

CHAPTER 7

The Wendy Bird



Unaware that the pirates had found their hiding place, the boys waited for a while and then emerged from their underground cave. Suddenly Nibs saw something in the sky.

"Look at that white bird," he said. "It sounds as if it is saying, *Poor Wendy!* It must be a Wendy bird."

It wasn't actually a bird that Nibs saw at all, but poor Wendy herself, flying up above.

Now the boys heard another sound. It was the voice of Tinker Bell, shrill and jealous. She was no

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longer pretending to be nice to Wendy, but was pinching her and trying to make her fall.

"Peter wants you to shoot this white bird," Tink called down to the boys.

"Quick," the boys cried. "Bows and arrows!"

Tootles excitedly fitted an arrow to his bow. "Get out of the way, Tink," he shouted. He fired, and Wendy fluttered to the ground with an arrow in her breast.

"I shot the Wendy bird!" Tootles bragged. "Peter will be so proud of me!"

"Silly donkey," Tinker Bell clinked, laughing at her trick before going to hide. She knew she would be in trouble for urging poor Tootles to shoot Wendy.

Slightly frowned as he looked at Wendy.

"That is no bird," he said. "I think it is a lady."

"A lady?" Tootles replied nervously.

"Peter was bringing a lady to take care of us, and you've gone and killed her!" Curly said.

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Tootles took a deep, sad breath. "I did it. I shot the Wendy-lady," he said quietly, and turned to leave the group.

Just then the boys heard a crowing sound up above. It was Peter's signal. He was back!

They gathered around Wendy so that Peter would not see her. He dropped to the ground in front of them, but no one said a word.

"Why so quiet, boys?" Peter asked.

But still none of the boys spoke.

"Never mind," Peter said. "I have news. I've brought you back a mother! You may even have seen her already. I think she was flying this way."

Tootles cleared his throat. "Boys," he said bravely, "step aside."

The boys obeyed, revealing Wendy's body. Peter bent, took the arrow from Wendy's heart, and turned to face his band of boys.

"Whose arrow is this?" he asked sternly.

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"Mine, Peter," Tootles replied.

Angrily, Peter raised the arrow, prepared to hit Tootles with it. But he couldn't do it.

At just that moment, Nibs saw Wendy move. "The Wendy-lady!" he cried. "She moved her arm!"

Peter bent over Wendy again and saw the acorn he had given to her when she'd asked for a kiss. It was on a string around her neck. The arrow had hit the acorn and saved her life!

"Hurry up and get better," he said, "so I can introduce you to the boys and the mermaids."

From her hiding spot up above, Tink sighed loudly.

"Listen to Tink crying because the Wendy-lady is alive," Curly said. The boys told Peter about her crime.

"We are not friends anymore, Tink," Peter cried. "Go away and never come back!"

PETER PAN

Frantically, Tinker Bell flew onto Peter's shoulder and begged his forgiveness, but he brushed her off.

Lying on the ground, Wendy stirred slightly. She was waking up.

"I'll be all right," she said wearily. "You don't have to banish her."

"Well, all right," Peter told Tinker Bell. "You can come back, but not for a whole week."

You would think Tinker Bell would be grateful to Wendy for defending her, but Wendy's generosity only made Tink want to pinch her even more. Wendy, in the meantime, was so tired and sore from her hard fall that she rolled onto her side and fell asleep.

"I have an idea," Peter said. "Let's build Wendy a house."

The boys were thrilled; they loved to build. They were incredibly quick carpenters, too, scurrying around for firewood, branches, and twigs,

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and looking for soft cushiony flowers to use for her bedding.

Just then John and Michael dropped from the sky. They had been sleep-flying, but they woke up as soon as they hit the ground. "Mama?" Michael cried, rubbing his eyes. "Nana?"

"Where are we?" John asked. "Are we dreaming?"

Finally, the boys spotted Peter. "Oh, hello," Peter said distractedly. He had forgotten all about them. Using his feet as a ruler, he bent to measure Wendy to see how big her new house should be.

"Come on," he told her brothers. "We are building a house for Wendy, and you have to help."

"I don't see why Wendy should get her own house," John said. "She's only a girl."

"She's going to be our mother," Curly said. "Now, you heard Peter. Get to work!"

Wendy moved and groaned a bit in her sleep. "Slightly," Peter cried. "Go get a doctor."

Slightly said, "Ay, ay," and left at once, before remembering that there were no doctors on the island. Still, he knew better than to disobey Peter, so he returned wearing John's hat and looking very serious.

Although the other boys knew that Slightly was just pretending, Peter did not. To him, make-believe was the same thing as true. And so, convinced that Slightly was in fact a doctor, he said, "Help this lady. She is very ill."

"I will give her some medicine," said Slightly, bending over the sleeping Wendy and pretending to do just that. "And, there—she is cured!"

"What a relief," Peter said.

While Wendy slept, the boys built her house around her. They knew she would love it because as she slept, she sang: *"I wish I had a pretty house, the smallest ever seen, with bright and shiny reddish walls, and a roof of mossy green."*

As they worked, the boys sang back: "We've



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built your walls and mossy roof, and made a lovely door. So tell us now, Wendy mother, do you want something more?"

Still sleeping, Wendy sang: "Well, since you ask, I'd surely grin, for windows all about, with daffodils peeping in, and babies peeping out."

And so the boys built windows and pulled flowers for Wendy, but they weren't quite sure what to do about the babies.

"Let's just pretend that part," they said.

When they were finished, the house was beautiful, and Wendy was completely contained inside. They were about to go inside to surprise her when they realized they had forgotten to put a knocker on the door.

"Silly donkeys!" Tinker Bell cried from above.

Tootles gave the sole of his shoe to hang on the door, which did the trick. Now there was nothing left to do but knock.

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"Everyone stand up straight," Peter warned, "and be on your best behavior."

He knocked politely, and all of the boys waited.

When Wendy opened the door, blinking sleepily, the boys whipped off their hats and bowed.

"Where am I?" she said, confused and surprised.

The boys practically tumbled over one another to explain.

"We built you this house," Slightly said.

"Do you like it?" asked Nibs.

"It's lovely," she said, looking around. "How did you know it's exactly what I wanted?"

"Just clever, I guess," said Slightly. He saw no need to tell her what she had been singing in her sleep.

"Can we be your children?" the twins asked.

"Well," Wendy said, "that's awfully nice of

you, but I am only a child myself. I have no real experience."

"That's okay," Peter said, although he actually knew less about mothers than any of them. "We just need a nice motherly person. You'll do."

Wendy agreed to try, and invited all the boys into her new house. As they gathered around, she did her first motherly thing and told them the end of "Cinderella." When she was finished, she followed the boys to their cave and tucked them in for the evening before returning to her own home.

Something Worse than the Night



The next morning, the Darling children were measured for their trees. Hook, if you recall, thought it silly to have one tree for each lost boy, but it actually made a great deal of sense. Each different-size boy had a door that fit him as perfectly as a tailored suit. This way, they could all enter the cave at once, without having to wait in line. More important, no other body except each lost boy's exact body could fit in that particular tree. This was especially helpful in case of sneak pirate attacks!