

# **Peter and the Starcatchers Study Guide**

**Peter and the Starcatchers by Dave Barry**

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# Plot Summary

Peter and the Starcatchers, written by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, is the prequel to the Peter Pan story. It is the story of Peter and his friends and their magical adventure that takes Peter from a mundane orphan boy from England to an immortal flying boy on the magical island of Never Land.

Peter and his group of friends from St. Norbert's Home for Wayward Boys are taken to a the ship Never Land. They will call this ship home for the next month and a half or so, until they reach their ultimate destination in Rundoon to be servants to the evil King Zarboff the Third. However, things do not go as has been planned for the orphan boys and the crew of the Never Land. The most feared pirate to ever have sailed the seas, Black Stache, has caught wind of a great treasure aboard the Never Land's sister ship, the Wasp. Black Stache, who will later become Captain Hook, leads his band of pirates to do battle with the crew of the Wasp only to find that they have been tricked! The real treasure is onboard the Never Land.

There are only two people on the Never Land that know about the treasure on board. William Slank, the first mate, who is also secretly a servant of the evil King Zarboff, ordered the trunk put on the Never Land. Molly Aster is the daughter of Leonard Aster, the ambassador of the Queen to King Zarboff. Her father was on the Wasp to protect the Starstuff, however, Molly is on board the Never Land. She realizes that the trunks have been swapped, but can not stop either Slank or Black Stache alone. She recruits Peter to help her and tells him all about the Starcatchers. They are a group of people dedicated to stopping the power of the Starstuff from being used for evil.

The Wasp, now crewed by pirates and captained by Black Stache, turns around to go after the Never Land. Black Stache and his first mate Smee plan to trick the crew of the Never Land by flying the British colors and wearing the British naval uniforms. When they approach the Never Land, the pirates are easily able to overtake the crew, and take over the other ship. Peter and Molly manage to dump the trunk into the ocean, and jump overboard during the fighting and the storm. After the storm, everyone, including the trunk, wash ashore on an island inhabited with hostile natives and a giant crocodile.

On the island, everyone is split into different groups. Peter and Molly are together, and the other boys are with a sailor named Alf. The pirates are together, and Slank and Little Richard from the Never Land are by themselves. Alf and the boys, who do not know about the trunk, are simply trying to survive. All of the other groups are trying to find the trunk. After being captured by the natives, and almost fed to the giant crocodile, Alf and the boys, along with Peter, set out to find Molly and the trunk.

All of the groups find the trunk within a very short time of each other. Slank and Little Richard first get the trunk. However, they have to battle the newly formed Mermaids in order to get it. Peter stumbles upon the lead mermaid, and uses some Starstuff to heal her. Slank and Richard sneak up on Peter and beat him unconscious, leaving him face down to drown. After Slank gets the trunk from the mermaids, Black Stache steals it



from them. Black Stache does not know about the mermaids, however, and quickly loses it again. Slank and Little Richard use some of the Starstuff to fly the longboat to the trunk, and get their hands on it once more. Just then, Molly, Alf, and James attack Slank and Richard. Slank and Richard get the upper hand, but before Slank can kill Molly, he hears Peter calling out to him. There, on a rock, surrounded by Mermaids, is Peter. Peter he has the trunk.

Peter agrees to trade the trunk to Slank for the lives of all of his friends. Slank takes the trunk, but leaves the boys and Alf behind. Slank does not intend to honor their agreement, as he'd rather take Molly to Zarboff. Luckily, Peter played a trick as well. He moved the Starstuff out of the trunk before giving it to Slank. The natives attack just then, and go for the trunk as well. As soon as Fighting Prawn and Peter are alone on the boat, Black Stache makes his attack on them. Peter manages to defeat Black Stache, cutting off his hand. He saves Fighting Prawn's life, which endears him to the native and earns Fighting Prawn's help. Molly's father arrives with more Starcatchers to transfer the Starstuff safely, and take them all home. Peter decides to stay on the island. He has learned that his exposure to the Starstuff has transformed him so that he will not age and can fly. His fellow orphans decide to stay with him and the Starcatchers leave after a tearful goodbye.



# Chapters 1 through 6

## Chapters 1 through 6 Summary

In Chapter 1, Peter and the Starcatchers opens with a group of boys being taken to a ship by carriage. They left St. Norbert's Home for Wayward Boys the previous night, and have no idea where they are going, other than on a ship. When they finally reach the wharfs, Edward Grumpkin, the second in command at St. Norbert's, hands the boys over to Slank. He tells them that The Never Land will be their home for the next five weeks, if they're lucky.

Chapter 2 opens with Mack and Alf, two sailors from The Never Land, in a warehouse stealing a trunk. Two trunks were brought to this warehouse by soldiers, and Slank has ordered the two of them to wrap it in canvas so that it looks like any other trunk, and bring it to the ship. When Alf touches the chest, he feels a feeling of warmth flowing throughout his body. Everywhere the warmth goes, he feels great. Old aches and pains disappear, and he hears the sound of tiny bells ringing. As they are loading the trunk on the ship, Alf sneaks another feel of the wood on the trunk, and once again feels the warmth and hears the tiny music.

In Chapter 3, Peter searches for an escape from the ship. He plans to run down the gangplank just before it is raised. Luckily for Peter, he notices a young girl, who also notices that he seems to be planning a run for it. She looks to the gangplank and shakes her head. Just then, Peter notices a large man with a whip standing at the edge of the gangplank. One of the sailors makes a run for it, and Little Richard, the big man, lashes out with the whip, catching the runner's ankle and dragging him back to Slank. Peter realizes that if it weren't for the girl, it would be his ankle in the whip, and himself in the brig. The girl introduces herself as Molly, the daughter of the ambassador to King Zarboff the Third. She tells him of the king's snake, which ate his father. Zarboff now feeds the snake pigs and any servants who have disappointed him. Slank informs the boys that they are on their way to Rundoon to be Zarboff's servants.

In Chapter 4, The Sea Devil and her pirate crew are hiding in the Angel's Graveyard. A rocky place that is the resting ground for many sunken ships. The captain, Black Stache, and his first mate Smee catch sight of The Never Land and The Wasp. They plan to intercept The Wasp and board the ship and take the treasure.

In Chapter 5, Hungry Bob shows the boys to their hold where they may sleep. He offers them soup with still living worms and a rat in it. The boys balk at the food, and Peter plans to ask the captain for a decent meal. Bob finds this hilarious, and takes the pot of soup with him when he leaves. He assures the boys that in a day or two they'll be licking the pot clean.

In Chapter 6, The Wasp is proving to be as quick as the wind. Black Stache orders the water thrown overboard, along with the two fattest crew members. He reasons that with



less weight they will be faster, without the water the men will have more motivation to capture The Wasp, and her water as well. He also figures that by tossing the fattest two crewmen overboard, he'll motivate the crew to prove themselves worth their weight to their captain.

## Chapters 1 through 6 Analysis

Chapter 1 introduces several characters. Peter is the leader of the boys at St. Norbert's Home for Wayward Boys. He claims his right to lead based on his age. Peter doesn't actually know how old he is, but always claims to be one year older than the oldest boy. Besides, Peter can spit farther than any of the other boys, which clearly gives him the right to lead. Peter, as the self appointed leader of the group, must be first to board the ship. The whole time, Peter is scouting for a means to escape.

Tubby Ted is a chubby boy in Peter's group. He seems to be a bit of a know it all, and answers most of the questions the other boys put forth. When they arrive at The Never Land, he is more worried about running out of food than the rats, sharks, or the fact that they will be on the ship for at least five weeks.

The other three in the group, Prentiss, James, and Thomas, follow Peter and try to stay quiet. The man from St. Norbert, as well as the man from the ship, both seem content to cuff the boys on the ear for any minor transgression, such as talking too much.

In Chapter 2, Alf is confused by the warmth and good feelings he feels when he touches the chest and the fact that they disappear when he no longer touches the trunk. He panics, figuring that it must be rat poison. Even Mack, who didn't touch it, felt something strange when Alf touched the trunk. Alf really wants Mack to touch it so that he will see for himself what Alf felt. Mack is scared of what he did feel, as well as the possibility that it might be rat poison, and will not touch it.

In Chapter 3, during his search for an escape route, Peter notices Alf touch the trunk just as they are loading it onto the ship. Peter wonders why Alf looks so happy when he touches the trunk. Peter is also surprised to see a girl on the ship. When Molly comes down to introduce herself, Peter claims to be one year older than her. They argue about who is older, increasing the claim all the way to sixteen. Molly can not accept that Peter is sixteen, as that is just too old. They agree to both be fourteen. Peter and James both learn that they are meant to be servants for the evil king. James cries about it, and Peter must help him to the front of the ship.

In Chapter 4, Captain Black Stache has a reputation as being the meanest, most terrible pirate captain to ever have sailed the seas. His current first mate, Smee, holds the record time in that position with one year. All others before him have been cast overboard by the captain long before a year. Black Stache has heard that the greatest treasure ever to be taken to sea is on The Wasp, and he plans to take it. Rumor has it that The Wasp was built specifically to out run The Sea Devil. Soon the new ship will be put to the test.



