive her. Much-Afraid takes her time answering this question and finally says that she loves him because she cannot do



otherwise, even if he were to deceive her. The Shepherd touches her head and leaves. After Much-Afraid picks up the memorial pebble and places it in her bag, she and her companions continue on their journey.

Chapter 12, In the Mist Analysis

Much-Afraid's time in the mist is an opportunity for her to sort out any still-lingering doubts that she might have about the Shepherd. She is concerned once again that he might be leading her astray because things do not appear to be going the way she imagined them. Used to the excitement of crisis and drama, Much-Afraid becomes quite bored with the day-to-day walking of the path, which is actually the lesson the Shepherd is trying to teach her. During this time of inaction, she is more susceptible to the negative voices creeping into her head. The fact that Much-Afraid makes the decision to sing even before the mist lifts is a demonstration of her spiritual growth. She has taken captive the negative thoughts and replaced them with songs of praise. It is after she chooses to take action that the mist actually breaks. It is a poignant moment when the Shepherd asks Much-Afraid what would happen if he actually did deceive her and she responds straight from the heart that she can do nothing but love him, regardless.



Chapter 13, In the Valley of Loss

Chapter 13, In the Valley of Loss Summary

As they walk around a bend in the path, Much-Afraid, Sorrow, and Suffering suddenly stop short because they realize the path shoots down into the depths of a valley that seems lower even than the Valley of Humiliation. Much-Afraid is horrified that she will have to give up all of her progress and walk even lower than the place where she began. For the first time on the journey, Much-Afraid begins to seriously consider giving up. She feels angry and resentful that she has worked so hard only to be sent down into a deep valley, farther away from the High Places than ever. For a few moments, Much-Afraid ponders the option of turning her back on the Shepherd but living a life completely devoid of loving him seems much more terrifying than staying with him. She screams for the Shepherd to come to her aid and she holds on to him sobbing, begging him not to let her turn away from him. Calmly and lovingly, the Shepherd reminds her that she is in the palm of his hand and not even she has the power to turn herself away from him now. Passionately, Much-Afraid builds an altar and keeps a stone to remind her of her conscious decision to turn her will and her life over to the care of the Shepherd. The four of them, singing all the way, then begin to descend into the Valley of Loss, which, of course, is much easier than it originally seemed.

Chapter 13, In the Valley of Loss Analysis

Much-Afraid experiences a profound change of will. When faced with difficulties while loving the Shepherd or taking the easy route without loving him, she opts to follow her heart. The Shepherd helps Much-Afraid to see that the journey is not just about where she has been and what she has accomplished, but more importantly, where she is at the moment. Once again, the Shepherd points out that as soon as Much-Afraid stops worrying and projecting about the future, things just seem to become easier and to fall right into place. The Valley of Loss at first seems to be a place where Much-Afraid is to lose everything. This could not be closer to the truth. However, Much-Afraid realizes she will not be losing anything she actually needs. She will simply be losing her resentment, fear, bitterness, and self-pity.



Chapter 14, The Place of Anointing

Chapter 14, The Place of Anointing Summary

When the Shepherd has led Much-Afraid and her companions across the beautiful Valley of Loss, they reach the base of the steepest mountainside yet. Much-Afraid notes that its peaks are even higher than that of the Precipice Injury and she shudders. After all of her worrying and wanting to turn back, Much-Afraid realizes that the Shepherd does not mean for them to scale the mountain at all. There are chairs suspended by a cable, much like those on a ski lift, and the four of them simply sit in the chairs and are carried to the borderland of the High Places. Upon reaching the top, Much-Afraid, Suffering and Sorrow are speechless at the beauty surrounding them. There are fields of beautiful flowers and in the distance is the powerful voice of a mighty waterfall. The four of them walk towards the Falls of Love, and when they arrive, the Shepherd asks Much-Afraid what she thinks of it. She replies that it is both "beautiful and terrible." When he asks her why it is terrible, she replies that its power is overwhelming and as the water flows over the stone lip, it is dashed and broken on the rocks below. The Shepherd encourages her to take a closer look and when she does, Much-Afraid realizes that each bit of water is actually very much like a free-floating creature with wings that finds only joy in the fall and movement down and around the rocks. At this, the Shepherd brings them back into the flowery fields and tells them that they are to rest in preparation for the final lap of the journey. Much-Afraid is overjoyed.

During their days of rest, the Shepherd is constantly with them. Although the fields are very beautiful, it rains and the mist blocks the snow-capped view of the High Places. The Shepherd reminds Much-Afraid that although this next part of the journey may be very difficult for her, she must never forget or doubt what she has seen. On the final day of their rest, the Shepherd carries Much-Afraid into the High Places and transforms into his true self, the King of Love. He is so magnificent to look upon, and Much-Afraid realizes she has somehow always known he was the King himself. The King brings her to an altar and anoints her with a glowing coal, telling her she is cleansed. The experience is so overpowering that Much-Afraid loses consciousness and the King carries her back to where the others wait. When she asks him, now transformed back into the Shepherd, if he will soon fulfill his promise to her, he answers that the time is near at hand. While Much-Afraid is walking around, reveling in her excitement, Suffering and Sorrow ask the Shepherd about the place they have been resting. The Shepherd tells them that it is the place where he brings his beloved in preparation for burial.

