



Classic Starts™: Peter Pan (Classic Starts™ Series)

By J. M. Barrie



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“All children grow up. All except one.” That special child is Peter Pan, and since making his debut on the stage in 1904, this eternal youth has carried boys and girls off to magical, marvelous Neverland. It’s a trip that all kids want to make, and with this easy-to-read version of the classic, everyone can fly “second to the right, and straight on till morning” with Peter. Along with Wendy, John, and Michael Darling, they’ll meet the fairy Tinkerbell, the Lost Boys, and the menacing Captain Hook.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"All children, except one, grow up." Thus begins a great classic of children's literature that we all remember as magical. What we tend to forget, because the tale of Peter Pan and Neverland has been so relentlessly boiled down, hashed up, and coated in saccharine, is that J.M. Barrie's original version is also witty, sophisticated, and delightfully odd. The Darling children, Wendy, John, and Michael, live a very proper middle-class life in Edwardian London, but they also happen to have a Newfoundland for a nurse. The text is full of such throwaway gems as "Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter Pan when she was tidying up her children's minds," and is peppered with deliberately obscure vocabulary including "embonpoint," "quietus," and "pluperfect." Lest we forget, it was written in 1904, a relatively innocent age in which a plot about abducted children must have seemed more safely fanciful. Also, perhaps, it was an age that expected more of its children's books, for *Peter Pan* has a suppleness, lightness, and intelligence that are "literary" in the best sense. In a typical exchange with the dastardly Captain Hook, Peter Pan describes himself as "youth... joy... a little bird that has broken out of the egg," and the author interjects: "This, of course, was nonsense; but it was proof to the unhappy Hook that Peter did not know in the least who or what he was, which is the very pinnacle of good form." A book for adult readers-aloud to revel in--and it just might teach young listeners to fly. (Ages 5 and older) --*Richard Farr*

From School Library Journal

Grade 3-7-- A pleasure to view, read, and hold, this new edition of an old favorite deserves space in every collection. From jacket painting, to cover (with Tinker Bell embossed in gold), to endpapers (dark maps of Neverland), Gustafson's artwork opens doors to glimpses of old friends and to new interpretations. Fifty oil paintings reveal expressive, changing characters. Peter Pan is dewy-cheeked, spry, wicked. Maternal Wendy is tender, then stoic. Even Hook is at times downcast. The Indians, proud and handsome, avoid stereotype. Masterly composition and use of light create dramatic full-page illustrations, accompanied by cameos of ordinary objects (kite, bear, tea kettle). Compared to Hague's illustrations for *Peter Pan* (Holt, 1987), which were dark and surreal, these are light and vital. Handsome bookmaking, Barrie's text, and Gustafson's pictures combine to breathe new life into Peter Pan's old shadow. --Carolyn Noah, Central Mass. Regional Library System, Worcester, MA
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From Kirkus Reviews

An unusually large, attractive, unabridged edition with dozens of full-page illustrations and smaller vignettes. In style, Gustafson's lusty oil paintings of the pirates are akin to N. C. Wyeth's, though they have more the flavor of compelling dramatic play than real menace. His slim, round-faced, rosy children and cozy interiors are closer to Wyeth's gifted student, Jessie Wilcox Smith, while the ethereal yet mischievous fairy folk recall Rackham. This is not to suggest that the result is merely derivative, in the manner of Michael Hague; Gustafson is a talented craftsman who skillfully melds his references to past greats to create an appropriately traditional style that has enough of a contemporary aura (especially in the characterizations) for broad popular appeal. An endpaper map of "The Neverland" and meticulous renditions of intriguing details add to the drama and fun. A perfect gift for a family that reads aloud. (Fiction. 5+) -- *Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Margert Lewis:

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Joel Faulkner:

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Jerry Deal:

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Walter Dion:

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