

AI-Generated Graded Readers

Masaru Uchida, Gifu University

Publication webpage:

https://www1.gifu-u.ac.jp/~masaru/a1/ai-generated_graded_readers.html

Publication date: March 4, 2026

About This Edition

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice.

The text was translated from German into English and simplified using ChatGPT for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

Source Text

Original work (1st part): Heidis Lehr- und Wanderjahre

Original work (2nd part): Heidi kann brauchen, was es gelernt hat

Author: Johanna Spyri

Language: German

Source: Project Gutenberg

<https://www.gutenberg.org/>

Full texts available at:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7500/pg7500.txt> (Heidis Lehr- und Wanderjahre)

<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7512/pg7512.txt> (Heidi kann brauchen, was es gelernt hat)

The original texts are in the public domain.

Copyright and Use

This simplified edition is intended for educational and non-commercial use only.

The source text is provided by Project Gutenberg under its public domain policy.

Users should refer to the Project Gutenberg License for full terms:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/policy/license.html>

This adaptation was generated with the assistance of artificial intelligence and edited for readability and educational purposes.

Disclaimer

This edition is an educational adaptation and is not affiliated with or endorsed by Project Gutenberg.

Johanna Spyri, *Heidi* [*Heidis Lehr- und Wanderjahre* and *Heidi kann brauchen, was es gelernt hat*] (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified from the German by ChatGPT)

Part 1

Early in the morning, on a bright day in June, a narrow path went up from the small and friendly village of Maienfeld toward the high mountains. The path first passed through green fields and many trees. Then the land slowly changed. Short grass grew on the ground, and strong mountain plants gave a fresh smell to the air. The path rose more and more steeply toward the high Alps.

On this path a strong young woman from the mountains was walking upward. She held the hand of a small child. The child's cheeks were red and hot from the long climb in the warm sun. The sun was bright and strong that morning, and yet the child was dressed as if winter had come. The little girl was only about five years old, but no one could see the shape of her body, because she wore two or three dresses one over another. Around everything was a thick red cloth tied tightly about her.

Because of all these clothes the small girl looked like a round bundle that moved slowly up the mountain. Heavy shoes with thick nails were on her feet. Each step seemed hard work. The woman, however, walked strongly and quickly, and the child tried to keep up with her.

After about an hour they reached a small group of houses halfway up the mountain. This place was called "the little village." As soon as the woman came near the houses, voices called to her from many sides. Some people spoke from open windows. Others stood in doors. A few called from the road.

"Good morning, Detel!" one voice cried.

"Where are you going so early?" another asked.

But the woman did not stop. She answered quickly while still walking. She greeted everyone but kept moving upward.

When they came to the last house of the village, a friendly woman stepped out

of the door.

“Wait a moment, Dete,” she called. “I will come with you if you are going higher.”

Dete stopped. At once the little girl let go of her hand and sat down on the ground.

“Are you tired, Heidi?” asked Dete.

“No,” said the child. “I am hot.”

“We are almost there,” said Dete. “You must make strong steps. In about an hour we will reach the top.”

Now the other woman joined them. She was broad and kind in face. The three began to walk together. The two women soon started to talk about many people who lived in the little village and in houses nearby.

After a while the woman asked a question.

“But where are you taking the child, Dete?” she said. “She must be your sister’s little girl, the one who was left alone.”

“Yes,” Dete answered. “That is the one. I am taking her up to the old man on the mountain. She must stay with him.”

“What?” cried the woman in great surprise. “You want to leave the child with the Alm-Uncle? Dete, you cannot mean that! The old man will surely send you away again with the child!”

“He cannot do that,” said Dete firmly. “He is the child’s grandfather. I have taken care of her until now. I cannot refuse the good place I have been offered. Now it is the grandfather’s turn to do his part.”

“Yes, if he were like other people,” said the woman slowly. “But you know what he is like. What will he do with such a small child? The little one cannot live with him.”

“I must go to Frankfurt,” Dete explained. “I will get a very good position there. Last summer the rich family stayed at the hotel where I worked. I took care of their rooms. They asked me even then to come with them. I could not go before, but now they are back and I will go with them.”

“I would not wish to be that child,” the woman said, shaking her head. “No one

knows what the old man is truly like. He speaks with no one. Year after year he never goes to church. When he comes down the mountain with his thick stick, everyone moves away from him. With his large gray brows and wild beard he looks like a strange man from far away.”

“Even if that is so,” Dete replied, “he is still the grandfather. He must care for the child. He will not harm her. If something bad happens, it will be his fault, not mine.”

The woman looked thoughtful.

“I would like to know what the old man has done in his life,” she said. “People talk about him, but never clearly. You must know something from your sister, do you not?”

“I know some things,” said Dete carefully. “But I do not speak of them.”

The woman moved closer and spoke softly.

“Tell me a little. I will keep it secret.”

Dete looked around first to see if the child was near. But Heidi was no longer walking behind them. The women had not noticed when she stopped.

Dete suddenly stood still.

“Where is the child?” she said.

They both turned and looked down the path. The road twisted around the mountain, but no small figure could be seen.

“Look there,” said the woman suddenly. She pointed away from the path. “The child has climbed over the grass. She is with the goat boy and his goats.”

Far away a boy was climbing the mountain with a group of goats. The little girl followed him.

“That is good enough,” said Dete. “The boy can watch her. And now I can tell you what you wanted to know.”

She began to speak again.

“The old man once owned a fine farm,” she said. “He was the older son of the family. But he did not want to work. He wanted to travel and live freely. At last he lost the farm and all the money.”

The woman listened closely as they walked slowly up the mountain path.

Part 2

Dete and the woman continued their slow climb up the mountain path while they spoke. The wind moved softly across the grass, and from far above came the sound of goats calling to one another.