Chapter 14, The Place of Anointing Analysis

After Much-Afraid's most recent altar and sacrifice, all of her senses are heightened and she is so much more aware of the splendor surrounding her. Once she makes a conscious decision to "be" as opposed to "thinking" and "doing," she is more available to herself and to her environment. The anointing ceremony where the Shepherd

touches Much-Afraid with a glowing coal from his altar only serves to further heighten her realization of the connection between her inner beauty and the beauty around her. She is close to the discovery that they are one and the same.



Chapter 15, The Floods

Chapter 15, The Floods Summary

After walking all day, Much-Afraid, Suffering and Sorrow come upon a cabin where they will spend the night. When they open the door, they realize that a fire is crackling in the fireplace and a meal for three is set at the table. Exhausted, the three of them fall asleep almost instantly. Much-Afraid is awakened while it is still dark by the voice of the Shepherd. Although she cannot see him, his voice warmly surrounds her. He tells her that in the morning, she will go to the Falls of Love to sacrifice his initial promise to her along with her "natural longing for human love." Although she does not fully understand, Much-Afraid immediately agrees. She waits till dawn to wake Suffering and Sorrow and tells them that they must leave right away. As they climb higher and higher toward the place indicated by the Shepherd, there are bright lightning flashes and loud thunder crashes. Abruptly, all five of Much-Afraid's relatives sprint out of the mist, screaming something about a storm and an avalanche. Suffering and Sorrow stop walking. They ask Much-Afraid if she thinks they should turn back but Much-Afraid insists they continue forward. At that moment, the Shepherd's voice tells Much-Afraid there is a safe cave next to them in which they are to wait out the storm. The three companions crowd together inside the small cave and the rains create a wall of water over the mouth of the cave.

During the storm, Much-Afraid takes out her bag of memorial stones and reviews them one by one. Thinking of the fact that she is to sacrifice the most important promise the Shepherd has ever made to her, she wonders if she should throw away these stones which symbolize all of his promises. Picking up each one in turn, Much-Afraid realizes that she cannot bear to part with any of them, regardless of whether or not the Shepherd will keep his promises. She is determined to follow through on his request, simply because she loves him and he has asked it of her. Sorrow and Suffering watch her throughout this process and when she has finished, they point out that the storm has subsided. After this, the path gets much steeper and Much-Afraid is nearly overcome with exhaustion. She vaguely notices that while she is becoming weaker the closer they get to the High Places, her companions appear stronger and more vigorous with life than ever. They arrive at a bubbling brook from which the voice tells her to drink in order to regain her strength. Much-Afraid follows the Shepherd's instructions but the water is so bitter that she immediately vomits. The Shepherd's voice tells her to sweeten the water with a tree branch nearby. After this, Much-Afraid is able to drink and much of her strength is returned to her. In memorial of this event, Much-Afraid picks up her twelfth pebble and places it with the others.

Chapter 15, The Floods Analysis

Although it is not made entirely clear by the Shepherd at this point, Much-Afraid's "natural longing for human love" is not to be sacrificed in vain. This command of



sacrifice is foreshadowing the fact that this human love will be replaced by something much greater in return. Interestingly, it is at this point in the story that Much-Afraid begins to take a leadership role in her relationship with Suffering and Sorrow. It is her companions who now question the path while Much-Afraid is positive she must continue forward. This foreshadows the future relationship that will be shared between the three companions. The bitterness of the water and its subsequent cleansing via the Shepherd's instructions is symbolic of the final release of all of Much-Afraid's bitter resentments. Before the water is cleaned, she is unable to even swallow it. After it has been cleaned, it is by no means sweet, but it strengthens her, much as her past resentments and bitterness will not be sweet, but will provide her with direction and strength.



Chapter 16, Grave on the Mountains

Chapter 16, Grave on the Mountains Summary

Finally, the path stops at the edge of a mist-filled abyss which reaches to the horizon in every direction. Much-Afraid, Suffering and Sorrow realize they must now jump down into the chasm, despite the fact that they have no idea how far they will have to fall before they reach the bottom. Suffering and Sorrow, much stronger than the exhausted Much-Afraid, wrap their arms around her and together, the three of them jump. Because of their strength, Sorrow and Suffering bring Much-Afraid to the bottom of the abyss a bit disoriented, but on the whole unharmed. Upon feeling around in the thick, opaque mist, Much-Afraid finds the altar on which she is to make her final sacrifice. She calls to the Shepherd, but there is no answer. Much-Afraid thinks back to how Bitterness foresaw the Shepherd's abandonment of her, but she realizes he could never have seen that she would perform this act of love anyway, simply because she loves the Shepherd and he has asked it of her.

