



PETER BREAKS THROUGH

All children, except one, grow up. And Wendy wasn't exception. She knew this. You always know after you are two. Two is the beginning of the end.

The whole Darling family lived at house 14. Mrs. Darling was a lovely lady, with a romantic mind and such a sweet mocking mouth that had one kiss on it that Wendy could never get.

When she was young, many gentlemen wanted to marry her but Mr. Darling took a cab and was the first one, and so he got her. He got all of her, except that secret kiss.

Wendy came first, then John, then Michael.

For a week or two after Wendy came they tried to decide whether they should keep her, as she was another mouth to feed. Mr. Darling was calculating expenses, while Mrs. Darling was looking at him with appealing glance.

There was the same story with John, and Michael; but both were kept, and soon, the three of them could be seen going in a row to Miss Fulsom's Kindergarten school with their nurse. As they were poor, this nurse was a Newfoundland dog, called Nana, who had not had an owner until the Darlings took her. She turned out to be not a nurse, but a real treasure. It was nice to see how she was escorting the children to school, carrying an umbrella in her mouth in case of rain.

Sometimes there were dances in the children's room. And Mrs. Darling danced up and had more fun than all of them. There never was the happiest family until the coming of Peter Pan.

Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. Don't you know? It is the nightly custom of every good mother when her children are asleep, check their minds and put things in the order for next morning. Moreover, each child has his own island the Neverland in his mind too.

Of course the Neverland was special for everyone. John, for example, lived in a boat turned upside down on the sands, Michael in a wigwam, Wendy in a house of leaves sewn together and furthermore she had a pet wolf forsaken by its parents. We also were there in our early sweet childhood.

Occasionally Mrs. Darling found things she could not understand, and one of them was the word Peter in her children's heads. She knew of no Peter, but

he was often in John and Michael's minds, while in Wendy's she found him over and over again.

– Yes, he is rather cocky, – confessed Wendy, when mother asked her

– But who is he, darling?"

– He is Peter Pan, you know, mother.

At first Mrs. Darling did not know, but after thinking back into her childhood she just remembered a Peter Pan who was said to live with the fairies. But now she doubted whether there was any such person.

Mrs. Darling consulted Mr. Darling, but he just smiled.

One fine morning Wendy told Mrs. Darling something very disturbing.

Some leaves of a tree had been found on the nursery floor, which certainly were not there when the children went to bed. Wendy thought Peter sometimes came to the nursery at night and sat on the foot of her bed and played on his pipes to her. Unfortunately she never woke, so she didn't know how she knew, she just knew.

Mrs. Darling decided that her daughter was just a dreamer. But it wasn't so, as the very next night showed, the night on which the extraordinary adventures of these children began.

That night all the children were at once in bed and they quickly went into the land of sleep. Nana had an evening off, and Mrs. Darling sat down by the fire to sew, looking at her little sleepers. The fire was warm, so she fell asleep too.

While she slept she had a dream. She dreamt that the Neverland had become closer and that a strange boy had broken through from it. While she was dreaming the window opened, and a boy indeed dropped on the floor. He was with a strange flying light, no bigger than your fist, and it was the light that wakened Mrs. Darling.

She cried when she saw the boy, and somehow she knew at once that he was Peter Pan. You could notice that he was very like Mrs. Darling's kiss. He was a lovely boy, wearing dead leaves but the most surprising thing about him was that he had all his first teeth. When he saw she was a grown-up, he smiled angrily at her with his little pearls.

EXERCISES

1. Write true, false or no information.

- 1) Mr. and Mrs. Darling have three children.

- 2) Wendy was the youngest child in the family. _____
- 3) Nana had had an owner before Mr. and Mrs. Darling took her. _____
- 4) The Neverland is a special island where you can do whatever you want. _____
- 5) Mrs. Darling knew Peter Pan when she was a little kid. _____
- 6) Mrs. Darling was surprised when she saw Peter. _____