

SETTING: *The children's nursery in London as well as various locations in Neverland.*

AT RISE: *Around the stage are various set pieces: a trunk, benches, stools, etc. – all pieces you might find in a child's nursery. Downstage center is a low bench that represents the "window." One-by-one the ACTORS enter, carrying the props they will need to tell the story: props, costumes, pieces of set. They arrange them as they speak their lines.*

ACTOR 1

All children, except one, grow up...

ACTOR 2

Second to the right and straight on 'til morning...

ACTOR 3

Dreams do come true, if only we wish hard enough...

ACTOR 4

All the world is made of faith, and trust, and pixie dust...

ACTOR 5

One girl is more use than twenty boys...

ACTOR 6

If you cannot teach me to fly, teach me to sing...

ACTOR 2

(Crows like a rooster)
Caw caw-caw caw-caw!

ALL

(To the audience)
The Nursery.

(ACTOR 2, ACTOR 3, and ACTOR 4 exit. ACTOR 1 becomes WENDY, ACTOR 5 becomes JOHN, and ACTOR 6 becomes MICHAEL. WENDY sits on a bench. MICHAEL and JOHN crowd at her feet as she tells them a bedtime story.)

WENDY

Then the gang of swarthy pirates, who had captured the beautiful maiden, were about to make her walk the plank, when who should appear but...

MICHAEL

Peter Pan! I bet it's Peter Pan!

JOHN

Hush, Michael – you're spoiling it! Let Wendy tell it.

MICHAEL

I am *not* spoiling it! And you're not the boss of me, John.

JOHN

I am too your boss, for I am older than you.

WENDY

And I am older than both of you, which means you both must mind me. Now stop arguing this instant, or I shan't tell you the rest of the story...

MICHAEL

But we know the rest of the story, Wendy – it's the same every night.

(He jumps to his feet and grabs a toy sword.)

Peter Pan shows up and he and the pirates engage in a fierce battle!

(JOHN jumps up and grabs a toy sword.)

JOHN

Avast, me hardies! We fight to the death!

(With a yell, he and MICHAEL come together, clashing swords and proceed dueling around the room. WENDY stands on the bench as if it was the plank of a ship.)

WENDY

Save me! Save me before I am forced to walk this plank!

MICHAEL

Take that! And that!

JOHN

Take that! And that!

(MRS. DARLING enters, dressed in an evening gown. NANA, wearing a mop cap, follows her in.)

MRS. DARLING

Children...

(They ignore her.)

Children!

(They still ignore her.)

Nana, make them stop.

(NANA steps forward and barks.)

NANA

(“Shut up”)

WOOF!

(They stop.)

JOHN

Oh, hello Mother.

MRS. DARLING

Children, what is all this hullabaloo about?

WENDY

We were playing pirates.

MRS. DARLING

Pirates?

JOHN

Yes! I am the pirate Captain, Wendy is the beautiful maiden forced to walk the plank, and Michael is Peter Pan.

MRS. DARLING

Peter who?

WENDY

Peter Pan! You know who he is, don't you mother?

MRS. DARLING

(Trying to remember)

It seems to me I might have heard that name before... long ago, when I was very young.

MICHAEL

Peter Pan is our friend.

JOHN

He comes here every night to visit us.

MRS. DARLING

He comes here? Into this room? Impossible. I've never heard a knock on the door. Have you, Nana?

NANA

("Nope")

Woof.

WENDY

He doesn't knock on the door, Mother. He comes in through the window.

MRS. DARLING

The window?!

(She crosses to the window and looks out.)

But we're three floors up!

(WENDY shrugs.)

Have any of you actually seen this Peter Pan?

JOHN

Oh no.

MICHAEL

Not yet.

WENDY

Although last night he sat on the foot of my bed and played on his pipes to me.

MRS. DARLING

You must have been dreaming.

WENDY

Oh no – it wasn't a dream. He was here.

MRS. DARLING

How can you be certain if you never saw him?

WENDY

Because he accidentally left behind his shadow. I found it and locked it in the trunk for safekeeping.

MR. DARLING (O.S.)

Molly? Molly!

(He rushes in. He is also dressed in evening wear, with his tie untied around his neck.)

There you are.

MRS. DARLING

George, dear, whatever is the matter?

MR. DARLING

This tie – it will not tie! I've tried and tried to no avail. I warn you, Molly – unless this tie is round my neck we don't go out to dinner tonight, and if I don't go out to dinner tonight, I never go to the office again, and if I don't go to the office again, you and I starve and our children will be flung into the streets.

(She ties his tie during the following.)

MRS. DARLING

Perhaps, George, we should not go out tonight.

MR. DARLING

Not go out?

MRS. DARLING

I worry about leaving the children.

MR. DARLING

We are dining just down the street. The children will be fine.

MRS. DARLING

Still...

(She has finished with his tie. He steps back.)

MR. DARLING

Molly, I've already explained how important this dinner is. If we cancel now... Consider my position. My reputation. It's bad enough we employ a dog as our children's nurse...

MRS. DARLING

Nana is a treasure!

NANA

(“Agreed!”)