In Chapter 5, the boys complain about how small their cabin is, but Hungry Bob assures them that it will keep them warm. They must eat quick, before the rats get their food, but the boys don't seem to mind if the rats do get this food. The soup that Hungry Bob brings them is full of worms and even has a rat swimming around in it. After Hungry Bob leaves with the soup, Peter decides to go see the captain immediately. It is clear that Captain Pembridge is no true captain. Slank runs the ship, and only obeys Pembridge's orders, on the rare occasion that he leaves his cabin, to amuse himself and the crew. When Peter returns to the boys without talking to the captain and sees the hope and how the boys look up to him, he realizes that he needs a plan.

In Chapter 6, Black Stache shows himself to be insane with his plan to run down The Wasp. Smee realizes this is crazy, but knows better than to call Stache on it. The Sea Devil had better catch The Wasp now, as the crew only has about three days of water left.



# Chapters 7 through 13

## Chapters 7 through 13 Summary

In Chapter 7, after a couple of days of hunger, the boys finally give in and eat the rat and worm soup. Even now that they have given in to their hunger, the soup is not enough. One night, Peter decides to steal some food for the boys, and sneaks aft. When he comes to the aft hold, he finds a sleeping guard, and figures that this must be where they keep the decent food. Instead, he sees the trunk, and a flying rat suspended mid air above it. The sailor wakes up and goes into the hold, only to trip over Peter. They both are mesmerized by the flying rat, and are motionless. Just then, Molly whispers to Peter from behind him, and takes him to her cabin to avoid Slank, who must surely be looking around by now. In her cabin, she hands Peter a package in brown paper, and sends him on his way to the hold where the boys are. Peter returns and they divide up the bread that Molly gave him. All the boys sleep, except for Peter, who is kept awake that night by thoughts and questions about flying rats and glowing green eyes.

In Chapter 8, poor Preston and Harbuckle, the two fattest of the pirates who were cast over board, are adrift in a dory. To make things worse for them, their dory has a hole in it, and is now slowly sinking. Harbuckle manages to untie Preston's hands and, after a minute of forgetfulness, Preston returns the favor. They are barely afloat when they see the ship approaching. Finally, a boy on deck sees them and the ship steers toward them. It would seem that Preston and Harbuckle are saved.

In Chapter 9, Peter stands at the rail and watches as the two pirates are hoisted aboard. They thank Slank for rescuing them, but attempt to lie to him about what ship they are from. Slank tricks them into catching themselves out in a lie, and they admit that they are from the Sea Devil. They tell Slank and everyone around about Black Stache's mad plan to catch the Wasp, and the treasure that is aboard. They don't know what the treasure is though. Slank sends them below decks, still not sure how long he will let them live. Peter overhears a group of sailors talking about the rat and the trunk, and Alf tells them about his experience with the trunk. After the pirates laugh it off and leave, Peter tells Alf that he believes him because he saw the rat. Alf and Peter agree that they both want to know what is in that trunk.

In Chapter 10, as the Sea Devil closes in on the Wasp, Black Stache summons Smee and Storey, his first mate and crew chief, to go over the battle plan. It would seem that Black Stache's plan, mad thought it is, is working perfectly. They are perfectly positioned for a downwind run, after which they should have no trouble catching the Wasp. After they two crewmen leave to convey the orders, Stache takes the model of the Sea Devil, and pushes it into the model of the Wasp, pushing until the Wasp falls off the table and shatters. As he steps on the remains of the model Wasp, he thinks to himself that it is time for the kill.





In Chapter 11, Molly sneaks across the deck late at night and peers out into the sea. She is waiting for the porpoises, and is glad when they finally arrive. She has studied their language of squeaks and clicks, and tells them about Black Stache and his hunt for her father's ship. She tells them to go warn her father. She also tries to tell them about the trunk on her ship, but they don't understand. Some sailors come looking to see what the noise is, and decide that it was just the porpoises. However, Molly has to return to her cabin now, so she is unable to tell them about the trunk in a way that they can understand.

In Chapter 12, Peter and James witnessed the whole exchange between Molly and the porpoises. After sending James back to their hold, Peter sneaks to Molly's cabin and confronts her about it. She lies to him, telling him that she only imitated the noises that they make to see if she could get a response. He calls her on the lie, and tells her that if she won't explain what is going on to him, that he will simply have to find out for himself. Molly tells him that if she has to, she'll tell on him to Slank to keep him out of that hold with the trunk. Peter, feeling betrayed, calls her a rat and leaves.

In Chapter 13, Molly's father is waiting for a report from Ammm. He finally gives in to his impatience and calls out over the rail in a series of clicks and squeals. Ammm comes to the surface, and greets Leonard. Leonard replies and asks news of Molly. Ammm tells him that Molly said three things. First, her teeth are green, which Leonard attributes to her poor command of the porpoise language. Second, a bad man is after Leonard's ship. Leonard is certain that this is Black Stache, though he does not know how Stache knows about the trunk. Finally, Ammm reports that Molly told him that something is on her boat, but that he could not understand it. He tries to relay it to Leonard exactly as Molly said it, but the porpoise is not well made for human speech, and they are interrupted by the sailor on watch. Leonard tries to warn Captain Scott, but the captain assures him that no vessel can catch the Wasp. However, as Scott soon discovers for himself, he is wrong. On deck, he can see the Sea Devil bearing down on them at a truly demonic speed. As the pirate ship approaches, the Queen's men prepare for battle.

## Chapters 7 through 13 Analysis

In Chapter 7, Hungry Bob is amused when the boys finally give in to their hunger and eat the soup. They still don't eat the really wiggly ones, but they do choke down the mostly dead stuff. Peter realizes that the captain is not going to be any help, as the sailors openly mock him now. Slank will more likely give Peter the lash than good food if he is asked. Peter decides that his only option is to sneak aft and steal some food for the boys. That night, after eating bread for the first time in several days, the boys sleep well. Peter, however, does not. He is perplexed by the glowing green eyes, which he suspects may have been Molly, though he is not sure how. He also wonders how a rat can fly. Peter does not tell the other boys about this, but he vows to himself that he will find out what is going on with the mysterious cargo in the aft hold.

In Chapter 8, Preston is not a very intelligent or quick thinking person. Harbuckle has to grunt several times and point to his hands before Preston realizes that his friend has a



good idea. Preston should roll over so that Harbuckle can untie his hands. After Harbuckle does this, Preston removes his own gag and draws in a breath of fresh sea air. He is relieved, and owes it all to Harbuckle, who he has momentarily forgotten. When Preston does drag Harbuckle back up and take his gag out, Harbuckle is understandably upset with his slow shipmate.

In Chapter 9, Harbuckle knows better than to admit to being a pirate, as Slank is just as likely to send him back overboard. Preston on the other hand, is too stupid to realize this, and gives them away. After Slank proves this by catching them in a lie, they finally admit to being from the Sea Devil. Slank can't believe Black Stache's plan, but Preston and Harbuckle are able to convince him that it is the truth. The sailors do not believe that there is magic about the trunk, or that there was a flying rat, but Alf does. Peter and Alf talk about it, and Alf asks Peter if he wants to know what is in the chest. When Peter says yes, Alf admits that he also wants to know. This may well foreshadow an agreement or companionship between the young orphan and the sailor.

Chapter 10 shows us more evidence of Black Stache's madness. All around his cabin are the remains of rotten meat and cheese, from his stool to his bunk. Only after Storey and Smeem seem reluctant to sit, does Black Stache seem to notice that his cabin is in such a sorry shape. He made his cabin boy, the sixth one this year, walk the plank for touching his model ships. After the other two leave, Stache pushes the Wasp model off the table, and crushes it underfoot. He seems determined to destroy the Wasp after he takes all the treasure and some crew members as prisoners. Despite his obvious madness, Black Stache has executed his plan to perfection, and they are now positioned just right to catch the Wasp. This does not bode well for the troop and sailors aboard the Wasp, especially Molly's father, the ambassador to Rundoon.

In Chapter 11, Molly is able to communicate with porpoises. Her father has taught her some of the language, and has sent Ammm and his group to check up on her. She is not alright, as they had hoped she would be, and this upsets the porpoises. They are ready to rush off to warn her father about Black Stache when she stops them. She feels the need to explain to them about the trunk, so that they can relay the message to her father, but they don't understand. In her frustration, she yells in English, drawing the attention of two sailors who are on watch. The late night meeting is over, and she must sneak off to her cabin.

In Chapter 12, Peter and James are both curious as to what Molly is doing talking to fish, but Peter, feeling that he is the leader, sends James back to their hold where it is relatively safe. At first, Molly denies it, then finally, she admits that she was talking to them. Peter doesn't believe her lie that she was only imitating their noises to see if she could get a response. Peter seems to be very good at telling when people are lying to him. When Molly tells Peter that she will turn him in to Slank if she has to, Peter feels angry and betrayed. Peter had thought that they were friends, but now he thinks he was wrong. He calls her a rat, and storms away angry. Peter decides that he does not need Molly to tell him what is going on, that he and Alf can find out for themselves.



In Chapter 13, Captain Scott is too confident in his new ship design. He does not accept the possibility that another vessel could catch them, so he is not too worried about Leonard's warning. However, he changes his mind when he goes above deck and sees the Sea Devil bearing down on them. The sail that Black Stache had specially designed is one single massive sail, black and shaped like a brassiere for a giant woman, giving it the name, The Ladies.