“The old man had a younger brother,” Dete continued. “The younger one was quiet and good. But the older son did not want to live a calm life. He wanted to see the world and do as he pleased. In the end he lost everything the family had.”

“The whole farm?” asked the woman.

“Yes,” said Dete. “The land, the house, the money—everything was gone. When the truth became known, his father and mother were filled with grief. One after the other they died. The younger brother left the country. No one knew where he went.”

“And the old man?” asked the woman.

“He disappeared too,” said Dete. “For many years no one knew where he was. Then people heard that he had gone into the army in a far country. After that there was no news of him for twelve or fifteen years.”

The woman listened with wide eyes.

“And then?” she asked.

“One day he returned,” said Dete. “He came back with a half-grown boy. The boy was his son. The old man tried to place the boy with relatives, but no one wanted to help him. People did not trust the old man anymore.”

“What did he do then?” asked the woman.

“He brought the boy here to the little village,” Dete explained. “He lived here with the boy. The boy’s name was Tobias. He was a good young man. He learned the work of building houses and became a carpenter. People liked him.”

“And the boy’s mother?” asked the woman.

“No one knows much about her,” said Dete. “She had died long before they came here.”

The woman walked in silence for a moment.

“And your sister?” she said.

“My sister Adelheid married Tobias,” said Dete quietly. “They loved one another very much. For a time they were happy.”

She paused and sighed.

“But their happiness did not last long,” she continued. “Only two years later Tobias was working on a house when a heavy beam fell. It struck him and killed him at once.”

The woman covered her mouth in shock.

“How terrible,” she said softly.

“Yes,” said Dete. “When they carried him home, my sister saw him and fell into a terrible fever from grief and shock. She was never strong even before. After only a few weeks she also died.”

“So the child lost both parents,” the woman whispered.

“Yes,” said Dete. “The little girl was only one year old. My mother and I took care of her. But last summer my mother died too. I had to work to live, so I brought the child with me to Ragaz.”

“And now you go to Frankfurt,” the woman said slowly.

“Yes,” said Dete. “I have a chance for good work there. I cannot carry a child with me. The grandfather must now take care of her.”

While the women talked, the small girl far ahead of them was climbing happily beside the goat boy.

Heidi had watched the goats with great interest. They jumped lightly over stones and bushes. The boy ran easily among them with bare feet and short trousers.

The child had tried at first to follow them in her heavy clothes, but it was very hard. At last she stopped and sat down.

Without a word she began to remove her shoes. Then she pulled off her stockings. Soon the thick red cloth came away as well.

Next she opened the outer dress and took it off. Another dress came away after that.

Soon Heidi stood only in her light underclothes. Her arms were free, and the

warm air felt good on her skin.

She carefully placed all the clothes in a small pile on the grass.

Then she began to run again.

Now she could move easily. She climbed over stones and grass just like the goats. Soon she reached the goat boy.

The boy looked back and saw her.

His whole face opened in a wide smile. He saw the pile of clothes far below on the mountain.

But he said nothing.

Heidi began to ask questions.

“How many goats do you have?” she asked.

“Many,” said the boy.

“Where do you take them?”

“Up to the high grass.”

“What do you do there?”

“They eat.”

“And you?” Heidi asked.

“I watch them,” the boy said.

The two children continued climbing while they talked. The goats moved around them, jumping over stones and bushes.

After a long climb they finally reached a small wooden hut standing high on the mountain. Three old fir trees stood behind it. From this place the whole valley could be seen far below.

On a bench beside the hut sat an old man with a long gray beard. A pipe was in his mouth. His hands rested on his knees as he watched the children come up the mountain.

Heidi reached him first.

She walked straight up to him and held out her hand.

“Good evening, Grandfather,” she said.

Part 3

The old man looked down at the small girl who stood before him with her hand stretched out. His thick gray brows moved a little as he studied her face.

“So,” he said slowly, “what does that mean?”

But he still took her small hand and shook it once.

Heidi looked up at him with calm eyes. She did not seem afraid. She watched his long beard and the heavy brows that almost met over his nose. The old man was strange to look at, and Heidi wanted to see him well.

At that moment Dete arrived, breathing hard from the long climb. Behind her came the goat boy Peter with the bundle of clothes.

“Good day, Uncle,” said Dete. “I have brought the child of Tobias and Adelheid. You may not know her anymore, for you have not seen her since she was one year old.”

“So,” said the old man shortly. “And what is the child to do with me?”

Then he turned his head toward Peter.

“You can go now,” he said. “Take the goats with you. And take mine as well.”

Peter did not wait. The old man’s voice and eyes were enough. He turned at once and ran after the goats.

Dete stood before the old man.

“The child must stay with you,” she said firmly. “I have taken care of her for four years. Now it is your turn.”

The old man’s eyes flashed.

“And if the child begins to cry and call for you,” he said, “what shall I do then?”

“That will be your problem,” Dete replied quickly. “No one told me what to do when she was placed in my arms at one year old. I had enough to do for myself and my mother. Now I must go to my work. You are the closest family she has.”

Dete spoke faster and louder than she had planned. She felt uneasy inside, and her words came out sharp.

When she finished speaking, the old man slowly rose from the bench.

He looked at her in such a way that she stepped back without thinking.

Then he lifted his arm and pointed down the mountain.

“Go back the way you came,” he said in a hard voice. “And do not come here again soon.”

Dete did not wait to hear more.

“Goodbye then,” she said quickly. “And goodbye, Heidi.”

She turned and hurried down the mountain path as fast as she could walk. Soon she was almost running.

In the little village below, many people called out to her again.

“Dete! Where is the child?”

“Where is little Heidi?”

Voices came from doors and windows.

Dete answered quickly as she passed.

“With the Alm-Uncle! Up there with the Alm-Uncle!”

