

# A boy with big ears and strange habits

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In 1984 a popular band called Alphaville released a record called “ Forever young”. If there ever was a character that lived up to those words it would be Peter Pan. Author J. M Barrie states in the acting of fairy play that, “ The Actors in a fairy play should feel that it is written by a child in deadly earnestness and that they are children playing in the same spirit. The scenic artist is another child in league with them” Peter Pan epitomizes this in his personality and his speech the way he carries himself with the lost boys in Never land. Peter creates this “ make believe” or fictional land as a way to escape reality and responsibility. For Peter Pan being a child means living freely, with no rules, having fun and never growing old. J. M Barrie described the children in the book as “ gay, innocent and heartless.” While it may seem fun and gleeful to never having to grow there is a downside to it. Peter Lack of going through adulthood can be seen with his inability to have a serious relationship, his refusal to be raised by the Darlings and his reluctance to ever leave his child like ways and grow into a man.

Peter Pan’s innocence is most prevalent with his refusal to form an intimate relationship with a woman. As discussed in class and in the first quiz, Peter can only view Tinker Bell, Wendy or Tiger Lilly as a mother figure despite them willing to give themselves to him. All three of these women have feelings for Peter but his close minded behavior prevents him from craving them in a relationship perspective. Peter’s continuous belief that he is a child causes him to ignore all signs. In J. M Barrie’s play Peter believes the adoration towards him is because they all want to be his mother, this is show when he says “ You all three want that. Very well that’s really wishing to be my mother.” By Doing this he angers the girls as he cannot let go of his

childhood mindset of constantly searching for a mother figure after he felt replaced by his own mother.

Even when Mrs. Darling offered to take care of Peter and raise him to be a man he wasn't interested. He said passionately, "I don't want to go to school and learn solemn things. Don't want to be a man. Oh Wendy's mother, every time I wake I put up my hand to feel if there's a beard" and proceeded to say "no one's going to catch me, and make me a man". These lines further prove that Peter did not care to grow up, all he thought about was to have fun and play. Comparing the adult in Mr Darling who is a more serious Man and commands the respect in his home and Peter who remains a boy his entire life and just wants to associate with children shows the discrepancy between the personalities. I believe that Peter sees reality as a scary place and rather live in his imagination because that is where he feels the strongest and most comfortable. He rather fly around and visit the children because that keeps him away from responsibility. Peter does not see adulthood and getting old as something intriguing, I believe this is why he rather live with Tinker Bell and the fairies rather than the Darlings because it would be a burden to actually have to live a normal life.

As mentioned before Peter Pan will never give into the pressures of becoming a man. He will forever be Jubilant in his fantasy world of Never land where he is a hero to children. But despite his care free life he still carries resentment towards his real mother for giving up on him. In my perspective Peter Pan is a great example of the saying "Not all that glitters is Gold". By creating this "make believe" land as often described in the play

he gets to hide from his reality. His spontaneous adventures and dangerous quest is what quenches his desires of having fun. In a way I would resonate with Peter because adulthood can seem like an uncertain path filled with bumps and obstacles along the way. Nevertheless at some point we must face reality and face challenges.

Being a child means everything to Peter Pan, it is his way of life and despite the temptations of the girls to garner affection or as Wendy described it the right to “ love, honor and Obey” him. Or despite the willingness of the Darlings to raise Peter as one of their own. He can never leave this state of mind and will forever be known as Peter Pan the Boy who could never grow up.