# Chapters 14 through 19

## Chapters 14 through 19 Summary

In Chapter 14, Peter approaches Alf and tells him that he has a plan to find out what is in the trunk. Alf tells Peter that this is a terrible idea. Slank is angry about John falling asleep on guard duty, and had him whipped. Now, the guard will be more wary. Slank also said that if he finds out who was in the hold, or if he catches anyone else in there, that he'll feed them to the sharks. Peter explains to Alf that his life is hardly worth living as it is, and that it seems it will be worse when they reach Rundoon. Peter sees this as his only chance, and he is going to try. Alf is touched by his words and agrees to help him.

In Chapter 15, with the Sea Devil still gaining on them, no matter what they do, Leonard Aster devises a plan. Captain Scott does not like it, but when Aster pulls rank and orders him to do it, he has little choice. Leonard Aster orders Captain Scott to load the trunk into a dory, and set Aster and the trunk adrift. Aster's plan is that Stache will turn to over take the dory, exposing his broadside to the cannon fire from the Wasp. To help give the Wasp some advantage, they have an archer shoot the giant brassiere sail with a flaming arrow to set it afire.

When Black Stache sees that Aster has gone overboard with the treasure, he devises a plan of his own. Black Stache throws his captured sailor overboard, so that Aster will rescue him. When he does, it brings Aster in range of harpoons. Stache's crew shoots the dory with harpoons connected to heavy chains, and draws them in to the ship. The whole time, the Sea Devil is still over taking the Wasp with little trouble.

Captain Scott sees that Aster's plan has failed and so instead of leaving, he turns the Wasp to the side. He shoots at the Sea Devil, but misses. Even after the second round of shots, he only manages to hit with a couple. Determined to save Aster and his ship, Captain Scott stops retreating and orders his men ready for battle. Instead of being boarded, he will board the pirate ship.

Black Stache brings the Englishman on board with the trunk, only to find that it is full of sand and that the true treasure is on the other ship. Aster jumps overboard as the two ships collide, and rides away on a porpoise. Captain Scott's men fight the pirates, but they are outnumbered. Ultimately, Scott surrenders and readies himself to negotiate for the lives of his men.

In Chapter 16, Molly is met by Ammm, who is alone. Ammm explains that Black Stache has taken Molly's father's ship, but that the other porpoises were swimming Aster to an island. Molly sends a message to her father to hurry with help, and sets off in search of a trustworthy ally.



In Chapter 17, Black Stache and his crew is busy moving all of the provisions and sails from the Sea Devil to the Wasp. In Captain Scott's cabin, Stache and Smee discuss a new name for the ship. Stache settles on the Jolly Roger, and that is the new name of the ship. Storey, after being ordered to set a course to go back for the Never Land, quickly returns to the cabin to summon Black Stache. Black Stache comes on deck to see a dark mass of clouds roiling toward them. He has seen many things, but this does for a moment scare him.

In Chapter 18, Peter waits for the cook to be drunk on rum and passed out. Then he sneaks into the galley and fills a jar full of rum. When Hungry Bob brings them their food that night, Peter takes the pot of soup up to Alf, with the jar of rum mixed in. Alf takes the food to Leatherface, the guard at the aft hold. Leatherface drinks the soup and is soon knocked out. Peter and Alf break into the aft hold, but before they can get inside and peek at the trunk, Molly shows up and threatens to scream to keep them from seeing it. Alf tries to persuade Peter to run with him, but Peter stays. Alf leaves and Molly resumes counting to ten. Peter finally talks her into telling him what is in the trunk.

In Chapter 19, Black Stache has left all of the British sailors that he didn't keep as hostages on the Sea Devil in their long johns. The uniforms he plans to use to trick the crew of the Never Land into believing that they really are the Wasp come to their rescue in this terrible storm. The storm is coming on fast and hard and Stache knows that they will not be able to out run it, even in the Wasp. He only really hopes to reach the Never Land before the full force of the storm reaches them.

## Chapters 14 through 19 Analysis

In the beginning of chapter 14, Peter notices a dark storm on the way. This serves to foreshadow the coming battle between the Wasp and the Sea Devil that is fast approaching, just like the distant storm.

Peter is dead set on finding out what is in the trunk in the aft hold. He is not put off by Slanks threats to feed people to the sharks, or to whip them. Peter has a plan, but he needs a helper. Alf tells him that it is not worth it, but Peter's words touch Alf so, that he can't hold back a few tears. Alf tells Peter that his words are truer for him than Peter can know, and that he will help him find out what is in the trunk.

In Chapter 15, while the crew of the Wasp run around frantic, both Aster and Scott retain their British calm. They discuss the upcoming battle with a calm that betrays no worry, although they are both very worried. Aster's plan is to save the Wasp, and hopefully himself as well. Even if his plan fails, and he is killed, he would rather both he and the treasure go under the sea than the treasure fall into the hands of Black Stache. Scott does not like the plan, as he is unwilling to put Aster in more danger. He is sworn to protect both Aster and the treasure. When Aster pulls rank on him, Scott is angry, but ultimately does his duty and obeys. Both Captain Scott and Black Stache have to think quickly and be crafty in their plans in this battle. Both of them muse that none of the others know what it really means to be captain.



When Black Stache discovers that the trunk is full of sand, he also notices that Aster is just as surprised as he is. Aster really believed that the treasure was aboard the Wasp, and did not realize that the real treasure was aboard the Never Land, and that his was a decoy. When Scott sees that his men can not hope to defeat the pirates, he surrenders. He hopes that he can negotiate for the lives of his men, but he knows that his own life will be forfeit. He is the captain, and he lost his ship.

In Chapter 16, Molly is distraught to hear about the loss of the Wasp, and is worried to hear that Black Stache is now searching for the Never Land. However, it is clear that Molly is more than just a scared little girl. Apparently, she caused the decoy trunk to be put on her father's ship without his knowledge, and now she is getting ready to defend the true treasure herself if Stache manages to overtake them. She decides she needs a trustworthy ally, and goes off in search of Peter.

In Chapter 17, Black Stache does not like the name the Wasp. He feels that a pirate ship should not be named after an insect, so he changes the name to the Jolly Roger. Stache has a plan to catch the slow Never Land. They will sail back to them on a zigzag course, flying the British colors. Then, the Never Land, thinking that this is the Wasp coming back for them, will sail right up to them. At that point, the pirates can board the ship with little trouble. Black Stache does not know that the porpoises have already warned Molly aboard the Never Land that he has the Wasp. As the chapter closes, Black Stache and his pirates see a great storm coming. This storm is so terrible looking that it even scares Black Stache for a moment.

In Chapter 18, Peter does not understand exactly what rum is, but he is smart enough to see its effect on the crew. He knows that the crew loves it, that it makes them do strange things, and that it eventually has them sleeping soundly. He also knows that the cook keeps a stash of it in the galley, which explains why the food is so terrible, as the cook is more often drunk than sober. Alf likes Peter's plan to drug the guard and go into the hold, but when they actually get there the plan begins to fall apart. The door is locked. Alf breaks the lock off the door, but the noise attracts Molly, who must know the secret of the trunk, but will tell no one. She begins counting to ten, and if they are not gone by ten, she will scream for Slank. Alf does not want to be whipped or thrown overboard, so he leaves. He has taken a liking to Peter, and wishes that he would just see reason and go with him, but in the end he lets him stay. Peter convinces Molly that he can help her, but she has to tell him what is going on. She decides to tell him.

In Chapter 19, the crew is afraid of this terrible coming storm, which Black Stache compares to a witch, with the wind as her broom. Black Stache's orders to increase speed in this wind, to ride the witch's broom all the way to the Never Land, puts the ship and the crew in grave danger. The crew, knowing that it is death to question the orders of Black Stache, willingly go headlong into what may be their death, as possible death is a better chance than certain death. While the crew is terrified, Black Stache has not had this much fun in years.



# Chapters 20 through 25

## Chapters 20 through 25 Summary

In Chapter 20, safely in Molly's cabin, she tells Peter just about all that she knows about what is going on. Molly and her father belong to a secret group called the Starcatchers. Their enemy, and indeed the enemy of all humanity, are known as the Others. Most meteors are made of rock that falls from space. However, some is made of a mysterious, and magical substance that they call Starstuff. No one really knows what Starstuff is, but the few who know about it do know of its great power. Many of the mythological gods of humanity's past were people who discovered Starstuff and abused the power of it to enslave humanity. The trunk contains the largest supply of Starstuff in modern memory. The Queen of England is being manipulated by someone who knows the Others. She is sending it to King Zarboff the Third, who is one of the worst of the Others. The Starcatchers plan to capture Zarboff and the Starstuff in Rundoon, but someone has switched the trunks, and the Starstuff is on board the Never Land instead of the Wasp. Molly also tells Peter that the Wasp has been defeated by Black Stache, and that he is now on his way to get them. Molly and Peter need a plan.

In Chapter 21, Black Stache and his pirates are just about finished changing into British naval uniforms and the pirate in the crow's nest sights the Never Land. The battle will soon begin.