Much-Afraid tries to pull the need for human love out of her heart, but she realizes it has attached itself to all parts of her entirely. Terrified she will not be able to do what the Shepherd has asked, she turns to Suffering and Sorrow for help, but they tell her they cannot help her with this. Out of the mist comes the priest of the altar who offers his assistance to Much-Afraid. She agrees gratefully, but knowing herself better than ever, she requests that he tie her to the altar while he is removing all of the roots because she will most likely struggle. The priest obliges and after he rips out her need for human love he tells her that it has all come out in one piece, a sure sign that it is the exact and right time for it to be removed. As soon as the sacrifice is complete, Much-Afraid falls into a deep sleep.

Chapter 16, Grave on the Mountains Analysis

At this point in the story Much-Afraid truly steps out of the person she has been and begins to blossom into the new person she is becoming. When facing every other obstacle—such as the Precipice Injury, the Shores of Loneliness, and even the monotony of the mist of the Forests of Danger and Tribulation—Much-Afraid has stopped to shudder in fear and doubt. Upon reaching the massive, mist-filled chasm, she simply realizes what must be done and without a second thought takes a literal "leap of faith." This leap is much larger than those at the beginning of the story when every step was a leap of faith. Much-Afraid has mastered walking with the Shepherd and this is her opportunity to master walking with him in love and trust even when he seems to be completely out of reach.



Chapter 17, Healing Streams

Chapter 17, Healing Streams Summary

Much-Afraid wakes up in a cave with sunlight streaming in through its entrance. It takes her a few moments to realize where she is and what has happened. Upon remembering, Much-Afraid looks down at her heart and is amazed that there is no trace or scar of an injury. When she walks out of the cave, she sees she is still in the deep abyss, but there is no mist, only beautiful flowers, trees, and birds. Much-Afraid notices there is a great rush of water emanating from under the altar and she realizes that this must be the very source of the Falls of Love. After disrobing, she begins to swim and play in the water, which is more electrifying and healing than anything she has ever felt before. After her swim, Much-Afraid picks some of the delicious wild berries which are nearly as refreshing as the water. Suddenly, she realizes her feet are no longer lame and her mouth is no longer crooked. She has been transformed! Much-Afraid spends the next few days in this paradise, completely satisfied, thinking of nothing but the here-and-now.

Chapter 17, Healing Streams Analysis

As a result of her transformation, Much-Afraid is now able to see the beauty of the very place which had been filled with darkened mist. Now that it is filled with light, she is able to take in its vibrant magnificence and the teeming life that surrounds her. Much-Afraid is finally able to be completely at peace while alone. This is a tribute to her ability to finally connect her inner beauty with the beauty around her. Even before she realizes she has been transformed, she sees and feels the perfection in everything, including herself. It is because of this realization and the complete transformation of her heart that she is now ready to be physically transformed as well.



Chapter 18, Hinds' Feet

Chapter 18, Hinds' Feet Summary

While it is still very early morning, Much-Afraid awakens to hear someone calling her. It is not a voice, exactly, but she follows it just the same. She realizes it is coming from somewhere high above and she has every intention of answering the call in person, if she can only find a way out of the canyon. Suddenly, she sees a hart and a hind leaping from rock to rock, clearly showing her the way. Before she even realizes it, Much-Afraid is leaping from rock to rock herself, just like the hart and the hind. As she had known he would be, the Shepherd King is standing at the top of the abyss. Much-Afraid greets him with unbounded joy and gratitude. He tells her that from this point forward, her name will be Grace and Glory. The Shepherd instructs her to look down at her heart and she sees that the most beautiful flower of love has blossomed from the little thorn he had placed there, it seemed, in another life. He explains that in order for this flower to fully take root, her need for natural human love had to be removed.

It is then that Grace and Glory realizes that the priest of the altar was actually the Shepherd. The Shepherd is the one who bound her to the altar and ripped out the natural human love. He then tells her to give him the bag of the twelve memorial stones and from them he constructs a golden crown of precious jewels which he places upon Grace and Glory's head. Grace and Glory remembers how close she came to discarding all of those stones. Little had she known that they were destined to become transformed into beauty, just like she has been transformed. Through all of this, despite her joy, Grace and Glory cannot help but wish that Sorrow and Suffering could be her with her, for she has grown to love them deeply. Before she can express this wish to her Shepherd, he introduces her handmaidens, Joy and Peace, who are actually Suffering and Sorrow transformed. Grace and Glory is overjoyed and the three of them, led by the Shepherd, walk into the High Places of the Kingdom of Love.

