

“She was here just now,” he said a little impatiently. “You don’t hear her, do you?” and they both listened.

“The only sound I hear,” said Wendy, “is like a tinkle of bells.”

“Well, that’s Tink, that’s the fairy language. I think I hear her too.”

The sound came from the chest of drawers, and Peter made a merry face. No one could ever look quite so merry as Peter, and the loveliest of gurgles was his laugh. He had his first laugh still.

“Wendy,” he whispered gleefully, “I do believe I shut her up in the drawer!”

He let poor Tink out of the drawer, and she flew about the nursery screaming with fury. “You shouldn’t say such things,” Peter retorted. “Of course I’m very sorry, but how could I know you were in the drawer?”

Wendy was not listening to him. “O Peter,” she cried, “if she would only stand still and let me see her!”

“They hardly ever stand still,” he said, but for one moment Wendy saw the romantic figure come to rest on the cuckoo clock. “O the lovely!” she cried, though Tink’s face was still distorted with passion.

“Tink,” said Peter amiably, “this lady says she wishes you were her fairy.”

Tinker Bell answered insolently.

“What does she say, Peter?”

He had to translate. “She is not very polite. She says you are a great ugly girl, and that she is my fairy.”

He tried to argue with Tink. “You know you can’t be my fairy, Tink, because I am a gentleman and you are a lady.”

To this Tink replied in these words, “You silly ass,” and disappeared into the bathroom. “She is quite a common fairy,” Peter explained apologetically; “she is called Tinker Bell because she mends the pots and kettles.”

They were together in the armchair by this time, and Wendy plied him with more questions.

“If you don’t live in Kensington Gardens now—”

“Sometimes I do still.”

“But where do you live mostly now?”

“With the lost boys.”

“Who are they?”