Chapter 22 finds the crew of the Never Land working furiously to prepare for the coming storm. Peter finds Molly, and they discuss a plan to protect the trunk. First, they must make it through this storm.

In Chapter 23, Black Stache and his men are all changed, and will come up to the Never Land in a matter of moments. Smee hoists the Union Jack so that the crew of the Never Land will think that they are the Wasp and her crew returning for them.

In Chapter 24, after a failed attempt at convincing Slank that the Wasp was crewed by pirates, Molly and Peter attempt to throw the trunk overboard. Slank catches them, and grabs Molly. Peter bites Slank, and Slank throws Peter overboard.

In Chapter 25, when the two ships come along side each other, both crews start tying the ships together. Smee calls out to Slank, but gives away the fact that something is amiss. Slank carefully scans the unshaven faces, and the bare feet, then yells for the crew to cut the lines. The pirates jump across before the ships can separate, and Black Stache introduces himself to Slank and tells him he's there for the treasure. Slank lies, and says that they have a few women only, no treasure. Black Stache and some of the pirates set out to search the ship to look for the trunk.





## Chapters 20 through 25 Analysis

In Chapter 20, Peter is skeptical of Molly's story, but becomes a believer when she demonstrates her ability to fly. She explains to Peter the concept that power corrupts, and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is an important idea, as it is the central reason for the existence and behavior of the Starcatchers. Peter quickly catches on to the idea that the Starcatchers are the good guys, and the Others are the bad guys who only care about power. Peter agrees to help Molly, and they need a plan.

In Chapter 21, Black Stache notices a porpoise. It is strange that a porpoise would get caught in such a storm, but he takes it as good luck. When the porpoise leaves, he pushes down the worry that his luck may have gone with it. Black Stache demonstrates a sailor's superstition here, and his reliance on luck. He does not know that the porpoises are actually working with his opponents, which makes them bad luck for him.

In Chapter 22, Peter struggles over whether or not he should trust Alf enough to recruit his help. He ultimately decides not to. Molly and Peter briefly discuss throwing the chest overboard, now that they know that not only is Black Stache after it, but apparently Slank is working for the Others. However, this would be a dangerous idea, since then they would have no control over who finds it. Molly sets that idea aside as a last ditch effort if all else fails.

In Chapter 23, Black Stache notices how handsome he looks in a proper, clean captain's uniform.

In Chapter 24, when the Wasp draws near, the crew of the Never Land cheers. Black Stache's plan has worked once again. The crew of the Never Land don't realize that the Wasp is crewed by pirates in British uniforms, flying the British flag. Molly tries to convince Slank that Captain Scott is not coming to help them, but he will not believe it.

When Peter touches the chest, he feels great. He sees a bright light, and hears the music that Alf heard. Molly understands what Peter is going through, since it is worse for her. She is trained and used to it, and it's allure is almost too much for her. Peter manages to get hold of himself, then they try to throw the chest overboard.

In Chapter 25, when Smee messes up, Slank notices that Molly was right. When Black Stache introduces himself, Slank turns a curious look to Molly. This catches Stache off guard, as he knows nothing of the porpoises or Slank and Molly's conversation. Slank is the only one on the Never Land who is not visibly afraid of the pirates and Black Stache. He calmly relays the orders to lay aside their weapons, and then calmly faces Stache. He denies that they have any treasure on board, but offers Stache the women instead. Black Stache knows that the chest is on the Never Land, and warns Slank that if it is not there, Slank will be the one who is sorry.





# Chapters 26 through 31

## Chapters 26 through 31 Summary

In Chapter 26, Peter falls into the sea and believes that he will surely die. Instead of dying, he is saved by Ammm. The porpoise lifts him out of the water, as the Starstuff begins to take effect. Peter can now fly. Ammm teaches Peter how to fly, then they head back to the ship.

In Chapter 27, Smee finds the trunk on deck near the starboard rail. Just as Stache is about to open the trunk, Molly gets free of Richard and knocks Black Stache over, scratching his face. Richard goes after Molly, and the pirates attack Richard. Now the pirates and Richard are fighting, and Molly is scratching at Black Stache's face. Slank is the first to notice, but certainly not the only, that Peter is returning. Everyone stops what they are doing to watch Peter float down to the deck from ten feet above the sailors' heads.

In Chapter 28, Peter's return distracts the pirates and non-pirates enough that Molly is able to get free of Black Stache. She points the trunk out to Peter and he immediately grabs it and throws it overboard. As the trunk is sinking, Peter loses his ability to fly. Molly, realizing this, jumps into the sea also.

In Chapter 29, Black Stache orders the ships cut loose so that they can escape the storm. One sailor has seen a reef, and where there is a reef, there must also be an island near. Stache takes Little Richard, Slank, and the woman prisoner. The rest he leaves to die in the storm.

In Chapter 30, just as Peter is sure that he will die, Molly grabs him by the hair and pulls him out of the waves. She uses the Starstuff from her locket so that she could fly. On their way to the island, Peter falls from her grasp. He manages to keep his head above water long enough to barely breathe, and finally he washes ashore. After crawling up far enough to be out of the waves, Peter falls asleep on the beach.

In Chapter 31, the storm washes the trunk up onto the beach of a lagoon. The storm has not been nice to this trunk, and it now has several new cracks, some quite large. As the seawater rushes around the trunk, some water seeps in, and then back out. The water forms a multicolored pool around the trunk that does not recede with the sea. Eventually three fish swim into the pool and stay. As the color of the pool changes, the fish begin to change as well.

## Chapters 26 through 31 Analysis

In Chapter 2, as Peter goes overboard, he is certain that he will die. He does not know how to swim, so there seems to be no hope for him. He is aware of the fact that he is able to think many times faster than usual. After he realizes that he can fly, Peter takes



a few hints from the porpoise and practices his powers of flight. When he realizes that he has gone far from the ship, he becomes afraid. As he approaches the ship on his return, he notices that it is getting harder and harder for him to stay aloft. The Starstuff is wearing off.

In Chapter 27, Black Stache quickly verifies what Slank has already told him. There is no real treasure here. When he asks Slank once more where the treasure is, he notices just the slightest of wavering from him. Black Stache curls his finger around the trigger very elaborately, for a more dramatic effect in order to break Slank. Just as Slank seems about to tell him, Smee interrupts. When Stache sees the trunk that Smee points out, he can tell by Slank's expression that this is his treasure.

In Chapter 28, when Peter flies back to the ship and throws overboard the trunk, Black Stache and Slank both shout out in unison "No!". They also both shout for someone to catch Peter, once again in unison. This demonstrates the similarity between the pirate and the unscrupulous sailor. The author even goes as far as to point out that they sound almost as if they are one man shouting the orders.

In Chapter 29, Black Stache rationalizes to his crew that the boy can't have been flying. It must have been a trick of the wind. However, despite his words to Smee, Stache knows that somehow Peter was flying, and that it has something to do with the trunk. Rather than give up, Black Stache is now more determined than before to get the trunk. He takes three prisoners and leaves the others to die.

In Chapter 30, when Molly uses her locket so that she can fly and go after Peter, she uses up her only supply of Starstuff. Now she has no more magic if they encounter another emergency situation.

In Chapter 31, the Starstuff in the trunk has an odd effect on the water that seeps in. The water does not leave the area around the trunk. It is important that a few fish enter this pool and begin to change. Though their change is not detailed here, the fact that they have changed will play an important role later.



# Chapters 32 through 37

## Chapters 32 through 37 Summary

In Chapter 32, the Never Land begins to break apart. As several men are sent overboard by the waves, Alf takes the boys to a dory. He puts them in the dory and pushes them off into the sea just as the Never Land goes up for its last time. After the ship is crushed in the waves and rocks, the boys see no sign of Alf. They float for a few hours and the sky clears to a bright blue. They spot land, but are unable to steer the dory toward it. Alf, floating on a barrel, swims by and grabs the dory. He ties the dory's lead line around his chest, then swims them to shore.

In Chapter 33, as the storm abates, the pirates catch sight of land. Black Stache orders them to quickly get them into the lagoon and anchor so they can go ashore. Slank and Little Richard hatch a plan to escape when they realize that land is near.

In Chapter 34, Peter wakes up on the beach, and heads for the treeline looking for a water source. When he takes a break at the treeline, Molly finds him. They bring a water barrel up into the trees and hide it. They then set out to see if they can find the trunk. When they arrive at a high platou, overlooking where Peter came ashore, they see, in a smaller lagoon nearby, Alf and the boys coming ashore in the little dory. Molly and Peter decide to go down to meet them, but they must hurry. The Wasp is sailing directly for the spot where Peter came ashore.

In Chapter 35, Alf and the boys head off into the jungle to look for water and to get away from the exposed beach. The boys lose sight of Alf, and eventually Ted disappears too. James wants to go back to look for Ted, but the other two boys won't go. James leaves them to find Ted, but has to come back. When he returns to where they were, the other boys are nowhere to be seen. James collapses on the jungle floor and cries. When he looks back up, he notices two very large, very brown feet.

In Chapter 36, Peter and Molly head down in what they hope is the direction of the boys and Alf. The jungle is dense, and they are unable to see very much. Molly hears one of the boys yelling, but cautions Peter from yelling back, as they have no way of knowing if there are pirates nearby. As they approach the area that the voice came from, they begin to hear more voices. These voices talked in a series of clicks.

