***Peter Pan and Wendy***

***Chapter 13***

***Do You Bilieve in Fairies?***

***Synopsis:***

The pirates snatch the boys out from their trees and proceed to violently tie them up. Hook, in “malicious triumph,” watches as the pirates struggle to tie up Slightly; he discovers Slightly’s secret, which is that he “whittled his tree to make it fit him” without telling the others. Hook then orders the other pirates to take the captive children to a 11 conveyance. During the attack, Peter is alone in the underground house, unaware of what is going on. As he lies on the bed, he mourns Wendy’s departure; he has been having painful dreams since she left. However, on this night, Peter falls into a “dreamless sleep.” Hook watches him from a tree, becoming infuriated at Peter’s “impertinent appearance as he slept.” When Hook notices Peter’s medicine, he decides to add five drops of poison to it and quietly scurries away into the night. Peter wakes up to a knock on the door the next morning, which turns out to be Tinker Bell. She frantically tells him what happened to Wendy and the boys. Peter immediately exclaims that he will save Wendy and wants to take his medicine beforehand as a tribute to her. Tinker Bell, having overheard Hook in the night, warns him that the captain poisoned it. She stops Peter from drinking it by intercepting his mouth and the cup, thus drinking the poison instead to save his life. Tinker Bell’s light begins to fade as she weakens, and tells Peter that she might survive “if children believed in fairies.” He cries out, hoping to reach any children “who may be dreaming of the Neverland” to clap if they believe in fairies. Tinker Bell is saved by the distant sound of clapping children, and the two of them then endeavor to find Wendy. Peter, initially apprehensive about traveling by foot in the dark, begins to feel invigorated, swearing “Hook or me this time” as he and Wendy depart.

***Critical Analysis:***

The lost boys are picked off one by one as they emerge from their trees, each one tossed through the air from one pirate to another until they land at [Captain Hook](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Captain_Hook)'s feet. [Wendy Darling](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Wendy_Darling), however, is treated like a lady. Captain Hook raises his hat to her and offers her his arm.

The children are all thrown into the little house they had built for Wendy, and four pirates carry it on their shoulders towards their ship. Hook remains behind, sliding down a hollow tree to attack [Peter Pan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Peter_Pan).

It turns out that Peter is sleeping. Hook is momentarily moved to pity by the sight of the lonely boy. "The man was not wholly evil," the narrator says. Hook almost goes back up the tree without harming Peter. But even in his sleep, Peter manages to look cocky—and that cockiness reawakens Hook's rage. Spotting the bottle of pretend medicine Wendy insists on giving Peter every night, Hook puts poison in it. Then he returns to his ship.

Peter Pan sleeps through all this. [Tinker Bell](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Tinker_Bell) knocks at the door and tells him Captain Hook has kidnapped Wendy and the boys. "I'll rescue her," Peter says, but first he decides to take his medicine. Tinker Bell, who has overheard Hook boasting aloud about the poison, stops Peter as he is about to take it and drinks it herself. "Now I am going to be dead," she tells Peter. There is only one thing that might save her life: if children believe in fairies. Peter addresses children everywhere in their dreams. "Do you believe?" he shouts. "If you believe ... clap your hands; don't let Tink die."

Enough children clap to save Tinker Bell's life, and Peter sets off to rescue Wendy. He knows pirates could be stalking him and death may be a heartbeat away. He reacts in typical fashion: "He was frightfully happy."

At the end of chapter 8 when Peter believes he is about to drown, he delivers the much-quoted line, "To die will be an awfully big adventure." But when faced with the prospect of [Tinker Bell](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Tinker_Bell)'s death in this chapter, Peter's reaction is different. This is only the second time in the book Peter seems to recognize the reality and finality of death, and it is revealing that this epiphany occurs not when he himself is threatened but only when a friend's life is on the line. Peter is capable of genuine emotion after all; he cares about Tinker Bell more than he is willing to admit.

Yet a moment later Peter is perplexed that Tinker Bell would sacrifice herself for him. When the fairy tells him she drank the poison to save his life, Peter's immediate response is, "But why, Tink?" Peter's profound inability to comprehend why someone would be willing to trade her life for a friend reveals two things about him. He doesn't understand how much Tink loves him. And that in turn means he doesn't know what it means to love at all. Peter can imagine a make-believe meal so real it makes his waistline expand. However, this prodigious capacity for creative vision fails utterly when it comes to imagining what someone else is feeling. As the Cambridge researcher Rosalind Ridley has pointed out, Peter lacks a "theory of mind." He may look about 10 years old, but in terms of his emotional development, he is stuck at the level of a much younger child.

Peter may not understand why Tinker Bell is willing to give up her life to save his. But for once he is convinced death is real because he takes immediate action to try and avert it. Then follows the most famous scene in the book. In every stage and film production, the actor playing [Peter Pan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Peter_Pan) directly addresses the audience. The actor delivers aloud the very same line Peter speaks in the book: "If you believe, clap your hands and don't let Tink die." By this time the fairy's light is flickering out, so everybody claps as hard and loud as they can. Tinker's light bursts back into high beam and she arises from her bed to fly around the room in renewed health.