Chapter 18, Hinds' Feet Analysis

Much-Afraid sees the hart and the hind bounding up the mountain with joy. She saw this earlier on her journey, but at the time was too lame to follow. Now, she has hinds' feet herself and is able to leap from rock to rock along with them. After she has been anointed Grace and Glory, she realizes that her final sacrifice was necessary for an even better kind of love to take root in her heart. Grace and Glory is no longer dependent upon or in need of human love because she is fully whole without it. This can be viewed religiously, as "coming to fully know Jesus," or spiritually as "connecting with one's higher-self," or from a scientific or psychological perspective as "becoming fully self-actualized."



Chapter 19, High Places

Chapter 19, High Places Summary

Joy, Peace, and Grace and Glory spend several joyful weeks in the High Places of the Realm of Love with the King. During this time, he teaches them many lessons and shows them many things. They are amazed to see how expansive the Realm of Love actually is, and it is obvious there are so many places even higher than where they have climbed. It is during this time of playing, learning, and climbing that the King sits down with Grace and Glory to discuss the lessons she has learned throughout her journey. Grace and Glory reviews each of the places she has been and each memorial stone she collected along the way. She tells the King that, in sum, she has learned that regardless of the circumstances, she must live her life based on the true love in her heart and that no matter how dismal and twisted things may seem to be, she must always act and react out of love and trust in him. The King agrees and tells Grace and Glory that the reason he has been able to transform her feet into hinds' feet is because of the internal transformations that occurred as a result of her journey.

Chapter 19, High Places Analysis

In reviewing her journey, Grace and Glory understands the value of the lessons she learned and the pitfalls she encountered, but there is not a single inkling of regret. She has learned the difference between humility and humiliation and Grace and Glory is quite clear that while self-pity may appear to be humility, it is actually selfishness. The four main lessons of Grace and Glory's journey are to accept all things with joy, to avoid bitterness and resentment at all costs through acceptance and forgiveness, to see herself in the glory of what she can and will be rather than focusing on her shortcomings, and to understand that things are exactly the way they are supposed to be in the tapestry of life, in which the Shepherd will always give her exactly what she needs.



Chapter 20, Return to the Valley

Chapter 20, Return to the Valley Summary

Finally, the King brings Joy, Peace, and Grace and Glory to part of the High Places which overlooks the Valley of Humiliation and the village of Much-Trembling. Grace and Glory is overcome by thoughts of her family and suddenly realizes that although she simply assumed them to be evil and malicious, they are actually miserable and in spiritual pain. She immediately brings these thoughts to the King. After careful consideration, it is decided that Grace and Glory, along with her handmaidens Joy and Peace, will follow the King down into the Valley of Humiliation to share their newfound happiness and all the possibilities of change.

Chapter 20, Return to the Valley Analysis

As Grace and Glory masters herself and becomes completely connected with the Shepherd and her inner voice, she is no longer consumed with her own problems, needs, and challenges. She is now able to share what she has learned with others from a place of love. Regardless of whether this is viewed from a religious, spiritual, or scientific perspective, the end result is still tapping into a power greater than oneself.



Characters

Much-Afraid, Grace and Glory

Much-Afraid is a frightened, deformed, lost soul who is transformed into a beautiful, spiritually connected, joyful being. Much-Afraid's feet and mouth are crooked and she spends much of her time in the village of Much-Trembling trying to avoid her unsavory relatives. Much-Afraid is a shepherdess of the Chief Shepherd's flock and she goes on a pilgrimage to the High Places in the Kingdom of Love in order to better serve the Shepherd. Throughout the story, Much-Afraid faces innumerable and seemingly impossible obstacles on her journey, and is able to overcome them. The Shepherd renames her Grace and Glory and she is able to see the world from a fresh, new perspective, enabling her to continue to grow in love. As the Shepherd had promised, her feet are transformed into hinds' feet and her face is quite beautiful to behold. At the end of the story, she returns to the village of Much-Trembling to help and love those relatives from whom she escaped.

Chief Shepherd, Prince of Love, King of Love, The Priest

The Chief Shepherd is also known as the Prince of the Kingdom of Love. He is the protector and guide of many people in Much-Trembling and the Valley of Humiliation. It is to him that Much-Afraid pledges her eternal devotion and for whom she goes on her pilgrimage to the High Places. The Shepherd does not always make his reasons known to Much-Afraid, but he always guides her with kindness, wisdom, and love. At the Place of Anointing, Much-Afraid discovers that the Shepherd is actually the King of Love and the Realm of Love is his Kingdom. When the Shepherd asks Much-Afraid to make the ultimate sacrifice, he disguises himself as an altar priest so he will be near to her even though she is unaware of his presence.

Sorrow and Suffering, Joy and Peace

Sorrow and Suffering are the twin sisters specially appointed by the Shepherd to be Much-Afraid's companions and helpers on her journey to the High Places. Upon reaching the High Places, Suffering and Sorrow are transformed into Grace and Glory's handmaidens, Joy and Peace.