In Chapter 37, Black Stache and his men come ashore. They find a set of foot prints heading off into the jungle, and between them is what appears to be the mark of the trunk made as it was dragged into the jungle. Black Stache and the pirates head into the jungle following the tracks.



## Chapters 32 through 37 Analysis

In Chapter 32, the boys are scared, but Alf saves them. After they spot land, they try to kick and thrust themselves toward it. Unfortunately, since none of them know how to swim, they are still at the mercy of the sea. Alf's convenient return saves them. When they arrive at the beach of the lagoon, the boys thank Alf and God, in that order. Alf informs them that just because they are on land and the storm is over, does not mean that they are safe. Their safety depends partly on who else may be there.

In Chapter 33, Black Stache and the crew are tired after a sleepless night in the storm, but they quickly heave to when land is spotted. Slank comes up with a plan to escape. He plans to tie the cow to the door of the cell, so that when the cow jerks away, she rips off the door as well. He plans to use the oafish Little Richard to make the cow jerk away. When Richard, who does not know how to milk a cow, makes the attempt, the cow should try to escape.

In Chapter 34, when Molly finds Peter, she touches his arm. Peter is overcome with strong emotions for her, and must cast his eyes down to keep her from seeing it. As Molly tells him how worried she was, she has to do the same to keep Peter from seeing the emotion in her eyes. Both are developing feelings for each other, but does not realize that the other feels the same.

In Chapter 35, Alf knows that if they don't find water they will die. He also knows that they are exposed on the beach, and need to head into the jungle. The boys don't understand any of this, but they follow him because he is the adult. Alf explains to the boys that there may be savages on the island, and that they may be cannibals, but that if they don't find water, they will die anyways.

In Chapter 36, Peter wants to yell for his friends, but Molly knows that the pirates may be nearby. There is also the possibility that there are others around, though Molly doesn't know who that might be. She is determined to find out about anyone else before they find out about her and Peter.

In Chapter 37, Black Stache is so overwhelmed by the beauty of the lagoon, as well as his own safety, that he shows uncharacteristic reverence of the lagoon. It is unlike Black Stache to care much about anything other than himself and treasure. When the pirates examine the tracks and determine that it is probably two children, dragging the trunk between them. Black Stache assumes that Peter and someone else has the trunk. He judges this to be the mark of the trunk because it was obviously made by something heavy, like a trunk. What he is forgetting, however, is that this trunk is not heavy.



# Chapters 38 through 44

## Chapters 38 through 44 Summary

In Chapter 38, there are now nine fish in the special pool surrounding the trunk. They move only enough to remain in the pool of special water. They are slowly changing. They are not human, but neither are they fish. They grow their pectoral fins out into distinct arms with fingers, and their dorsal fins shrink into their bodies as they elongate. Their heads separate from their trunks, and their eyes move closer together.

In Chapter 39, after a sad attempt at milking the cow, Richard succeeded in angering the cow enough for her to rip the door off of the brig wall. Little Richard and Slank quietly tie up the crew and arm themselves. Then, Richard launches a dory and they head to shore to go after Black Stache.

In Chapter 40, James looks up to see two tall savages. They have spears, but instead of killing him they seem to be laughing at him. They lead him to a clearing. In the clearing, there are more savages as well as Alf and the other boys. Alf and the boys wonder at whether these savages are friendly or not, and Alf decides that it is time to communicate. He raises his right hand and says "How", which causes the savages to laugh. Alf and the savage exchange "How"s for a while, then the savage asks Alf if they can progress the conversation, as he is tiring of "How".

In Chapter 41, as Molly and Peter near the voices, they find themselves at the clearing full of savages. They arrive just in time to see the old savage level his spear at Alf.

In Chapter 42, Slank and Little Richard find the bung from the water barrel, and realize that Black Stache is chasing the wrong group. They move his longboat around the point, so that when he returns he will have a long swim back to the Wasp. Slank and Little Richard head out to find the treasure.

In Chapter 43, Alf asks the savage how he learned to speak English. The man explains that he was forced into slavery aboard a British ship, and that he learned English during his thirteen years of service on the ship. The ship was wrecked near the island, and he swam home.

In Chapter 44, Peter decides that he must help his friends, but Molly insists that the trunk is more important than all of them together. Molly heads off after the trunk, but Peter stays to help his friends. Instead of rescuing his friends, he actually gets captured and must join his friends in custody of the Mollusk people.

## Chapters 38 through 44 Analysis

In Chapter 38, not only are the fish transforming physically, but their thoughts are more complex now. They are thinking about the trunk.



In Chapter 39, when Slank and Richard escape, Slank does not even pause to rescue Mrs. Bumbrake. While he was glad to keep her company on the ship, he does not really care about her. After tying up the angry pirates, Slank and Little Richard head to shore. Slank has a gold locket on his person when they leave the ship, and they are heading for Black Stache.

In Chapter 40, James is surprised to see that the savages are not going to eat him. Back in the clearing, the savages do not see at all concern when Alf approaches one of them. The savages all get a good laugh out of Alf, but eventually the savage to whom he is speaking tires of "How". He tells Alf this, in plain English.

In Chapter 41, when Peter and Molly find their friends and the savages, Peter misunderstands the situation. He can see what is going on, but can not hear what Alf is saying. He is sure that Alf says the wrong thing, and is going to die. He tells Molly that they must do something, and that they'll think of something.

In Chapter 42, Slank quickly catches on to the fact that Black Stache is not chasing the trunk, but actually something from the Never Land wreckage. Slank remember that the trunk is light, and does not figure that it would make such marks in the sand. Slank is certain that the treasure is on the island, he can feel it. Slank is determined to make the treasure his own.

In Chapter 43, Alf is surprised to learn that the other man speaks English. The other man has a hatred for the British, thanks to his slavery aboard a British ship. He informs Alf and the boys that they have determined that things are better on the island when only the Mollusk people live on the island. One of the boys works up the courage to ask if they let the visitors go, but the savage reminds the boy that he never said they let them go. This tells Alf and the boys that they are likely to die after all.

In Chapter 44, Peter is angry with Molly for choosing the trunk over Peter's friends. He accuses her of not caring about them, but she insists that she does. It's just that the trunk and the Starstuff is more important. Peter decides to rescue them by himself, and breaks off from her.



# Chapters 45 through 51

## Chapters 45 through 51 Summary

In Chapter 45, Black Stache and Smee make their way up to a ridge to look around. Black Stache spots the savages with the boys and Alf, and orders Smee to round up the men and get ready. They will attack the Savages and recapture the boys, and hopefully find the trunk.

In Chapter 46, after a heated explanation of British savagery, Fighting Prawn takes Alf and the boys to a type of cage. He explains that it was harder for them to decide what to do about the visitors, since some of them were children. However, the law won out, and they must be fed to Mr. Grin.

In Chapter 47, Slank and Little Richard head around the point and find another lagoon. This lagoon is more beautiful than the one they landed in, with a massive waterfall at its center. Slank sees a mermaid sitting on a rock, but when he looks again, she is gone. After trying to explain it to Little Richard, Richard finally sees two more mermaids.

In Chapter 48, Fighting Prawn explains to Alf and the boys that Mr. Grin used to live nearby, but left them alone. One day, the British came and hunted Mr. Grin. They captured him and tied him up on the beach and tortured him. Fighting Prawn's son tried to cut him loose, but the British shot him in the leg. Mr. Grin at the boy, then the British. The Mollusk people let him go, as it was not his fault. However, he had developed a taste for human meat, and they had to capture him, as he lurked about their camps trying to eat them.

In Chapter 49, when Slank and Little Richard catch up to the mermaids, Slank calls out to them. They seem scared but don't run until after Little Richard smiles at them. The two men follow the mermaids to a cave, and go in. there are perhaps half a dozen fish women, with razor sharp teeth, guarding the trunk. Little Richard goes for the trunk, and when the fish women attack him, Slank shoots one of them. The gunshot scares them enough that they abandon the trunk and leave the cave.

In Chapter 50, Peter falls down into the dark, and lands on Tubby Ted. As his eyes adjust to the darkness, he can see his group. He can also see the piles of bones and skulls. Alf and the boys hear growling. Each growl sounds slightly closer than the one before. Peter sees a set of glowing red eyes that seem impossibly far apart.

In Chapter 51, as Fighting Prawn and the rest of the Mollusk people wait for the sounds of screams to begin, something flies into their clearing. Fighting Prawn's mother tries to tell him that a bird is here, but he brushes her off. When the others finally notice it, they realize that it is not a bird. Fighting Prawn begins to wonder if perhaps Peter and Alf were telling the truth about the magic trunk on the island.





## Chapters 45 through 51 Analysis

In Chapter 45, Black Stache believes that Alf must be using the treasure, which he considers his own already, to barter his and the boys' freedom from the Savages. Smee is worried about the spears and the possibility of cannibalism, but Black Stache is determined to have the trunk.

In Chapter 46, Tubby Ted inspires an angry rant from Fighting Prawn when he calls him a savage. Fighting Prawn tells them about the savagery he saw aboard the British ship, and felt at the wrong end of a British whip. He assures the boys that the only time the Mollusk people see savagery is when they have visitors.