This moment never fails to entrance audiences. However, since 1904 when the play was first performed in London, [Barrie](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/author/)'s manipulation of the audience has perturbed some critics. "And then the horrible appeal to the audience comes," wrote critic Michael Newton on the centennial of the book's publication, "to clap their hands and save Tinkerbell's life." He says, "They must pretend really to believe in the pretense, and act as though they are more childlike than they are." Newton claims that when English novelist Graham Greene (1904–91) was a child, he refused to clap.

Greene was apparently not the only child who refused to clap at performances of the play. The author gets his revenge in this chapter. Barrie added a paragraph to the book that warns such cynical children that they may have incurred the wrath of a fairy. "Many clapped. Some didn't. A few little beasts hissed," the narrator says. But Tinker Bell will find them. "She never thought of thanking those who believed, but she would have liked to get at the ones who hissed."

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

***Summary part 1:***

Each boy, as he climbs up out of his tree, is captured by a pirate, tied, and gagged. [Hook](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/captain-jas-hook) displays the tied-up boys to [Wendy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/wendy) “with ironical politeness.” [Slightly](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters), who is the bulkiest of the boys, is very difficult to tie up, so Hook reasons that Slightly’s tree might accommodate a full-grown man.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Hook’s manner in this scene is mysterious. He seems to be mocking Wendy’s fragility and respectability, and rightly so, for he is a strong and barbaric pirate. But he is a shade too adept at imitating the gentility he scorns.

***Summary Part 2:***

The pirates put [Wendy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/wendy) and the boys in Wendy’s cabin and carry the cabin to the ship. When the pirates and their prisoners are out of sight, [Hook](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/captain-jas-hook) slides down into the house through [Slightly](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters)’s tree. He finds [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan) sleeping peacefully. Peter sometimes has terrible long nightmares related somehow to “the riddle of his existence,” but on this night he is sound asleep, and his mouth hangs open to show his pearly teeth. Hook is almost moved to pity by the pretty scene, but as always something arrogant in Peter’s appearance enrages him.

***Analysis part 2:***

Most children have nightmares at one time or another, but these rarely take their terror from existential mystery. Though initially we too are enchanted by Peter’s baby teeth and angelic insouciance, we can no longer ignore the brief symptoms of his unchildlike, sad, intelligent inner life. The riddle of his existence troubles us too.

***Summary Part 3:***[Hook](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/captain-jas-hook) is about to attack, but he finds that he can’t undo the latch on [Slightly](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters)’s door to reach Peter. Instead, he puts a very deadly dose of poison in [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan)’s medicine, which is just within his reach. Then he climbs out of the tree and returns to his ship.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The scene shows just how close Hook’s hatred of Peter lies to his love for him. His love is selfless, a door to love of beautiful and innocent things. His hatred is a rebellion against this love.

***Summary Part 4:***Soon, [**Peter**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan) is awakened by a tapping on his door. It is [**Tinker Bell**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/tinker-bell), and she tells Peter that [**Wendy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/wendy) and the boys have been tied and hauled away. Peter is about to run after them, but first he decides to take his medicine, because he imagines it would have pleased Wendy. Tinker Bell tells Peter it is poisoned: she heard Hook talking to himself about his murderous trick. But Peter doesn’t believe her and prepares to drink it anyway.

***Analysis Part 4:***Peter’s anger at Wendy and his affection for her also are close together, but this closeness indicates only the intensity of real friendship. Peter’s affectionate gesture cannot be connected to any idea of fairness. It is a sort of penance for his earlier coldness, but a private penance. It’s an emotion with no exterior motive.

***Summary Part 5:***To save him, [**Tinker Bell**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/tinker-bell) drinks the whole dose. She begins to die right away, and her light grows fainter and fainter. She will only be saved if many children show that they believe in fairies. [**Peter**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan) asks all the children “who are dreaming of Neverland” to clap their hands if they believe. So many clap that Tinker Bell becomes well again.

***Analysis Part 5:***Peter and Tinker Bell both tend to hide behind stiff and quarrelsome manners. This manner is a sort of armor, and indicates both a distrust of emotions and some prior injury. But in this scene, the two show their love and friendship without reservation.

***Summary Part 6:***Now [**Peter**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/peter-pan) sets out to rescue the others. He has to walk, because flying close enough to the ground to look out for enemies would mean alarming the birds, whom he gave “such strange names that they are very wild and difficult of approach.” These birds would tip off the pirates that he is on his way. Peter is alert and excited, and he swears into the darkness: “Hook or me this time.”

***Analysis Part 6:***If Peter named the birds, has he named everything on the island, even the island itself? The name ‘Neverland’ would certainly make it “wild and difficult of approach.” Peter created an island for his home, and gave it a name that meant it never was, and never will be.