Fearing Relatives, Family of Fearings

Fearing is Much-Afraid's surname, and the Fearings are one of the largest families in the village of Much-Trembling. Throughout Much-Afraid's journey, they attempt to block



her at every turn, but with the loving assistance of the Chief Shepherd, she is able to overcome their evil plots.

Mrs. Dismal Forebodings

Mrs. Dismal Forebodings is the aunt who raises Much-Afraid after she is orphaned. She is a miserable woman, devastated by her daughters' poor choices in husbands.

Gloomy and Spiteful

Gloomy and Spiteful are Much-Afraid's two cousins, Mrs. Dismal Forebodings' children, with whom she lived as a child. Gloomy eventually becomes the wife of Coward, another cousin. Spiteful becomes the wife of Timid-Skulking and loses a daughter shortly after birth.

Craven Fear

Craven Fear is the brother of Gloomy and Spiteful. Throughout her childhood, Much-Afraid is the target of much of Craven Fear's persecution. The Family of Fearings, in an attempt to pry her out of the Chief Shepherd's service, demands that she marry Craven Fear immediately. After Much-Afraid's escape from the Valley, Craven Fear is sent after her to bring her home captive.

Coward

Coward is one of Much-Afraid's cousins. He covers her mouth and chokes her when the Fearing family comes to her cottage to kidnap her. Gloomy is Coward's wife, whom he eventually ends up deserting.

Mrs. Valiant

Mrs. Valiant is Much-Afraid's next-door neighbor. When Much-Afraid is being held captive by her Fearing relatives in her own cottage, Mrs. Valiant comes to her rescue by single-handedly scaring them away with the threat of calling the Chief Shepherd.

Pride

Pride is Much-Afraid's attractive cousin. He is sent partway up the mountain to seduce her with his false charm into coming back to the Valley of Humiliation and permanent slavery.



Resentment, Bitterness, and Self-Pity

Resentment, Bitterness, and Self-Pity are the reinforcements sent to assist Pride after his unsuccessful attempt to bring Much-Afraid back. In the end, they are also unsuccessful.



Objects/Places

Valley of Humiliation

The Valley of Humiliation is where Much-Afraid grows up, escapes from, and eventually returns in order to help those from whom she has fled.

Much-Trembling

Much-Trembling is the village in which Much-Afraid lives at the beginning of the story, and where she returns at the end.

The High Places

The High Places are the different areas of the Realm of Love. It is to the High Places that Much-Afraid sets out on a pilgrimage.

The Realm of Love

The Realm of Love is the Shepherd's Father's Kingdom, where "perfect love casteth out fear and everything that torments." It is in the High Places of the Realm of Love that Much-Afraid becomes Grace and Glory and her companions, Suffering and Sorrow, become her handmaidens, Joy and Peace.

Hinds' Feet

Hind's Feet are the first and most important promise the Shepherd makes to Much-Afraid. She receives Hind's Feet to replace her lame, crooked feet so she can leap and bound with the Shepherd wherever he goes.

The Trysting Place

The Trysting Place is where Much-Afraid has her nightly rendezvous with the Shepherd while living in the Valley of Humiliation.

Acceptance-with-Joy

Acceptance-with-Joy is a little golden flower Much-Afraid finds blooming in the desert. Acceptance-with-Joy is also the first letter in the alphabet of Love.



The Furnace of Egypt

The Furnace of Egypt is the desert Much-Afraid must walk through to continue her journey to the High Places. Much-Afraid finds the first letter in the alphabet of Love while in the Furnace of Egypt.

Bearing-the-Cost, Forgiveness

Bearing-the-Cost, also called Forgiveness, is a little blood-red flower Much-Afraid discovers growing out of the rocks. Bearing-the-Cost is also the second letter in the alphabet of Love.

The Precipice Injury

The Precipice Injury is where Much-Afraid begins her climb to the high places in earnest. This is where she discovers the second letter in the alphabet of Love as well as experiences her first real physical injury and healing.

The Shores of Loneliness

The Shores of Loneliness are where Much-Afraid is finally able to stand up for herself, and with the assistance of the Shepherd, win a battle against her Fearing relatives Pride, Resentment, Bitterness, and Self-Pity.

The Old Sea Wall

The Old Sea Wall is the causeway by which Much-Afraid crosses the sea with Sorrow and Suffering. It is on this wall that Much-Afraid truly begins to find joy in the face of adversity.

Spirit of Grace and Comfort

Spirit of Grace and Comfort is a cordial given to Much-Afraid by the Shepherd right before she begins her first ascent up the mountain.

The Forests of Danger and Tribulation

The Forests of Danger and Tribulation are where Much-Afraid uses the assistance of her companions and fends off her Fearing relatives, without the Shepherd's direct aid for the first time.



