***Peter Pan and Wendy***

***Chapter 12***

***The Children Are Carried Off***

***Synopsis:***

The narrator explains how, by attacking the redskins first, the pirates violated the “unwritten laws of savage warfare.” Hook and the other pirates set foot on their land, to the surprise of the redskins, who anticipate deadly results from the pirates’ attack. Hook relentlessly carries out the attack, and “because the noble savage must never express surprise in the presence of a white,” the redskins wait too long to retaliate, resulting in a massacre with many deaths on both sides. Afterwards, Hook is still unsatisfied, because more than anything, he wants to defeat Peter Pan. The narrator explains that, above all, Hook obsessively despises Peter for his cockiness and that “while Peter lived, the tortured man felt that he was a lion in a cage into which a sparrow had come.” The pirates, now eavesdropping on the boys from the trees, hear Peter say that the redskins would have beaten their tom-toms if they had won the battle. Hook then commands Smee to beat the tom-tom, deceiving the children into believing that the redskins won. While the lost boys continue saying goodbye to Peter, the pirates wait in the trees to attack, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to capture Peter.

***Critical Analysis:***

The pirates had attacked while the tribe was asleep, catching them unprepared. "No more would they torture at the stake," the narrator says in wry tribute to the fallen native warriors. "For them the happy hunting grounds now." [Tiger Lily](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Tiger_Lily) and a handful of her men survive, but the battle is a slaughter that decimates her tribe—and kills at least five of the pirates.

The battle over, everything falls quiet. The pirates listen at the hollow trees, trying to hear what [Peter Pan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Peter_Pan) is saying to the lost boys below. Meanwhile, Peter doesn't want to risk leaving the safety of their underground home until he knows that the tribe has won. He says that if they hear the tom-tom beating, this will be the sign of victory. Since the pirates have captured the tom-tom, [Captain Hook](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Captain_Hook) makes a silent signal to his first mate, Smee, to beat on the drum. He does so, twice, and the pirates are rewarded. "The doomed children answered with a cheer that was music to the black hearts above," the narrator says. The pirates each take their station behind a hollow tree and wait to attack the moment the lost boys appear.

The opening scene of the chapter, although clearly intended as humor, still manages to be offensive to Native Americans in its depictions of them. The very fact that Hook has succeeded in catching [Tiger Lily](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Tiger_Lily)'s tribe by surprise is, "sure proof that the unscrupulous Hook had conducted it improperly, for to surprise redskins fairly is beyond the wit of the white man." This is a backhanded way of saying that Hook got the better of them, which makes the natives look stupid. It is also a backhanded way of praising Hook. The narrator repeatedly chastises him for dishonor in ignoring the usual rules of engagement in combat. However, it is always coupled with a comment about how successful a tactic this is.

[Barrie](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/author/) uses the battle scene to divulge more about the inner life of the book's main antagonist, Hook. Readers already know that Hook is a study in contrasts. Sure, he is a dastardly killer—but he can also be handsome and courtly as well. And like all the most intriguing villains in literature, Hook doesn't do the bad things he does just for the delight of being evil. He has a reason for wanting revenge against Peter. After all, Peter did chop off his hand and make Hook watch as a crocodile ate it. In addition, Peter's arrogant, conceited behavior has gotten under Hook's skin.

There is one key way in which Hook and Peter are actually alike. In September 2013 Kendra Levin—executive editor of Viking Children's Books—spoke at length about how the hero and villain of the most engaging books are often mirror images of each other. They are flip sides of the same coin. "The best villains have a lot in common with the heroes of their stories," she says. "They're almost a cautionary tale, the other road that the main character might have gone down, had things turned out differently, like Voldemort and Harry Potter."

Voldemort and Potter are both orphans, and so in a way are [Peter Pan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Peter_Pan) and [Captain Hook](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Captain_Hook). Peter's mother is probably long dead, but even while she lived she quickly forgot her son. Peter has lived the entirety of his ageless life in Neverland without her. This is precisely why he is so desperate for Wendy to come to Neverland and be his mother. Readers don't know what happened to Hook's parents, but he's living without them now, so he too is a kind of orphan.

Both Hook and Peter feel the lack of motherly care and love, but this is where the similarity ends. Peter uses charm and persuasion to acquire the love he seeks, refusing to use force even when Wendy threatens to leave. Hook, by contrast, can be seen as Peter's evil twin. They both want a mother. But Peter renounces force as a way of keeping what he has, whereas Hook is willing and even eager to use violence to get what he lacks.

***Summary and analysis part by part:***

***Summary part 1:***

The pirates attack first, thereby breaking the rules of pirate-redskin warfare, which state that the indians always attack first. Many indians are killed during battle, but a small number, including [Princess Tiger Lily](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters), manage to escape. [Hook](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/captain-jas-hook) is not really interested in the indians, though; he has come for [Peter Pan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan). He hates Peter not because of the loss of his arm, but because the boy is so arrogant. This aspect of Peter’s personality constantly aggravates Hook and generally disturbs his peace.

***Analysis Part 1:***

We have learned something new and surprising about Hook. We’ve thought all along that Hook wants to kill Peter to avenge himself for the loss of his arm, or in the spirit of customary hostility between pirates and lost boys. But vengeance is only a cover for Hook’s real feeling, a hatred so intense and specific it verges on obsession.

***Summary Part 2:***

The boys are listening to the sounds of battle, and the pirates are listening to the boys. One boy says that the indians indicate victory by beating the tom-tom, so [Smee](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters) himself picks up the drum and starts playing. The boys yell happily, say goodbye to [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan), and begin climbing out.

***Analysis part 2:***

Peter and the other boys expect life on the island to proceed according to a series of simple rules (like the tribe in the section above). Their faith in fairness makes them easy targets for deceit.