But the women in the village began to talk loudly.

“How could you do that?”

“The poor little child!”

“Such a small girl left alone with that old man!”

Dete did not stop. She walked faster and faster until the voices were far behind her.

Up on the mountain the old man had sat down again on the bench. He smoked his pipe and looked at the ground. He said nothing.

Heidi had already begun to explore.

First she looked into the small goat stable beside the hut. It was empty.

Then she walked around behind the hut and found the three tall fir trees. The wind moved strongly through the branches above. The sound rushed and sang high in the air.

Heidi stood still and listened with great pleasure.

After a while she walked back to the front of the hut. The old man still sat there in the same place.

Heidi stood in front of him with her hands behind her back and looked at him quietly.

At last he lifted his eyes.

“What do you want now?” he asked.

“I want to see what you have inside the hut,” Heidi said.

The old man stood up.

“Come then,” he said.

He opened the door and went inside. Heidi followed him.

As they entered he said, “Take your bundle of clothes with you.”

“I do not need them anymore,” Heidi answered.

The old man turned and looked sharply at the child.

Heidi’s dark eyes shone with interest as she looked around the room.

“Why do you not need them?” he asked.

“I want to walk like the goats,” Heidi said. “They have light legs.”

The old man watched her a moment longer.

“You may walk like the goats,” he said, “but bring the clothes.”

Heidi ran outside quickly, picked up the bundle, and carried it inside.

The hut was one large room.

In the middle stood a table and one chair. In one corner was the old man’s bed.

Near the wall hung a large pot over the fire place.

The old man opened a big cupboard built into the wall.

Inside were his clothes. On shelves were plates, cups, and a few glasses. There was also a round loaf of bread, some cheese, and pieces of dried meat.

Everything the old man owned seemed to be inside that cupboard.

Heidi quickly pushed her clothes far behind the old man’s things so they would not easily be found again.

Then she looked around the room with great interest.

“Where shall I sleep, Grandfather?” she asked.

“Where you like,” he answered.

That pleased Heidi very much.

She began to search every corner of the hut. At last she saw a small ladder leaning against the wall.

She climbed up it.

Above was a space filled with fresh sweet-smelling hay. Through a round

window she could see far down into the valley.

Heidi clapped her hands.

“I will sleep here!” she called down happily. “It is beautiful here, Grandfather! Come and see!”

“I know already,” he said from below.

“I will make my bed now!” Heidi called again. “But you must bring a sheet. A bed must have a sheet.”

“Is that so?” the old man said.

After a moment he opened the cupboard again and took out a long piece of cloth.

Then he climbed up the ladder.

Heidi had already begun to arrange the hay carefully into a soft pile where her head would lie near the round opening.

The old man looked at it.

“That is well done,” he said.

He added more hay so the bed would be thick and soft.

Together they spread the cloth across the top.

Heidi carefully pushed the edges underneath the hay.

She stepped back and looked at the bed with serious thought.

“Grandfather,” she said, “we forgot something.”

“What?” he asked.

“A blanket,” Heidi replied. “When one sleeps, one lies between the sheet and the blanket.”

“And if I do not have a blanket?” he said.

Heidi thought a moment.

“Then we can use hay,” she said happily and ran toward the hay pile.

But the old man stopped her.

“Wait a moment,” he said.

He climbed down the ladder.

After a short time he returned carrying a large strong sack.

He placed it on the bed.

“Is this not better than hay?” he asked.

Part 4

Heidi looked at the large sack that the old man had placed on the bed. She pulled at it with both hands. The cloth was heavy and strong.

“Yes, Grandfather,” she said with great satisfaction. “This is very good.”

Together they spread the sack across the hay bed. Now the bed looked thick and warm. Heidi climbed onto it and lay down for a moment to test it.

“It is soft,” she said happily. “And when I wake up, I can look out of the round window and see the valley.”

The old man watched the child quietly. There was something calm and strong in the little girl that surprised him.

After a while he said, “Come down now. It is time to eat.”

Heidi quickly climbed down the ladder.

The old man went to the cupboard and took out bread and cheese. Then he placed them on the table. He also poured milk into two cups.

Heidi climbed onto the chair.

“Sit properly,” said the old man.

Heidi folded her hands for a moment and looked at the food.

The old man noticed.

“Are you praying?” he asked.

“Yes,” Heidi said simply. “One should thank God before eating.”

The old man said nothing for a moment. Then he sat down at the table.

They began to eat.

Heidi was very hungry after the long climb. She ate the bread and cheese with great joy and drank the fresh milk.

“This milk is good,” she said.

“It comes from my goats,” the old man replied.

After the meal Heidi looked around again.

“Grandfather,” she said, “how many goats do you have?”

“Two,” he answered.

“What are their names?” Heidi asked.

“Little Swan and Bear,” he said.

“I want to see them,” Heidi said quickly.

“You will see them tomorrow,” said the old man. “Now it is evening.”

Heidi nodded. She was not unhappy to wait.

Soon the light outside became softer. The sun slowly moved down behind the mountains. Long shadows lay across the grass.

The old man opened the door of the hut.

“Come,” he said.

They stepped outside.

The air was cool and clear. Far below the valley was quiet and peaceful. A golden light lay over the mountains.

Heidi stood very still and looked around with shining eyes.

“It is beautiful,” she said softly.

“Yes,” said the old man.

They sat together on the bench near the hut.

For a while neither of them spoke. The wind moved gently through the tall fir trees behind the house.

Soon Heidi began to feel sleepy. Her long day had been full of walking and new sights.

The old man noticed that her head slowly moved down and up again.

“Go to bed now,” he said.

Heidi stood up at once and ran inside.

She climbed quickly up the ladder to the hay bed.

The old man soon followed and looked once more at the bed.

Heidi had already crawled inside the sack and pulled it around her like a blanket.