In Chapter 47, Slank knows that the mermaids have the trunk. He is determined to get it from them. Little Richard is concerned that they might get hurt. Slank assures Richard that they will not hurt the mermaids, so long as they do not fight to keep the trunk. Slank's only concern is the trunk, and the magic that it contains. In this way, he is once again comparable to Black Stache.

In Chapter 48, Fighting Prawn will not spare even the boys. He reasons that since all of the visitors in the past have been trouble, then so will they. He reasons that since his son died, then so could these boys. Alf tries to barter with his own life. He offers to go willingly, but asks that he please spare the boys. Fighting Prawn does not relent.

In Chapter 49, Slank and Richard are both entranced by what they believe are mermaids. They are beautiful, and Little Richard is looking forward to meeting the blonde one. However, after they attack in the cave, Little Richard changes his mind. The fish women are vicious in their attack, but eventually the gun scares them off. Despite their semi human appearances, the fish women seem to still have very fishy instincts.

In Chapter 50, when Prentiss sees the bones, he begins weeping uncontrollably. Alf tries to reassure him, but it is no use. When Peter sees the glowing red eyes, he wonders at how far apart they are. They are impossibly far apart, meaning that the head that they are on must be incredibly big.

In Chapter 51, Fighting Prawn and the Mollusk people wait by the cage to hear the screams start. This will tell them that Mister Grin is doing his job, and the law is being enforced. They do not want to hear it, and they are sorry that they had to do this to the boys, but the law is the law. Fighting Prawn hopes that Mister Grin does not take his time with them, as he sometimes does.





# Chapters 52 through 57

## Chapters 52 through 57 Summary

In Chapter 52, Peter and Alf arm themselves with human leg bones from the pile. They try to fight off Mister Grin, who turns out to be a twenty five to thirty foot long, massive crocodile. He must weigh at least a ton. Alf falls and hits his head, so Peter jumps on Mister Grin's back and starts bashing him with the bone. Mister Grin bites the bone, and throws Peter off. Peter is backed into a corner by the giant crocodile, but Molly comes to the rescue. She flies over the wall and throws Peter the locket. He touches the Starstuff so that he can fly out, but punches the crocodile in the nose at the same time. Mister Grin floats off happily into the jungle.

In Chapter 53, Black Stache and his pirates have crept up on the Mollusk people, and are preparing to attack. Before they get a chance, they see Molly fly over the wall. Then, the giant crocodile flies out over the wall and into the jungle. The Mollusk people run off into the jungle, leaving only Fighting Prawn behind. Black Stache prepares his men to attack Fighting Prawn and get the kids from the other side of the wall, when the children, holding hands in a circle, rise up into the air from behind the wall.

In Chapter 54, Slank and Little Richard now have possession of the trunk. Little Richard, who is carrying the trunk, notices that his wounds are healing. Slank orders him to put the trunk down immediately and go get the boats. They row toward the pirate ship, planning to throw all overboard, save the few they will need to sail the ship at pistol point. Slank and Little Richard do not notice the trail of bubbles following them in the water.

In Chapter 55, Peter has each of the children and Alf touch the glowing orb in his hand. When they've all touched it, he snaps the locket closed. Since Peter is the only one of the group other than Molly with any flight experience, he has them all hold hands and tows them along. As they fly, they pass right over Black Stache and his pirates.

In Chapter 56, as Slank and Richard row toward the Wasp, the boat begins to lurch. Each of the men blame the other, but then they notice that the mermaids are back. They have come for the trunk. After capsizing the boats, the mermaids attack the men then take the trunk back to their cave. Slank asks Richard how he feels about heights, then takes out his locket of Starstuff.

In Chapter 57, Molly, Alf, and the boys touch down just outside the jungle on the beach. Peter tries to explain what happened to the boys, but Alf figures out that it is the magic of the trunk. Peter assures Molly that they will find the trunk, and thanks her for coming back for them. Peter and Molly agree that all they can do now is try to get some sleep, and Ammm shows up.



## Chapters 52 through 57 Analysis

In Chapter 52, when Alf and Peter arm themselves, Alf once again takes responsibility of the children and tries to lead the giant Crocodile away. When Alf is first introduced, he muses about how he is neither a good man nor a good sailor. However, his behavior around the boys, especially Peter, shows differently. Unlike most of the other sailors, Alf cares about the boys, instead of only himself. Perhaps the magic of the trunk has changed him, or perhaps he always had it in him, but never had reason to show it.

In Chapter 53, the Pirates are just as scared by the floating girl and the floating crocodile as the Mollusk people are. One man speaks up, but Black Stache is unable to punish him. He can see that the man speaks for the crew, so to prevent mutiny, Black Stache treats with him nicely. He tells the crew that flying crocodiles are unusual, but that it is gone. He tells the crew that the power of the treasure made the girl, boy, and crocodile fly, and if they can get it, they'll all have a share in that power. This rallies the troops, but secretly black Stache has no plans to share the power with anyone but himself.

In Chapter 54, Slank does not want Little Richard touching the trunk. Somehow, Slank knows exactly what is in the trunk, and he sneers at Black Stache, who did not know what he was after or who he was up against. Slank plans only to keep enough pirates to sail the ship at gun point, and then plans to kill even Little Richard when they get where they are going. Slank feels that the giant oaf knows too much now to be left alive.

In Chapter 55, Fighting Prawn now realizes that Peter was telling the truth about the magic. Black Stache passes up the perfect opportunity to kill Peter with a gunshot to the heart. Both men are more concerned with the magic of the trunk. Both men want that power for themselves.

In Chapter 56, when the mermaids take the trunk back, Slank is not ready to give up. He possesses his own locket of Starstuff, and now he is going to use it to make himself and Little Richard fly.

In Chapter 57, Alf is able to figure out that it is the magic of the trunk, but still does not know what causes it. Peter promises to explain it to Alf and the boys as soon as he can, but first he must talk to Molly. Molly could have, and believes that she should have, left Peter to die and went after the trunk. Instead, she used up quite a bit of Starstuff to rescue Alf and the boys. Molly can feel the trunk moving, but can not tell where it is. Peter tells her that if someone else has found it, that they can probably find them. All they have to do is wait for morning and get to a high place to look around. Molly agrees that it is the best plan they have, and gets ready to sleep. She is surprised, but happy about Ammm's return.



# Chapters 58 through 64

## Chapters 58 through 64 Summary

In Chapter 58, Black Stache and his pirates are following in the direction that the flying crocodile and the flying children flew. None of them are happy about going in the same direction as the crocodile, but Smee is the only member of the crew who can work up enough courage to mention it. This time, Black Stache is not so friendly with the crew. He yells at them that they are not the one who do the thinking, he is. When they come up to a crossroads in the jungle path, Black Stache stays and orders two scouts to go explore. If they are not back by the time the moon is straight overhead, they pirates will go to the South.

In Chapter 59, Ammm tells Molly that her father is coming, but is unable to really communicate when he will arrive. Ammm tries to lead Molly and the boys to the treasure, but they are having a hard time keeping up with him. Peter heads up a hill to see what is on the other side.

In Chapter 60, Slank and Little Richard are flying the longboat to go after the trunk. Slank rams the mermaid teacher with the longboat, severely injuring her. In the ensuing battle between mermaid and man, no one seems to notice the trunk drifting farther and farther away.

In Chapter 61, Crenshaw returns to the pirates and tells the tale of the two men in the flying longboat. Black Stache, who is sure that the treasure is at the heart of this, orders his men down the path. When they arrive at the lagoon, they see Slank and Little Richard in the longboat, battling mermaids for the trunk. Black Stache orders his men to make ready but wait. They will attack who ever is left after the fight.

In Chapter 62, Peter reaches the top of the hill, only to see that he was right. On the other side of the point is a lagoon. Peter spots the longboat and the battle, and make the logical assumption that the trunk must be nearby. He decides to continue down the hill instead of going back for Molly.

In Chapter 63, after the escape of both the trunk and the teacher, the other mermaids capsize the longboat, then leave. Slank finds himself standing in the water, not ten yards from the shore. The mermaids and the trunk are gone. Slank explains to Richard that if they didn't see where the trunk went, then the mermaids probably didn't either. Slank spots where he figures the trunk is, and takes Richard ashore to go after it.

In Chapter 64, Peter watches the pirates fighting something in the water, then he hears a moaning sound. Peter finds the blonde mermaid, bleeding from her head, lying on the sand. She is dying. Peter uses the last of the Starstuff in Molly's locket to heal her. When the mermaids realize that the trunk is on the shore. Peter runs to the trunk, and



does not notice Slank and Richard behind him. Richard knocks him out with a blow to the head, then leaves him to drown.

## Chapters 58 through 64 Analysis

In Chapter 58, Black Stache does not like the idea of following a giant flying crocodile any more than his crew, but he is obsessed with the power of the trunk, and he has made the connection between the flying creatures and the magic of the trunk. When Black Stache orders two of his pirates to scout out two different paths, he is glad that it is not him out there alone in the night.