Valley of Loss

The Valley of Loss is the place Much-Afraid enters after she has built an altar to turn her entire will and life over to the care of the Shepherd.

The Falls of Love

The Falls of Love is the massive and powerful waterfall where Much-Afraid first sees the water as beautiful and joyous rather than terrible. Later, during a stormy avalanche, Much-Afraid and her companions hide in a cave under the Falls of Love.

The Place of Anointing

The Place of Anointing is where the Shepherd brings Much-Afraid by herself, transforms into his true form, the King of Love, and anoints her with a burning coal from the Altar of Love, cleansing her. The Place of Anointing is also where the Shepherd brings his beloved in preparation for burial.

The Altar of Love

The Altar of Love is the King's altar from which he takes a burning coal and anoints Much-Afraid at the Place of Anointing.

The Memorial Stones

Twelve in all, the Memorial Stones are symbols of the four main lessons learned by Much-Afraid, now Grace and Glory, on her journey. The Shepherd transforms the stones into precious gems which he sets into the golden crown he places upon Grace and Glory's head.

The Grave on the Mountains

The Grave on the Mountains is where Much-Afraid makes her final sacrifice of the Shepherd's first promise to her and her need for human love. It is here that the Shepherd disguises himself as a priest and assists her in following through on his request even though she is unaware of his presence.

Healing Streams

The Healing Streams are where Much-Afraid swims and is transformed into a physically healthy and robust person. Her crooked mouth and feet are healed.



Themes

Connecting to One's Higher Self

Despite the obvious allusions and direct biblical references, this novel can be categorized as simply a spiritual book, or even of the self-help variety. With the exception of the Shepherd, every single character in the book is named for an idea, an attitude, or a state of mind. It is not necessary for one to look very far to see how the entire story could be the chronology of a single person's internal struggle to connect to his or her higher self. For example, Resentment is the embodiment of his name. He is constantly needling Much-Afraid, reminding her how unfair everything is, distracting her from the task at hand. Self-Pity also displays the characteristics of his designation. He tells Much-Afraid how pathetic she is and as a result encourages her feeling that everyone should feel sorry for her. Mrs. Dismal Forebodings is a miserable, broken-hearted woman who sees nothing positive ever happening for her or anyone around her.

Should one take the Shepherd's character and instead call him "Higher Self," "Soul," or "Heart," it is clear that although this book was obviously written with Christian intentions, those intentions translate much further than the Christian faith. "Finding Jesus," "self-actualizing," and "connecting to one's higher self" are all different names for the same process. An individual goes through this process, facing fears and becoming aware, to become the best person possible. There are many paths and many beliefs, but taken as an allegory, the metaphors that make up this novel can mean any of them.

Humility and Humiliation

Much-Afraid eventually learns the difference between humility and humiliation. She has spent her entire life being shunned, shamed and humiliated by her family and others around her. Even when she is with the Shepherd, she is constantly making self-deprecating comments about "her cold little heart" and twisted mouth and feet. Much-Afraid's actions demonstrate that she believes humility is the belittling of the self. As time goes on, Much-Afraid begins to realize that the only way she can be humiliated is if she is in a place of fear and does not feel comfortable in her own skin.

When Much-Afraid takes on a leadership role for the first time with Suffering and Sorrow right after the Shepherd's voice tells her to make the ultimate sacrifice, she demonstrates true humility. She recognizes her strength and her calling, but does not pretend to be anything she is not. When faced with the mist-filled chasm, she knows she cannot jump into it alone, but demonstrates humility by drawing upon the helpers provided to her by the Shepherd. It is at this point that Much-Afraid begins to equate humility with acknowledging exactly who and what she is, rather than selfishly focusing on her shortcomings.



Love for Its Own Sake

Much-Afraid's journey takes her from selfish fear to a place of unconditional love. Initially, Much-Afraid loves tentatively and certainly will not love anyone who does not love her in return. This is demonstrated by her need for the Shepherd to repeat that at the end of the journey she will, indeed, be loved in return, as well as her comment on how sad it is that the beautiful flowers have so much to give and no one to receive it, among many other examples. The difference between human love and spiritual love is what is discerned in this story, the latter being much superior to the former. Much-Afraid's full-circle pilgrimage brings her from hesitant and cautious love to empathy that need not be requited. She discovers that the joy of giving of herself and the overflowing love that she has is greater than receiving love from others. In addition, she finds that somehow, the more love she gives, the more loveable she is to others.

