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Peter Pan

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[PETER AND WENDY]

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by J. M. Barrie [James Matthew Barrie]

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Chapter I

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PETER BREAKS THROUGH

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All children, except one, grow up. They soon know that they will grow up,

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and the way Wendy knew was this. One day when she was two years old she

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was playing in a garden, and she plucked another flower and ran with it to

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her mother. I suppose she must have looked rather delighted, for Mrs.

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Darling put her hand to her heart and cried, "Oh, why can't you remain like

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this forever!" This was all that passed between them on the subject, but

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henceforth Wendy knew that she must grow up. You always know after you

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are two. Two is the beginning of the end.

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Of course they lived at 14, and until Wendy came her mother was the chief

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one. She was a lovely lady, with a romantic mind and such a sweet mocking

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mouth. Her romantic mind was like the tiny boxes, one within the other, that

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come from the puzzling East, however many you discover there is always

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one more; and her sweet mocking mouth had one kiss on it that Wendy

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could never get, though there it was, perfectly conspicuous in the right-hand

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corner.

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221 The way Mr. Darling won her was this: the many gentlemen who had been
234 boys when she was a girl discovered simultaneously that they loved her, and
250 they all ran to her house to propose to her except Mr. Darling, who took a
267 cab and nipped in first, and so he got her. He got all of her, except the
282 innermost box and the kiss. He never knew about the box, and in time he
297 gave up trying for the kiss. Wendy thought Napoleon could have got it, but I
311 can picture him trying, and then going off in a passion, slamming the door.

325 Mr. Darling used to boast to Wendy that her mother not only loved him
339 but respected him. He was one of those deep ones who know about stocks
354 and shares. Of course no one really knows, but he quite seemed to know, and
370 he often said stocks were up and shares were down in a way that would have
375 made any woman respect him.

388 Mrs. Darling was married in white, and at first she kept the books
403 perfectly, almost gleefully, as if it were a game, not so much as a Brussels
414 sprout was missing; but by and by whole cauliflowers dropped out, and
427 instead of them there were pictures of babies without faces. She drew them
438 when she should have been totting up. They were Mrs. Darling's guesses.

445 Wendy came first, then John, then Michael.

459 For a week or two after Wendy came it was doubtful whether they would
474 be able to keep her, as she was another mouth to feed. Mr. Darling was

489 frightfully proud of her, but he was very honourable, and he sat on the edge
501 of Mrs. Darling's bed, holding her hand and calculating expenses, while she
515 looked at him imploringly. She wanted to risk it, come what might, but that
533 was not his way; his way was with a pencil and a piece of paper, and if she
545 confused him with suggestions he had to begin at the beginning again.

553 "Now don't interrupt," he would beg of her.

569 "I have one pound seventeen here, and two and six at the office; I can cut
584 off my coffee at the office, say ten shillings, making two nine and six, with
597 your eighteen and three makes three nine seven, with five naught naught in
610 my cheque-book makes eight nine seven—who is that moving?—eight nine
624 seven, dot and carry seven—don't speak, my own—and the pound you lent
639 to that man who came to the door—quiet, child—dot and carry child—there,
655 you've done it!—did I say nine nine seven? yes, I said nine nine seven; the
668 question is, can we try it for a year on nine nine seven?"

680 "Of course we can, George," she cried. But she was prejudiced in
692 Wendy's favour, and he was really the grander character of the two.

703 "Remember mumps," he warned her almost threateningly, and off he went
719 again. "Mumps one pound, that is what I have put down, but I daresay it will
730 be more like thirty shillings—don't speak—measles one five, German
742 measles half a guinea, makes two fifteen six—don't waggle your finger—

756 whooping-cough, say fifteen shillings”—and so on it went, and it added up
768 differently each time; but at last Wendy just got through, with mumps
781 reduced to twelve six, and the two kinds of measles treated as one.