In Chapter 59, Alf and James jump at the opportunity to follow Molly and Peter to go after the pirates. The other boys are reluctant, but do not want to remain alone on this strange island. When they near the point and the terrain gets difficult, Peter offers to go see what is on the other side. Molly is reluctant at first to let him go, as if she is afraid that he will not really return to her.

In Chapter 60, when the mermaids abandon the trunk to get away from a flying longboat, the oldest of the group, the blonde leader they call teacher, stays behind. She refuses to leave their treasure, which they adore as their creator. It is the magic of the trunk that caused them to transform into mermaids and gave them almost human intelligence, and it is their god. She will not abandon it.

In Chapter 61, when Crenshaw tells his tale about the flying longboat, the crew begins to talk amongst themselves about the unlucky island. To sailors, be they naval or pirate, luck and superstition are very important. Black Stache orders them to be quiet, but the men are so nervous that he has to yell at them get them to shut up.

In Chapter 62, Peter promised Molly that no matter what he found on the other side of the hill, he would return for her. When he notices the boat, he breaks that promise and heads downhill toward the lagoon. He reasons that since Molly is following Ammm around the point, she will catch up to him soon. There is no point in going all the way back down to get her since the going was so rough.

In Chapter 63, the mermaids leave Slank and Little Richard alone after they rescue their teacher. Slank reasons that if they didn't see where the trunk went during the battle, then the mermaids probably didn't either. He explains to Richard, who is still worried about the mermaids, that he doesn't care one way or the other about the mermaids. His only concern is the trunk.

In Chapter 64, Peter briefly considers not healing the mermaid, but ultimately decides to use the last of the Starstuff to keep her from dying. The mermaid does not talk to Peter, but she does smile at him and give his arm a squeeze. This embarrasses Peter and makes him blush, as the mermaids are not only beautiful, but naked as well.



# Chapters 65 through 73

## Chapters 65 through 73 Summary

In Chapter 65, Molly, Alf, and the boys continue to follow Ammm around the point. Molly can now see that Peter was right, that the lagoon is where Ammm is taking them.

In Chapter 66, the blonde mermaid, the leader and teacher of the others, is trying to help Peter. She is giving him mouth to mouth. Peter is only partially conscious.

In Chapter 67, Slank and Little Richard make progress toward the longboat with the trunk. Little Richard is clearly feeling the effects of the trunk, as he has begun to float in the air. When they reach the longboat, Black Stache and his pirates hold Slank hostage for the trunk. They tie Little Richard and Slank up and leave them where the tide will drown them. Slank escapes, just as the mermaids capsize the dory, freeing the trunk. Slank once again gets the trunk, and is preparing to fly the dory to the ship. Molly, James, and Alf attack Slank and Little Richard, with the help of Ammm in the water. Slank and Little Richard get the upper hand. Just as Slank is about to kill Molly, Peter yells at him. Slank turns to see Peter, surrounded by the mermaids. He has one foot on the rock, and the other on the trunk.

In Chapter 68, Slank discovers that the mermaids are working with Peter. He offers to trade Peter's friends for the trunk. Molly must go with him, to ensure his safety, until he reaches the ship. He'll leave Molly behind in the dory. Alf and Molly and James caution Peter not to take the deal, but Peter accepts and sends over the trunk.

In Chapter 69, Black Stache and his pirates are holding on to the overturned dory, floating out to sea. Stache forces some of the pirates to let go, so that the remaining ones can turn over the boat and get to the ship. It is Smee who points out that instead of drowning, the pirates that Black Stache sentenced to death are standing chest deep in water. They are over a sand bar.

In Chapter 70, Peter honors his agreement and allows Slank and Richard to take the trunk and Molly to the ship. Slank admits to Molly that he has no intentions of letting her go. King Zarboff will reward Slank well when he returns to Rundoon with both the Starstuff and a pretty girl who also happens to be from a great Starcatcher family.

In Chapter 71, back on shore, Black Stache is confronted with the possibility of mutiny. He manages to talk his men into continuing to follow him. The men are not happy about it, but they follow him in search of the trunk.

In Chapter 72, Slank tells Molly that with such a powerful supply of Starstuff, the Others will rule the world. Molly keeps him talking, as Peter flies toward her. Her eyes give Peter away, and both sailors start swinging at him. Peter misses Molly, but she still manages to escape. Slank will take no more chances. He will use the Starstuff now.



In Chapter 73, Peter finds Molly once again as she breaks the surface. This time, he grabs her and brings her into the air. Slank gets hold of her foot, but she kicks him in the face and breaks free. Peter and Molly hover above Slank, as he discovers that the trunk is now empty. In his rage, Slank throws his knife at Peter. His aim is good, but with the power of the Starstuff, Peter is easily able to catch the knife midair. The mermaids take the dory off into the sea.

## Chapters 65 through 73 Analysis

In Chapter 65, Molly hopes that Peter can have some patience and not rush ahead to get himself in trouble. Unfortunately for them, Peter has lost the trunk and gotten himself knocked out. Molly can only follow Ammm the slow way around and hope for the best. However, she is still upset with Peter for not coming back. He should not have gone ahead alone.

In Chapter 66, Peter, in his semi-conscious state, does not realize what is going on. The mermaid is giving him mouth to mouth, trying to resuscitate him. Peter thinks that he is dreaming of being in the arms of a beautiful blonde girl who is kissing him. Peter has never kissed a girl, and until recently, could not conceive of why anyone would want to. Here, Peter reveals his feelings for Molly, if only to himself. He never wanted to kiss a girl until Molly.

In Chapter 67, Slank is not worried when he and Little Richard are tied up. He knows that the mermaids, which Black Stache and his men don't know about, will capsize the boat. Slank shows some experience with Starstuff when he uses it to focus power in his arms to get loose. Slank admits to Molly that he is one of the Others, and that when the trunk gets to King Zarboff, they will be the one's in power.

In Chapter 68, when Peter woke up, he discovered that he and the mermaid could communicate mind to mind, in a combination of pictures and sounds. She tells him that her name is teacher, and they agree on what must be done. When they come up with a plan, it hits them at the same time, as if they were thinking with the same mind.

In Chapter 69, when Black Stache sees that his plan to swim back will not work, he comes up with another plan. Black Stache does not care about his men, and they must soon figure this out. Black Stache forces two of his pirates to let go of the dory, which is basically a death sentence. When he notices that they are standing chest deep in water, he realizes that they are over a sand bar, and can walk to shore.

In Chapter 70, Slank intends to keep Molly and to give her to King Zarboff. He thinks that Peter is a fool to have believed him, but Molly corrects him. Peter is a good person who does what he thinks is right. Slank, however, knows nothing of doing the right thing.

In Chapter 71, Black Stache thinks to himself that he is lucky that his pirates are "idgits". He is right. Despite the fact that he sentenced two of them to death, and that all of his pirates are ready for a mutiny, Black Stache is able to talk them into following him.



He reasons that if he had not ordered the two men to let go, that they would all have floated off sea to drown. Therefore, it is only due to him that any of them are alive now.

In Chapter 72, Slank is practically giddy now. He is getting too far ahead of himself, and thinking too much of his reward. He teases Molly by telling her about Zarboff's snake, and does not notice that Peter is coming up behind him. If it weren't for Molly's tracking Peter with her eyes, Slank would have been taken completely unaware.

In Chapter 73, Slank is filled with rage by the fact that Molly kicks him. Instead of heading for the ship, he decides to use the Starstuff to catch Molly and Peter and kill them. When Slank discovers that he has been defeated by two children, he is even more angry, but his anger can not save him from the mermaids who are taking him farther and farther out to sea.





# Chapters 74 through 79

## Chapters 74 through 79 Summary

In Chapter 74, Peter explains to Molly that he tricked Slank. He took the Starstuff, which was in a golden box, out of the trunk and hid it on the rock with the mermaids. He tells Molly about Teacher and their mental communication. Peter takes Molly to the mermaids and the Starstuff. Molly, who is overwhelmed by conflicting emotions, turns to cry. It is then that she sees her father coming.

In Chapter 75, Molly's father has a team of Starcatchers with him who craft a proper box for the Starstuff and contain it properly. Leonard tells Peter that the Starstuff has changed him, and that he will likely be able to fly forever. He also tells him that he might never grow old. They set out for Aster's ship, but before they get there, a spear sinks deep into the wood of the longboat. Fighting Prawn and the Mollusk people have arrived.

In Chapter 76, Fighting Prawn orders Aster to have his men lower their weapons and leave the Starstuff on the boat. He tells them that he will let them live if they give him the magic box, since he will need them to explain how it works. Aster orders his men to do as the native says. Peter tries to reason with Fighting Prawn, but Fighting Prawn is set on having the power to protect his people forever. Black Stache and his pirates run into the group, swords drawn.

In Chapter 77, Black Stache attacks the now alone Peter and Fighting Prawn. He stabs at Peter, but Peter flies up so fast that Black Stache is unable to stop his lunge. Black Stache's blade sinks deep into Fighting Prawn's chest.