Faith in the Love of God

This novel is almost complete allegory and the largest, most important use of imagery and symbolism is the representation of God as the Shepherd. Much-Afraid has always had an emptiness inside her and she has sought for her entire life to satisfy it. That emptiness might be described as a "God-shaped hole" which, by the end of her pilgrimage, has obviously been completely filled by love and utter, unabashed faith in the love of the Shepherd, or God. Every single obstacle faced by Much-Afraid is another opportunity for her to demonstrate, to the best of her current ability, faith in the love of her Shepherd. From the time that the Seed of Love is planted in her heart to the time that the massively rooted tree of human love is removed from her, Much-Afraid is painfully aware of the emptiness. Once that space is filled with the empathetic and need-free love of God, or Jesus Christ, if you will, her perspective on everything changes. One of the major messages of this tale is that faith in the love of God is a circular continuum, in that one who has faith will always have the deepest kind of love, and vice versa. Faith in the love of God will always return to itself many times over.

Style

Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person, but from the perspective of the main character, Much-Afraid. Although it is mainly told from the perspective of one character, the author keeps the verbiage formal and distant, even when describing emotions, . The only time the point of view strays from this format is at limited, brief intervals in which the author details the plans of Much-Afraid's Fearing relatives back in the Valley of Humiliation. This perspective is important to the novel because the plot is driven by the idea that Much-Afraid is changing into an entirely different being, so her thoughts and feelings are integral to understanding the story. The story divides itself into rather equal parts of exposition and dialogue, and both methods are important because Much-Afraid's thoughts and feelings often refer back to dialogue between her and the Shepherd. Much-Afraid is rarely alone in the story, with the exception of the very end, when she spends a few days bathing in the Healing Waters.

Setting

Since the novel is about a journey, the setting changes with nearly every chapter. The story begins in the village of Much-Trembling, set deep in the Valley of Humiliation. Its inhabitants are a combination of Shepherd's servants and those who despise the Shepherd. The first setting change is when the Shepherd leads Much-Afraid through the fields of the Valley to the base of the mountain. Much-Afraid climbs with her companions, Suffering and Sorrow, who then lead her into the desert, also called the Furnace of Egypt. There are great pyramids in the desert where the Shepherd takes Much-Afraid to learn many lessons. After the desert, Much-Afraid walks for a long time on the Shores of Loneliness with the sea on one side and the desert on the other. In order to cross the sea, Much-Afraid must climb over the windy Old Sea Wall to reach the woods on the other side.

The Great Precipice Injury is a massive, steep rock face Much-Afraid must scale in order to reach the High Places. However, when she reaches the top, she must first walk through the Forests of Danger and Tribulation where there are vicious, blustering storms. For several days, Much-Afraid waits out a storm in a hut nestled in the forest. After the storm, Much-Afraid and her companions walk through a deep, dark mist to reach the Valley of Loss, which is actually quite pleasant with beautiful fields and colorful flowers everywhere. The Shepherd brings Much-Afraid to the Place of Anointing and places her before the Altar of Love. Much-Afraid then travels to a chasm that is to be her Grave on the Mountains where she makes her final sacrifice. After washing in the Healing Streams, Much-Afraid finally reaches the High Places and the Realm of Love.



Language and Meaning

The author's language is formal, partially to set the serious tone of the story. Despite its formal quality, the text is easy to read and understand, with the exception of occasions when it is written in an antiquated, biblical style. Many of Much-Afraid's dialogues with the Shepherd are written in this style and there are many songs and poems that are actual biblical quotes, specifically from the Song of Solomon. Although there is much dialogue throughout the novel, the only two characters who are truly well-developed are the Shepherd and Much-Afraid. Suffering and Sorrow are almost always present, but they rarely speak.

Structure

Twenty chapters comprise this novel, each of them containing between fifteen and twenty-five pages. Every chapter has a title which generally is the name of the place in which Much-Afraid is about to travel. There are no flashes to memory and the storyline is completely linear. There is one subplot in the novel, consisting of brief descriptions of how the Fearing relatives plot against Much-Afraid, but they include only exposition. This subplot is important to the story in order for the reader to understand why Fearing relatives continually appear, and the motives which drive them. The pace of the novel varies, depending upon the reader's skill in reading and comprehending verse. There are many biblical quotes and other references presented in verse form and which sometimes break up the text flow in a manner that distracts from the story.



Quotes

"This is the story of how Much-Afraid escaped from her Fearing relatives and went with the Shepherd to the High Places where 'perfect love casteth out fear.'" Chp. 1, Invitation to the High Places, p. 17.

"An orphan, she had been brought up in the home of her aunt, poor Mrs. Dismal Forebodings, with her two cousins Gloomy and Spiteful and their brother Craven Fear, a great bully who habitually tormented and persecuted her in a really dreadful way." Chp. 1, Invitation to the High Places, pp. 18-19.

"'Don't be afraid,' said the Shepherd gently. 'You are in my service, and if you will trust me they will not be able to force you against your will into any family alliance. But you ought never to have let your Fearing relatives into your cottage, because they are enemies of the King who has taken you into his employment.'" Chp. 1, Invitation to the High Places, p. 21.