Woof!

(MR. DARLING takes her arm and pulls her aside.)

MR. DARLING

I have the feeling that she looks upon our children as puppies.

MRS. DARLING

Oh no, dear – I don't think so.

MR. DARLING

Nevertheless, she will be staying in the yard tonight.

WENDY

The yard? But Father, Nana always sleeps in the nursery with us!

NANA

(“That's right!”)

Woof!

MRS. DARLING

George, I would feel better about leaving if Nana was staying inside.

MR. DARLING

I am the Man of the House. The Breadwinner. The Master. And I say Nana is going into the yard. Come along, Nana.

(He takes NANA by the arm and leads her off. NANA whines on the way out.)

WENDY

Mother, is Father all right?

MRS. DARLING

Yes, dear. He's just worried about work. Come along, children. Into bed with you.

(WENDY, MICHAEL, and JOHN lie down on their beds. MRS. DARLING kisses each of them on the head.)

WENDY

Mother, will you tell us a story?

JOHN

Oh yes, Mother – please do! You tell us the best stories.

MRS. DARLING

I'm afraid I don't have time to tell you a bedtime story tonight.

WENDY

Will you sing us a lullaby, then?

MRS. DARLING

Aren't you a bit too grown up for that, Wendy?

WENDY

Oh no – not at all!

JOHN

We'd love to hear one.

WENDY

Sing us the lullaby about Neverland.

MICHAEL

Neverland...?

JOHN

I've never heard that one.

WENDY

Mother used to sing it to me when I quite small. Do you remember, Mother?

MRS. DARLING

I... I'm not sure I recall all the words.

WENDY

Please try.

JOHN/MICHAEL

Please, Mother.

MRS. DARLING

Very well...

(As she sings, the CHILDREN fall asleep.)

*When you are weary and Dreams await
I'll take you by the hand
And lead you to a magic place
The Isle of Neverland*

*Where coral reefs surround the coast
And waves crash on the strand
Coracles beach on the magic shore
Of the Isle of Neverland*

*Flamingos fly over deep lagoons
Where mermaids sing and flowers bloom
Where the sun melts into a silver moon
That shines upon the sand*

*So sleep, my child, and dream your dreams
For soon you'll understand
That once grown up, you can never return
To the Isle of Neverland*

*Yes, once grown up you can never return
To the Isle of Neverland*

(The CHILDREN are asleep. MRS. DARLING turns to leave when, from somewhere off, we hear the faint tinkling of bells. She crosses to the window and looks out. Nothing.)

Nothing but shadows...

(She suddenly remembers the trunk. She crosses to it, kneels in front of it, and is about to open it when...)

MR. DARLING (O.S.)

Molly! We're going to be late! Come along!

MRS. DARLING

Oh dear...

(She abandons the trunk, stands up, and looks at the CHILDREN.)

Goodnight, my Darlings.

MR. DARLING (O.S.)

Molly!

MRS. DARLING

I'm coming!

(She exits.)

MRS. DARLING (O.S.)

Really, George, you must learn some patience...

(Their voices fade. The sound of night. Faint crickets. The hoot of an owl. Then, once more, the faint tinkling of bells. The bells get closer, louder.)

NANA (O.S.)

(“What is that?”)

Woof? Woof?

(The bells get louder still. NANA's next bark signals danger.)

WOOF!

(TINKERBELL enters. TINK is actually a small bell attached to a ring around the actor's finger. TINKERBELL zooms to the window. She looks around to make sure the coast is clear, gives her bell another shake, and enters the room. She zooms about, searching for something. After a moment...)

PETER (O.S.)

Tinkerbell? Tink, where are you?

(TINKERBELL shakes her bell. Suddenly PETER PAN enters. He swoops to the window, looks both ways to make sure the coast is clear, then steps into the room.)

PETER

Tinkerbell, tell me – do you know where they put my shadow?

(TINK shakes her bell.)

In the trunk? How clever...

(PETER crosses over to the trunk, kneels in front of it, and opens it. His SHADOW suddenly pops out and jumps over him.)

PETER (cont.)

My shadow!

(PETER slams the lid to the trunk, locking TINKERBELL inside. We hear her bell jingling faintly, angrily. PETER stands and turns to confront SHADOW. He waves his right arm. SHADOW waves his right arm – which, of course, is not what a shadow should do. PETER waves his left arm. SHADOW waves his left arm. PETER dodges to the right. SHADOW dodges to the right. PETER dodges to the left. SHADOW dodges to the left.)

Why, you're not behaving at all!

(SHADOW blows a raspberry at PETER.)

Come here, you rascal!

(PETER starts after SHADOW. SHADOW turns and runs. After giving chase a few moments, with SHADOW always doing the opposite of what PETER expects, PETER finally grabs ahold of SHADOW and holds him. Again, they face each other.)

Now then, you need to stick to me and behave like a shadow should.

(SHADOW moves his right hand, attempting to free himself. PETER places his left hand over it.)

Stick to me.

(SHADOW moves his left hand, attempting to free himself. PETER places his right hand over it.)

Stick to me.