“Good night, Grandfather,” she said.

“Good night,” he replied.

Then he climbed down again and returned to his chair by the fire.

Above him Heidi lay quietly in the warm hay. Through the round window she

could see the stars slowly appear in the dark sky.

The wind moved softly in the trees.

Soon Heidi fell into a deep and peaceful sleep.

The next morning the sun rose bright and clear over the mountains. The first red light touched the high peaks.

Heidi opened her eyes.

For a moment she did not remember where she was.

Then she saw the round window and the shining valley below.

At once she jumped up with joy.

She quickly climbed down the ladder and ran outside.

The old man was already there.

He stood looking across the mountains to see what kind of day it would be.

“Good morning, Grandfather!” Heidi called.

“Good morning,” he answered.

Heidi ran around the hut happily. Everything was new and exciting.

Soon she saw the goats.

Two goats stood near the hut.

One was white like snow.

The other was brown.

Heidi ran toward them with open arms.

“Good morning, Little Swan! Good morning, Bear!” she cried.

The goats came close to her. They pushed their heads gently against her shoulders.

Heidi laughed.

The white goat lifted her head proudly. The brown one tried to push closer.

“Do not push so hard,” Heidi said to the brown goat. “You are like the big goat.”

At that moment a loud whistle came from down the mountain.

It was the goat boy Peter.

Soon he appeared with many goats behind him.

The goats ran up the mountain together, jumping and calling to one another.

Heidi ran into the middle of them, laughing as they moved around her.

Peter stopped near her.

“You can come with us today,” he said.

Heidi shook her head.

“No,” she said. “Someone is coming from Frankfurt. I must stay at home.”

“You always say that,” Peter replied.

“But it is true,” said Heidi. “When they come, I must be here.”

Peter shrugged his shoulders.

Then the old man’s strong voice came from the hut.

“Why are the goats still here?” he called. “Do you not have work to do?”

At once Peter ran after the goats and drove them up the mountain.

Soon they were gone.

Heidi returned to the hut.

She began to make the bed carefully. She smoothed the cloth and arranged the hay.

Then she cleaned the table and placed everything in order.

Since she had lived in Frankfurt she had learned to keep things neat.

The old man watched her with quiet satisfaction.

“Everything looks like Sunday here now,” he said with a small smile.

Part 5

Days passed peacefully on the mountain. Heidi woke every morning with the rising sun. The fresh wind moved through the fir trees, and the clear light spread over the valley far below. Each morning she jumped down from her hay bed quickly and ran outside.

Her grandfather was almost always already awake. He stood outside the hut and watched the sky. By looking at the clouds and the color of the mountains he could tell what kind of weather the day would bring.

Heidi greeted him happily each morning.

“Good morning, Grandfather!”

“Good morning,” he answered.

Soon after that Peter arrived with the goats. His whistle could be heard long before he appeared.

The goats rushed happily around Heidi. Some pushed their heads against her shoulders. Others jumped and ran around the hut.

Heidi knew many of them already. She spoke to them as if they were friends.

“Do not push so hard,” she said to one.

“Wait for the little one,” she told another.

Peter stood quietly nearby. He was not a boy who spoke many words.

Sometimes Heidi went with Peter and the goats up to the high mountain grass. On those days she climbed lightly over stones and bushes just as the goats did.

At the top of the mountain the goats spread out to eat the sweet plants. Peter sat on the ground and watched them.

Heidi did not like to sit still. She ran from place to place. She looked at flowers and small stones and clouds moving across the sky.

Sometimes she stood quietly and listened to the wind in the high trees. That sound made her very happy.

When the sun moved lower in the sky, Peter gathered the goats again. Together they ran down the mountain.

In the evening Heidi helped her grandfather with small tasks around the hut.

She brought water. She cleaned the table. She watched carefully how he made the evening meal.

The old man began to speak more with the child each day. At first his voice had been hard and short. But now it slowly became calmer.

One evening Heidi asked a question.

“Grandfather,” she said, “where do the clouds go when they leave the mountains?”

“They go where the wind carries them,” he answered.

“And where does the wind come from?” Heidi asked.

“From far away,” he said.

Heidi looked at the sky with deep thought.

“I would like to go far away with the wind,” she said.

The old man watched her quietly but said nothing.
So the days passed in peace.
Then one bright autumn morning something new happened.
Heidi woke early as usual when the wind moved through the trees. She jumped from her bed and ran outside.
The sky was clear and blue. The mountains shone in the bright morning light.
Heidi felt very happy.
She ran under the tall fir trees and jumped each time the wind moved the branches. The sound of the wind made her laugh.
Meanwhile her grandfather had gone to the stable. He milked the goats and prepared them for the day.
Soon Heidi saw them.
She ran to them at once.
“Good morning, Little Swan! Good morning, Bear!” she cried.
The goats pushed their heads gently against her again.
Heidi laughed with joy.
Just then Peter’s whistle sounded from below.
Soon the whole group of goats came running up the path.
Peter stood near Heidi.
“You can come today,” he said.
But Heidi shook her head again.
“No,” she said. “They may come today from Frankfurt. I must stay here.”
Peter looked unhappy.
“You always say that,” he muttered.
“Because it is true,” Heidi answered.
Before Peter could speak again, the grandfather called out loudly from the hut.
“Why are the goats still here?” he shouted. “Move them along!”
Peter quickly drove the goats up the mountain.
Heidi watched them disappear over the hill.
Then she went inside the hut.
She began to tidy everything carefully. She made the bed smooth and clean.

She placed the chair straight beside the table.

She wiped the table again and again until it shone.

Her grandfather came inside and looked around.

“Everything is in order again,” he said.

“Yes,” Heidi answered proudly.

But that morning she could not finish her work easily.

Outside everything looked so bright and beautiful. The sun shone warmly on the mountain grass.