"'But there is another thing I must tell you. Not only would I have to make your feet like hinds' feet, but you would have to receive another name, for it would be as impossible for a Much-Afraid to enter the Kingdom of Love as for any other member of the Fearing family. Are you willing to be changed completely, Much-Afraid, and to be made like the new name which you will receive if you become a citizen in the Kingdom of Love?'" Chp. 1, Invitation to the High Places, pp. 23-24.

"There was one moment indeed, when the song first started and everyone was startled into silence, when she might have called to him to come and help her. She did not realize that the Fearings were holding their breath lest she did call, and had she done so, they would have fled helter skelter through the door. However, she was too stunned with fear to seize the opportunity, and then it was too late." Chp. 2, Fearing Invasion, pp. 42-43.

"Opening the door, she went out into the darkness. A hundred Craven Fears lurking in the lonely street could not have deterred her at that moment, for the pain in her heart swallowed up fear and everything else and drove her forth. So in the dark hours, just before the dawn, Much-Afraid started off to look for the Shepherd." Chp. 3, Flight in the Night, p. 51.

"'Nothing my Father and I have made is ever wasted,' he said quietly, 'and the little wild flowers have a wonderful lesson to teach. They offer themselves so sweetly and confidently and willingly, even if it seems that there is no one to appreciate them. Just as though they sang a joyous little song to themselves, that it is so happy to love, even though one is not loved in return.'" Chp. 4, Start for the High Places, p. 56.

"Each time she shrinkingly took hold of the hand of either Sorrow or Suffering, a pang went through her, but once their hands were grasped she found they had amazing strength, and seemed able to pull and even lift her upwards and over places which she



would have considered utterly impossible to reach." Chp. 5, Encounter with Pride, pp. 71-72.

"Do you know what will happen to you, Much-Afraid, if you persist in going forward? All those fair promises he has made about bringing you into his Kingdom and making you live happily ever afterward will prove false. When he gets you up to the wild, desolate parts of the mountains, he will abandon you altogether, and you will be put to lasting shame." Chp. 5, Encounter with Pride, p. 76.

"There, on the next floor, they came to another and smaller room, in the center of which stood a great wheel, flat, like a table. Beside it stood a potter who wrought a work on the wheel. As he spun the wheel he fashioned his clay into many beautiful shapes and objects. The material was cut and kneaded and shaped as he saw fit, but always the clay lay still upon the wheel, submitting to his every touch, perfectly, unresisting." Chp. 6, Detour through the Desert, pp. 88-89.

"Remember also that it is always safe to obey my voice, even if it seems to call you to paths which look impossible or even crazy." Chp. 7, On the Shores of Lonliness, p. 93.

"Somehow the roar of the wind and the surge of the waters seemed to get into her blood and course through her being like a glorious wine of life. The wind whipped her cheeks and tore at her hair and clothes and nearly toppled her over, but she stood there, shouting at the top of her voice, though the wind seized the sound of it and carried it off, drowned in a deafening roar of its own." Chp. 8, On the Old Sea Wall, pp. 110-111.

"He sounded so cheery and full of strength, and, moreover, without a hint of reproach, that Much-Afraid felt as though a strong and exhilarating cordial had been poured into her heart and that a stream of courage and strength was flowing into her from his presence." Chp. 9, Great Precipice Injury, p. 124.

"Much-Afraid looked at the glowing flame above her head, and a longing which was almost envy leaped into her heart. She knew what she must do...At that moment a fragment of the rock which imprisoned the roots of the flower above her loosened and fell at her feet." Chp. 10, Ascent of the Precipice Injury, p. 138.

"For a very long time she sat trembling with that stone in her hand, but in the end she said, 'I have already given him the only answer possible when I told him, "If though canst, though mayest deceive me."' " Chp. 15, The Floods, p. 203.

"Suddenly she discovered that her feelings toward her relatives and those who lived down there in the Valley had undergone a complete change, and she saw them in a new light." Chp. 20, Return to the Valley, p. 247.



Topics for Discussion

What are the four main lessons learned by Much-Afraid? What is the common theme underlying all of them?

Is Hinds' Feet on High Places a religious book, a spiritual book, or both? Is it neither of these? Why?

What is the meaning of the Valley of Loss? What does Much-Afraid lose there?

Why do you think Much-Afraid slips and stumbles more while walking on relatively level ground in the mist of the Forests of Danger and Tribulation than she does while climbing the Precipice Injury?

What does the Shepherd mean when he tells Suffering and Sorrow that the Place of Anointing is where he brings his beloved in preparation for burial?

Why do you think the Shepherd tells Much-Afraid that Suffering and Sorrow are the best possible companions for her on this journey?

How does the author use names in this novel? What is the importance of the main character's initial name and then her given name at the end of the story?

Much-Afraid comes across a hind and a hart twice in the novel, once at the beginning and once at the end. What is the significance of this?

Why does the main character return to her Fearing relatives in Much-Trembling and the Valley of Humiliation at the end of the story?