

MACMILLAN READERS

BEGINNER LEVEL

ELIZABETH LAIRD

The House on the Hill



MACMILLAN

Part 1

It was a beautiful summer evening. Paul was happy. No more exams. College was finished. Now he needed a job. He wanted to be a writer and work for a newspaper. But first he needed a rest.

It was hot in the house. There was no wind.

I'll go for a walk, said Paul to himself. I'll go down to the river.

Paul lived in a small town and he was soon outside in the country. He walked near the river and watched the water birds.

Suddenly he saw the girl. She was standing alone, looking into the water. She was young, and very beautiful. She had long dark hair, and she was wearing a pretty white dress.

Paul went up to her.



'Hello,' he said. 'What's your name?'

'I'm Maria,' she said, and she smiled at him.

Paul and Maria talked for a long time. The sun went down. It was nearly dark.

'I must go home,' said Maria.

'Where do you live?' asked Paul.

'In the big white house on the hill,' said Maria.

'Where do you live?'

'In the little brown house near the market,' said Paul.

They laughed. But Paul was sad. The house on the hill was big and important. Maria was rich, and he was poor. And Paul was in love.

After that, Paul and Maria often met near the river. Maria always wore beautiful clothes. She always looked lovely. Paul thought about Maria all day and every day.

One evening, Paul said, 'Listen, Maria, I've written a poem about you.'

He took a piece of paper from his pocket and read the poem.

I met her in the evening
By the riverside.
Her dress was creamy white
And her hair with ribbon tied.

She turned and smiled at me,
And I asked her for her name.
Though I am young and poor,
My love will stay the same.



‘You are wonderful, Paul,’ said Maria. ‘I love your poem.’

Paul took Maria’s hand. He looked into her eyes.

‘I love you, Maria,’ he said. ‘Do you love me?’

She smiled. ‘Yes, of course I love you,’ she said. She stood up. ‘I must go home now.’

Paul was very happy.

She loves me! Maria loves me, he thought.

Paul went home. The little brown house was small and poor. But it was always clean and tidy. Paul lived alone with his mother. His father was dead.

That evening, his mother watched him.

'What's happened, Paul?' she asked. 'Why are you so happy?'

'It's nothing, Mother,' said Paul.

His mother smiled. He's in love, she thought.



The next day, Paul and Maria met again by the river. Maria looked sad, but Paul did not notice. He took her hand.

'Maria,' he said, 'I am poor now, but one day I am going to be a famous writer.' Maria said nothing.