Every few minutes something new caught her attention.

First a bright beam of sunlight came through the window. It seemed to call her outside.

Heidi ran out quickly to look.

The mountains shone with golden light. The valley far below looked wide and peaceful.

Heidi sat down for a moment to watch the view.

Then suddenly she remembered the table inside.

She jumped up and ran back into the hut.

But soon the wind rushed strongly through the fir trees again.

The sound was too wonderful.

Heidi ran outside once more and jumped happily under the moving branches.

Her grandfather worked quietly behind the hut.

From time to time he came to the door and smiled as he watched the child jumping with joy.

Then suddenly Heidi gave a loud cry.

“Grandfather! Grandfather! Come quickly!”

The old man stepped outside at once.

Heidi was running down the slope of the mountain.

“They are coming!” she shouted with great excitement. “They are coming! And the Doctor is in front!”

The old man looked down the path.

A man was slowly climbing up the mountain road.

Heidi ran to meet him.

When she reached him she caught his arm with both hands.

“Good day, Doctor!” she cried happily. “And thank you very, very much!”

The Doctor smiled in surprise.

“Good day, Heidi,” he said kindly. “But why are you thanking me already?”

“Because I could come home again to my grandfather,” Heidi said.

The Doctor’s face brightened at the child’s joyful welcome.

He had not expected such happiness.

He had walked up the mountain with many sad thoughts. Since the death of his only daughter he had often felt very lonely.

But now Heidi’s warm greeting touched his heart.

He took her hand gently.

“Come,” he said kindly. “Show me where you live and introduce me to your grandfather.”

Part 6

Heidi held the Doctor’s hand and began to walk slowly up the mountain path again. But after a few steps she suddenly stopped and looked down the path behind him.

She searched the road carefully with her eyes.

“Where are Klara and the grandmother?” she asked.

The Doctor looked at her kindly but also with a little sadness.

“Now I must tell you something that will make you sorry,” he said gently. “You see, Heidi, I have come alone. Klara was not well enough to travel. Because she could not come, her grandmother did not come either. But in the spring, when the days are warm again, they will surely come.”

Heidi stood very still.

For a moment she could not speak. All summer she had believed that Klara and the grandmother would come to visit her on the mountain. She had imagined the moment many times.

Now suddenly the picture in her mind was gone.

The wind moved softly through the trees. The mountains were quiet around them.

Heidi looked up at the Doctor.

There was a deep sadness in his eyes. She had never seen that look before when he had visited in Frankfurt.

At once Heidi forgot her own disappointment.

She wanted to comfort him.

“Oh,” she said quickly, “spring will come very soon. Here on the mountain it never feels long before spring comes again. And then they can stay much longer. Klara will like that even more.”

Heidi spoke with such strong belief that she herself began to feel better again.

She took the Doctor’s hand and began climbing upward again.

“Come,” she said cheerfully. “Now we will go to Grandfather.”

They reached the hut together.

Heidi ran ahead and called out happily, “They are not here yet, but they will come soon!”

The grandfather stepped forward to greet the visitor.

Heidi had spoken about the Doctor many times, so the old man already knew who he was.

He stretched out his hand.

“Welcome,” he said simply.

The Doctor shook his hand warmly.

Soon the two men sat together on the bench beside the hut. Heidi sat between them.

The Doctor began to explain why he had come.

“My friend Mr. Sesemann encouraged me to take this journey,” he said. “He thought the mountain air might help me feel strong again.”

Heidi listened carefully.

The Doctor leaned closer and spoke quietly to her.

“Soon something else will come up the mountain,” he whispered. “Something

that traveled here from Frankfurt. It will bring you even more joy than seeing me.”

Heidi’s eyes grew wide with curiosity.

She wondered what it could be.

Meanwhile the grandfather spoke kindly to the Doctor.

“You should stay here in the mountains for a while,” he said. “The fresh air will do you good. But I cannot offer you a bed here in the hut. There is no room for a guest.”

The Doctor nodded.

“That is no trouble,” he said.

“You can stay in the village below,” the grandfather continued. “There is a small inn there. It is simple but clean. From there you can walk up here each morning.”

The Doctor smiled.

“That sounds very good,” he said.

Heidi was still wondering about the secret surprise.

Suddenly she heard voices far down the mountain path.

She jumped up and ran toward the slope.

“Something is coming!” she cried.

The Doctor stood and looked down as well.

Soon a man appeared carrying a large bundle on his back. It was Sebastian, the servant from the Sesemann house.

He climbed slowly up the steep path.

Heidi ran down to meet him with great excitement.

“Sebastian!” she cried happily.

Sebastian stopped and laughed.

“Good day, little miss,” he said.

“Is that for me?” Heidi asked, pointing to the large bundle.

“Yes,” Sebastian said with a smile. “Miss Klara sends it.”

Heidi clapped her hands with joy.

Together they carried the large bundle up to the hut.

The grandfather cut the rope that held the package closed.

Heidi watched with shining eyes.

First they found a warm coat with a hood.

“This is so you can visit the grandmother in winter,” the Doctor explained.

Next they opened a warm shawl.

“This is for Peter’s grandmother,” said the Doctor.

Then came a large box of soft cakes.

Heidi laughed happily.

“She will enjoy these very much,” she said.

After that they found a long sausage.

“This must be for Peter,” Heidi guessed.

The Doctor smiled.

“It was meant for him,” he said. “But Klara thought he might eat it all at once. So his mother will keep it and give him small pieces.”

There was also a small bag of tobacco.

“This is for the grandfather,” said the Doctor.

The old man looked quietly at the gift.

Finally Heidi found several small packages.

Each one held a little surprise.

Heidi’s joy was so great that she almost danced around the hut.

The Doctor watched her with warm pleasure.

