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J. M. Barrie

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Peter and Wendy J. M. Barrie
Although the character appeared previously in Barrie's book The Little White Bird, the play and the novel based on it contain the portion of the Peter Pan mythos that is best known. The two versions differ in some details of the story, but have much in common. In both versions Peter makes night-time calls on Kensington, London, listening in on Mrs. Mary Darling's bedtime stories by the open window. One night Peter is spotted and, while trying to escape, he loses his shadow. On returning to claim it, Peter wakes Mary's daughter, Wendy Darling. Wendy succeeds in re-attaching his shadow to him, and Peter learns that she knows lots of bedtime stories. He invites her to Neverland to be a mother to his gang, the Lost Boys, children who were lost in Kensington Gardens. Wendy agrees, and her brothers John and Michael go along. Their magical flight to Neverland is followed by many adventures. The children are blown out of the air by a cannon and Wendy is nearly killed by the Lost Boy Tootles. Peter and the Lost Boys build a little house for Wendy to live in while she recuperates (a structure that, to this day, is called a Wendy House.) Soon John and Michael adopt the ways of the Lost Boys. Peter welcomes Wendy to his underground home, and she immediately assumes the role of mother figure. Peter takes the Darlings on several adventures, the first truly dangerous one occurring at Mermaids' Lagoon. At Mermaids' Lagoon, Peter and the Lost Boys save the princess Tiger Lily and become involved in a battle with the pirates, including the evil Captain Hook. Peter is wounded when Hook claws him. He believes he will die, stranded on a rock when the tide is rising, but he views death as "an awfully big adventure". Luckily, a bird allows him to use her nest as a boat, and Peter sails home. Because he has saved Tiger Lily, the Indians are devoted to him, guarding his home from the next imminent pirate attack. Meanwhile, Wendy begins to fall in love with Peter, at least as a child, and asks Peter what kind of feelings he has for her. Peter says that he is like her faithful son. One day while telling stories to the Lost Boys and her brothers, John and Michael, Wendy recalls about her parents and then decides to take them back and return to England. Unfortunately, and unbeknownst to Peter, Wendy and the boys are captured by Captain Hook, who also tries to poison Peter's medicine while the boy is asleep. When Peter awakes, he learns from the fairy Tinker Bell that Wendy has been kidnapped – in an effort to please Wendy, he goes to drink his medicine. Tink does not have time to warn him of the poison, and instead drinks it herself, causing her near death. Peter invokes the sympathy of children who might be dreaming of him, and Tinker Bell is saved. Peter heads to the ship. On the way, he encounters the ticking crocodile; Peter decides to copy the tick, so any animals will recognise it and leave him unharmed. He does not realise that he is still ticking as he boards the ship, where Hook cowers, mistaking him for the crocodile. While the pirates are searching for the croc, Peter sneaks into the cabin to steal the keys and frees the Lost Boys. When the pirates investigate a noise in the cabin, Peter defeats them. When he finally reveals himself, he and Hook fall to the climactic battle, which Peter easily wins. He kicks Hook into the jaws of the waiting crocodile, and Hook dies with the satisfaction that Peter had kicked him off the ship, which Hook considers "bad form". Then Peter takes control of the ship, and sails the seas back to London. Includes a biography of the Author

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