The bright mountain air, the clear sky, and the child’s happiness slowly lifted the heavy sadness from his heart.

That evening they sat together again on the bench outside the hut.

The sun slowly set behind the mountains.

Heidi sat close beside the Doctor and began asking many questions.

“Doctor,” she said, “when Klara comes in the spring, will she be able to climb the mountain?”

The Doctor looked toward the valley.

“Perhaps,” he said quietly. “Perhaps the mountain air will make her strong.”

Heidi nodded with deep certainty.

“It will,” she said. “The mountain makes everyone strong.”

The grandfather listened in silence.

The evening light grew softer and softer.
Soon the stars appeared above the dark mountains.
Heidi looked up at the sky with shining eyes.
“Tomorrow will be a beautiful day again,” she said.

Part 7

The next morning the sun rose bright over the mountains again. A soft red light touched the high peaks first, and then the light slowly spread across the valley.

Heidi woke early as usual. She opened her eyes and saw the round opening in the wall of the hay loft. Through it she could see the sky turning bright.

She jumped up at once.

Soon she ran down the ladder and outside the hut.

The Doctor had already come up from the village. He had walked the mountain path early in the morning and now stood beside the grandfather looking at the sky.

Heidi ran toward him happily.

“Good morning, Doctor!”

“Good morning, Heidi,” he replied warmly.

The fresh air of the mountain had already begun to change him. The sadness that had weighed on him when he first arrived had begun to lift.

The grandfather soon brought out the goats.

“Here are Little Swan and Bear,” Heidi said proudly to the Doctor.

The goats came close to Heidi and pushed their heads against her shoulders.

The Doctor laughed quietly.

“They truly know you,” he said.

Just then Peter’s whistle sounded from below.

Soon the goats from the village came running up the path in a lively group.

Heidi ran among them, greeting many of them by name.

Peter stopped beside her.

“You can come with us today,” he said.

Heidi looked toward the Doctor.

“May I go with them today?” she asked.

The Doctor smiled.

“Yes, go,” he said. “I would like to see where you spend your days.”

The grandfather nodded as well.

Soon Heidi, Peter, and the goats began to climb higher up the mountain.

The Doctor followed them slowly.

The air grew cooler as they climbed. Small flowers covered the grass in many bright colors.

Heidi ran from one place to another.

She showed the Doctor the best flowers, the smooth stones, and the places where the wind sounded strongest in the trees.

Peter sat on the ground and watched the goats while they ate.

The Doctor sat beside him.

For a while they both watched Heidi running happily through the grass.

At last the Doctor spoke.

“You live here every day?” he asked.

Peter nodded.

“Yes.”

“Do you like it?” the Doctor asked.

Peter nodded again.

“Yes.”

Heidi soon ran back to them.

“Doctor,” she said, “listen to the wind.”

They listened.

The wind moved across the high grass and through the trees. The sound was soft and strong at the same time.

The Doctor closed his eyes for a moment.

“It is beautiful,” he said quietly.

They stayed on the mountain for many hours.

When the sun began to move down toward the west, Peter gathered the goats again.

The goats began their quick journey down the mountain.

Heidi ran beside them.

The Doctor followed more slowly.

When they reached the hut again, the grandfather was sitting outside.

“So,” he said to the Doctor, “you have seen our mountain.”

“Yes,” the Doctor answered. “And I understand now why the child loves it so much.”

That evening they sat together again on the bench.

Heidi told many stories about Frankfurt. She spoke about Klara, the big house, and the grandmother.

The Doctor listened carefully.

At last he said quietly, “Klara often thinks about you.”

Heidi’s face shone with happiness.

“She will come in the spring,” she said with strong belief.

The Doctor looked at the mountains and nodded slowly.

“Yes,” he said. “In the spring.”

The days continued to pass quietly.

Each morning the Doctor climbed the mountain to visit the hut. Each evening he walked back to the small village below.

The fresh air, the long walks, and the peaceful life slowly brought strength back to him.

The grandfather spoke with him more each day. At first their talks were short. But soon they spoke for longer and longer times.

Heidi noticed that the Doctor often laughed now.

One evening she said happily, “Doctor, you are smiling again.”

The Doctor looked at her with gentle eyes.

“Yes, Heidi,” he said. “You have helped me.”

Heidi did not fully understand what he meant, but she was glad.

The autumn days grew cooler.

The leaves on the lower trees began to change color.

Soon the Doctor had to prepare to leave the mountains.

On his last evening he sat with the grandfather outside the hut.

Heidi sat beside them.

The sky was full of stars.

“Heidi,” the Doctor said kindly, “when I return home, I will tell Klara everything I have seen here.”

Heidi nodded.

“Tell her that the mountain is waiting,” she said.

“I will,” the Doctor replied.

The next morning he prepared to leave.

Heidi walked with him down the mountain path for a short distance.

When it was time to say goodbye, she held his hand tightly.

“Come again,” she said.

“I will come again,” the Doctor promised.

Then he continued down the path toward the village.

Heidi stood watching until he disappeared from sight.

At last she turned and ran happily back up the mountain toward the hut.

Part 8

After the Doctor had gone down the mountain path, Heidi stood for a moment and looked toward the valley where he had disappeared. Then she turned and ran quickly back toward the hut.

Her grandfather was still sitting on the bench outside. He looked up as she came running.

“Has the Doctor gone?” he asked.

“Yes,” Heidi said. “But he will come again. And he will tell Klara everything.”

The grandfather nodded slowly.

“That is good,” he said.

The autumn days continued to pass quietly on the mountain. The air grew cooler each morning, and the sun no longer stayed high in the sky for so long.

Heidi still woke early each day. She ran outside to greet the morning light. The

wind in the tall fir trees still filled her with joy.

Peter came each morning with the goats, and Heidi often went with him to the high pastures. The goats jumped and ran over the rocks and grass, and Heidi followed them happily.

But little by little the season began to change.

The grass on the high mountain became thinner. The wind grew stronger and colder.

One evening the grandfather said, "Soon the goats will no longer climb so high. Winter is coming."

Heidi listened carefully.

"Will the snow come?" she asked.

"Yes," he said. "The snow will cover the mountain."

Heidi thought about the winter for a moment.

"Then we will stay in the hut," she said.

"Yes," the grandfather answered.

One day Peter came with the goats earlier than usual.

"The snow will come soon," he said.

"How do you know?" Heidi asked.

Peter pointed toward the high peaks.

Dark clouds had gathered above the mountains.

"My grandmother says the snow will come when the clouds look like that," he said.

Heidi looked at the sky.

"Then winter is coming," she said quietly.

Soon the first snow did arrive.

During the night the wind blew strongly across the mountains. In the morning Heidi woke and saw a bright white world outside.

She ran down the ladder quickly.

"Grandfather! Grandfather!" she cried. "Everything is white!"

The old man opened the door.

Snow covered the ground around the hut. The trees held white powder on their

branches.

Heidi stepped outside carefully.

The snow felt cold under her feet.

She laughed with delight.

“The mountain has new clothes,” she said.

The grandfather watched her quietly.

During the winter the days were different.

Peter did not bring the goats up the mountain anymore. The goats stayed in the village below.

Heidi remained with her grandfather in the hut.

She helped him with many small tasks. She learned how to bring wood for the fire and how to keep the room warm.

When the wind blew strongly outside, they stayed near the fire.

Sometimes Heidi looked out through the small window at the white mountains.

One evening she said, “Grandfather, Peter’s grandmother cannot see the snow.”

The old man looked at her.

“That is true,” he said.

Heidi became thoughtful.

“She liked the soft white bread in Frankfurt,” Heidi said slowly.

“Yes,” the grandfather replied.

Heidi looked at the bread on the table.

An idea came to her.

“Grandfather,” she said, “may I save some bread for her?”

The old man watched the child quietly.

“Yes,” he said.

Each day Heidi began to save a small piece of bread.

She placed the pieces carefully in a small place beside her bed in the hay loft.

Soon she had many pieces.

One day the grandfather noticed the small pile.

“Why do you keep so much bread?” he asked.

Heidi explained.

“I want to take it to Peter’s grandmother. She likes soft bread, but she never has any.”

The grandfather said nothing for a moment.

Then he nodded.

“You have a good heart,” he said quietly.

When the weather became calm again, the grandfather said, “Today we will go down to the village.”

Heidi was very happy.

She put on her warm coat with the hood that Klara had sent.

Together they began the walk down the snowy path.

When they reached Peter’s house, Heidi ran inside.

Peter’s grandmother sat near the fire.

She could not see Heidi enter, but she heard the child’s voice.

“Grandmother!” Heidi cried happily.

The old woman lifted her head.

“Is that you, child?” she asked.

Heidi ran to her and placed the bread in her hands.

“I brought you something,” she said.

The old woman touched the bread slowly.

“White bread,” she said softly.

Her face filled with deep happiness.

“Thank you, dear child.”

Heidi sat beside her and began to talk.

She told stories about the mountain, the goats, and the bright snow.

The old woman listened carefully.

The grandfather stood quietly near the door.

After some time he said, “We must return before the snow begins again.”

Heidi said goodbye to the grandmother and promised to come again.

Then she walked back up the mountain beside her grandfather.

Above them the winter sky stretched wide and clear.

The mountain remained calm and silent under the deep white snow.

Part 9

The winter continued on the mountain. Snow lay deep around the hut, and the wind sometimes blew strongly through the tall fir trees behind it. When the wind moved through the branches, the sound rushed and roared high above the roof.

Heidi liked to listen to that sound. When the wind grew strong she often stood near the door and listened carefully. The noise of the trees made her feel both excited and calm at the same time.

Inside the hut the fire burned warmly. The grandfather brought wood from outside and placed it carefully in the fire place. Heidi watched closely and learned how to help.

Each morning she woke early and climbed down from her hay bed. Then she helped sweep the floor and set the table for the morning meal.

The grandfather did not speak very much, but he watched the child often. Heidi worked happily and quickly, and everything in the hut soon became neat and clean.

Some days the wind and snow were too strong for walking far outside. On those days Heidi and the grandfather stayed inside most of the time.

Heidi liked to sit near the window and look out at the white mountains.

“Grandfather,” she said one morning, “when the snow goes away, the flowers will come again.”

“Yes,” he answered.

“And Peter will bring the goats again,” Heidi continued.

“Yes,” he said again.

Heidi smiled with satisfaction.

The days slowly grew longer. The sun stayed in the sky a little more each day.

One morning the grandfather opened the door and looked outside.

The air felt different.

The snow still lay deep on the ground, but the light was warmer.

“Spring will come,” he said quietly.

Heidi clapped her hands.

“And then Klara will come too!” she said with bright excitement.

The grandfather did not answer immediately, but he nodded slowly.

As the weeks passed, the snow slowly began to melt. Water ran down the mountain in small shining streams.

Soon patches of brown earth appeared among the snow.

Heidi ran outside and watched the changes every day.

One morning she cried out with joy.

“Grandfather! Look!”

Small green plants had pushed up through the ground.

“The flowers are coming!” Heidi said happily.

The grandfather smiled slightly.

“Yes,” he said. “Spring has begun.”

Soon Peter returned with the goats again.

The animals ran happily across the fresh grass. The bells around their necks made cheerful sounds.

Heidi greeted each goat like an old friend.

“Little Swan! Bear! You are back!”

Peter stood nearby with his usual quiet smile.

“You see,” Heidi said to him proudly, “spring came just as I said.”

Peter nodded.

The mountain slowly filled with life again. Bright flowers covered the grass. The air smelled fresh and sweet.

Each day Heidi waited with growing excitement.

She often climbed to a high place where she could see the path from the village.

“They will come soon,” she said again and again.

One warm day near the end of spring something unusual appeared on the mountain path.

Heidi saw two men slowly climbing upward.

One of them was the Doctor.

The other man carried a chair with long handles.

Heidi ran down the slope with great excitement.

“Doctor! Doctor!” she called.
The Doctor waved to her.
“Heidi!” he answered.
When she reached him she looked around quickly.
“Where is Klara?” she asked.
The Doctor smiled.
“She is coming,” he said.
At that moment the two men carrying the chair reached the next turn in the path.
In the chair sat Klara.
Heidi’s face shone with joy.
“Klara!” she cried.
Klara lifted her arms happily.
“Heidi!”
The men carried the chair slowly up the last part of the mountain.
Heidi walked beside Klara the whole way, speaking excitedly.
“You will love the mountain,” she said. “It is beautiful here.”
Klara looked around with wonder.
The air was fresh and clear. The flowers covered the grass in bright colors. Far below the valley shone in the sunlight.
“It is even more beautiful than I imagined,” Klara said softly.
When they reached the hut, the grandfather stepped forward to greet them.
He looked at Klara kindly.
“Welcome,” he said.
Klara smiled warmly.
“Thank you,” she replied.
The Doctor looked around the mountain with deep satisfaction.
“This place will help her,” he said quietly.
Heidi stood beside Klara and held her hand.
The two girls looked across the bright mountain together.
The long-awaited visit had finally begun.

Part 10

Klara stayed on the mountain with Heidi and the grandfather. The fresh air and bright sun filled each day with quiet joy. The two girls spent many hours together outside the hut.

Each morning Klara was carried outside in her chair. From there she could see the wide valley far below and the tall mountains rising around them.

Heidi stood beside her and pointed in every direction.

“Look there,” she said. “That is where Peter brings the goats. And over there the flowers grow very thick.”

Klara listened with great interest.

She had never seen such wide open land before. In Frankfurt she had always lived inside the large house.

The mountain made her feel free.

Soon Peter arrived with the goats. The bells around their necks rang softly as they climbed.

Heidi ran to greet them.

“Klara, you must meet them,” she said.

The goats gathered around curiously. Some looked at Klara’s chair with surprise.

Heidi laughed.

“Do not worry,” she said to the goats. “This is my friend.”

Peter stood quietly nearby. He looked at Klara and then at the chair.

“She cannot walk?” he asked slowly.

“Not yet,” Heidi answered.

The Doctor had already climbed up from the village that morning. He stood near the grandfather and watched the scene carefully.

Each day he hoped the mountain air would slowly make Klara stronger.

During the day Heidi often pushed Klara’s chair to new places around the hut.

They watched the clouds move across the sky. They listened to the wind in the fir trees.

Sometimes Heidi brought flowers and placed them carefully in Klara's hands.

"These grow everywhere here," Heidi explained.

Klara smiled happily.

"I have never seen so many flowers," she said.

The grandmother from Frankfurt had also come to visit for a short time. She sat with the girls in the sunshine and watched them.

One afternoon she said quietly to the Doctor, "The child already looks stronger."

The Doctor nodded.

"Yes," he said. "The mountain is helping her."

Day after day the girls enjoyed the bright summer weather.

But one morning something happened that changed everything.

Peter came early with the goats.

When he saw Klara sitting in the chair near the hut, a strange feeling grew inside him.

Heidi spent almost all her time with Klara now.

Peter felt lonely and angry, though he did not fully understand why.

He walked slowly behind the hut where the chair stood.

No one was watching.

The chair stood empty because Heidi had helped Klara lie down in the grass nearby.

Peter looked at the chair for a long moment.

Then suddenly he pushed it.

The chair rolled down the slope of the mountain.

It hit the rocks and broke apart into many pieces.

Peter stood frozen with fear.

He had not thought about what would happen next.

At that moment Heidi and Klara returned.

Heidi saw the broken pieces far below.

"The chair!" she cried.

The Doctor and the grandfather quickly came to see what had happened.

The Doctor looked serious.

“How will Klara go back down the mountain now?” he said.
Heidi suddenly felt very afraid.
But the grandfather spoke calmly.
“Perhaps she will not need the chair,” he said.
He turned toward Klara.
“Stand up,” he said gently.
Klara looked frightened.
“I cannot,” she said softly.
“Try,” the grandfather said.
Heidi took Klara’s hands.
“I will help you,” she said.
Slowly, very slowly, Klara pushed herself up.
Her legs trembled.
For a moment she stood.
Heidi held her tightly.
“You are standing!” Heidi cried with joy.
The Doctor watched in amazement.
“Take a step,” the grandfather said calmly.
Klara tried.
One small step.
Then another.
Heidi laughed with happiness.
“You can walk!”
Klara herself could hardly believe it.
The fresh air, the mountain sun, and the many days of quiet strength had slowly returned power to her legs.
The Doctor turned to the grandfather.
“You were right,” he said with deep respect.
Heidi and Klara walked slowly together across the grass.
They laughed and held each other’s hands.
Peter watched from a distance with shame and surprise.

But soon Heidi saw him and called out kindly.

“Peter! Look! Klara can walk!”

Peter nodded slowly.

The mountain air felt warm and bright around them.

Soon the Doctor said, “When Klara’s father sees this, he will be filled with joy.”

Heidi looked across the shining mountains.

“The mountain made her strong,” she said.

The summer sun shone warmly over the quiet hut, the flowers, and the wide valley far below.

And on the green grass of the high mountain, Klara took her first strong steps beside her friend Heidi.