Chapter 78, Black Stache and his pirates row frantically to get to the Wasp and escape. Peter calls out a thought to Teacher, and has her mermaids stop the boat. Peter dashes in and engages Black Stache, who immediately drops the native to defend himself. Peter figures out Black Stache's weakness, and cuts off his left hand. When Smee and Black Stache head for shore, Peter dumps some starstuff onto Fighting Prawn, saving his life. In return for saving his life, Fighting Prawn releases Peter and his friends. Mister Grin has come ashore, and seems to be trying to decide who to eat first. Ultimately, he decides to go for Black Stache's hand, then Black Stache himself. Smee and Stache escape into the jungle, followed by a hungry giant crocodile by the name of Mister Grin.

In Chapter 79, the Mollusk people provide a great feast for the Starcatchers and the boys. They all eat until they can not eat anymore, but then it is time to leave. Peter tells them all that he can not go back. He must stay on the island. When Peter makes this decision, the rest of the orphans decide to stay with him. Leonard gives Peter some more Starstuff, incase he needs to heal someone, then turns a bird into a fairy for him. Peter has a tearful last moment with Molly, then they leave. Fighting Prawn tells Peter and the boys that they will need some wood to build their dwellings and cook fires. Peter





finds the part of the ship that bears the name Never Land. Considering the fairy, the crocodile, the natives, and the mermaids, Peter decides that Never Land is exactly where he is.

## Chapters 74 through 79 Analysis

In Chapter 74, Peter is excited about what he did with the Starstuff as well as his communication with Teacher. Molly, however, does not like it. She likes Peter, and is eaten up with jealousy. Peter does not notice her angry look when he calls Teacher beautiful, or her jealousy in general.

In Chapter 75, when Aster tells Molly and Peter about the leaky box, he mentions that some leaked on a lizard. The lizard changed, but escaped into Loch Ness. He hopes that this is the last they will hear of that, but of course that creature would eventually become the Loch Ness Monster.

Peter worries about never growing old. He is uncertain whether that would be good or bad, but figures he might miss his friends. He says friends, but looks at Molly, clearly showing that he is thinking of one person, not the whole group.

In Chapter 76, Leonard is reluctant to let the natives have the box, but he does not want his people to die. When he orders the Starcatches to lower their weapons, he fingers his locket, perhaps signaling that he has a plan.

In Chapter 77, Black Stache hatches a plan to attack Aster and the Starcatchers. This plan is foiled when the natives appear. Finally, when Fighting Prawn sends everyone but himself and Peter down the beach, Black Stache comes up with another plan. Peter, who is still able to fly, evades Black Stache's blade.

In Chapter 78, Peter takes a significant risk when he decides to save Fighting Prawn. However, Fighting Prawn, being a basically good man, is grateful of Peter's decision. Peter's gesture of goodwill toward an enemy buys his and his friends' lives and freedom.

In Chapter 79, Peter feels as though he would be a freak in England. He can fly and will never grow old. He also is a bit bitter over the fact that everyone else will age, and eventually move on. He feels more at home now on the island with the magical mermaids. All of his young friends, also orphans, decide that they belong where ever Peter is. Alf is too old to worry about more adventures, and simply wants to go home. Alf and Peter's parting is tearful, as over the course of their adventure the two have developed a strong bond. Fighting Prawn says that Peter and his friends are welcome, as well as protected, by the Mollusk people for as long as they want to stay on the island. Peter and Molly, who have both developed deep feelings for each other, have a tearful last moment. Both know that they now have no hope of a real relationship. Molly will grow up, and need more from a relationship than Peter will be able to provide. Also, she will eventually die. Peter would have to watch her grow up without him, and would eventually be alone.



# Characters

## Peter

Peter is an orphan from St. Norbert's Home for Wayward Boys. Peter is a born leader and leads the group of orphan boys that accompany him. Peter always takes charge of the situation, no matter how likely it is that the boys are lost, and always tries to shoulder all of the responsibility himself. After befriendng one of the sailors on the Never Land, Peter discovers the secret power of Starstuff. Peter's natural curiosity causes leads him into all sorts of wild magical adventures.

Peter develops very strong feelings for Molly, but he is too shy to let her know and too boyishly proud to let on to anyone else. Peter is also blind to the fact that Molly is developing very strong feelings for him. After being exposed to the Starstuff for too long, Peter undergoes a profound change. He has the permanent ability to fly and he will never age. Peter knows that his eternal youth destroys any chance he might have with Molly.

## Molly Aster

Molly Aster is the daughter of Leonard Aster. She is a young Starcatcher born to a prominent Starcatcher family. She, much like Peter, has not only the inclination, but also the skills to lead. She takes charge of the situation on board the Never Land. Without Molly on board the Never Land, either Black Stache or Slank might have succeeded in their evil plans. She is smart and solemn, but she is still a young girl. She still becomes overwhelmed by her emotions several times, as she is constantly facing dangerous situations that no child should ever have to experience.

Molly begins to fall in love with Peter, but in the end they have no chance. When Peter decides to remain behind, she does not argue with him. She knows that he is right and that they really don't have a chance at a real relationship. She is still jealous of the fairy, just as she was furiously jealous of the mermaid, Teacher.

## Thomas

Thomas is one of the orphans in Peter's group.

## James

James is the second oldest orphan in Peter's group, and the second in command.



## **Tubby Ted**

Tubby Ted is a chubby orphan in Peter's group whose main concern is always food.

## **Prentiss**

Prentiss is the youngest of the orphans in Peter's group.

## **Edward Grumpkin**

Edward Grumpkin is the second in command and grammar teacher at St. Norbert's. He is the enforcer of the rules, many of which he makes up on the spot, and quick to cuff a boy on the ear for any minor transgression.

## **William Slank**

William Slank is the first mate of The Never Land, as well as one of the others working for King Zarboff.

## **Alf**

Alf is a sailor who befriends Peter and the boys.

## **Mrs. Bumbrake**

Mrs. Bumbrake is Molly's governess.

## **King Zarboff the Third**

King Zarboff the Third is the evil king of Rundoon, as well as one of the Others.

## **Black Stache**

Black Stache, the captain of the Sea Devil, is, the most feared pirate in the world.

## **Smee**

Smee is Black Stache's idjit first mate.



## **Leonard Aster**

Leonard Aster is Molly's father and the Queen's ambassador to Rundoon. He is also a prominent Starcatcher.

## **Captain Scott**

Captain Scott is the captain of the Wasp, and he believes his ship the fastest on the seas.



## Objects/Places

### St. Norbert's Home for Wayward Boys

St. Norbert's is the orphanage home of Peter and his group of friends. Peter has been at St. Norbert's for seven years when he is taken to The Never Land.

### The Never Land

The Never Land is a dilapidated ship that is captained by an incompetent drunk. This ship is supposed to take Peter and his friends to be King Zarboff the Third's servants.

### The Wasp

The Wasp was built specifically to outrun The Sea Devil and is supposed to be carrying the greatest treasure ever to be taken to sea.

### Rundoon

Rundoon is a far away kingdom ruled by the evil Zarboff where the boys will be the king's servants until they die or are fed to Zarboff's snake.

### The Sea Devil

The Sea Devil, captained by Black Stache, is the fastest ship on the seas.

### Mollusk

Mollusk is the savages' name for the island that is their home. It is on this island that the shipwrecked sailors find themselves.

### Starstuff

Starstuff is the magical and unidentified stuff that falls from the stars sometimes instead of meteors. It has the power to grant flight to people as well as the power to permanently transform both people and animals.



## **Starcatchers**

Starcatchers are people who have banded together to prevent common people from finding out about Starstuff, as well as to keep it out of the hands of the Others, who would use it to rule the world.

## **The Others**

The Others are the ones who seek Starstuff for its power over people. Many of the ancient Others set themselves up as gods and fill out most ancient pantheons.

## **Loch Ness Monster**

The Loch Ness Monster was a lizard in Scotland on which some of the Starstuff leaked. The exposure to Starstuff transformed the lizard, which escaped into Loch Ness.



# Themes

## Power

The allure of absolute Power is a hard thing to resist. This story is driven by the lust for Power. When the mysterious Starstuff falls to the earth, many humans use that Power to rule over other people. These people, known in this story as the Others, have dominated humanity and committed many atrocities throughout history. Even some of the Starcatchers, who had good intentions in the beginning, have been corrupted by the allure of Power. These few have become some of the worst of the Others.

William Slank and his master King Zarboff the Third, are two of the worst of the Others in history. They are both driven by the Power of the Starstuff and intend to use it to take over the world and rule as gods. Slank has no problem killing his own companions to acquire this Power. He even plans to kill the oafish Little Richard simply because he knows about the Starstuff.

The Power of the Starstuff also attracts the mad pirate captain, Black Stache. Black Stache, in the quest for Power, has no trouble killing his own pirates or the children. Indeed, his only other concern seems to be to kill Peter, of whom he seems terribly jealous. Peter has come into contact with the Starstuff and has even learned to fly. Black Stache wants this Power so badly, and hates Peter so furiously for it, that he orders many of his men to die for it. Black Stache, not knowing the true Power of the Starstuff, is not one of the Others. However, if he did manage to gain possession of the Starstuff, he would be a terrible one indeed. Even Fighting Prawn, who wants only to protect his people from going through the torture he faced at the hands of the British, would have used the Power to make certain that no one ever came to his island again, and those who did would not live long. Fighting Prawn would likely have become a terrible tyrant, and once he became used to the Power of the Starstuff, might very well decide to take his revenge to the British.

## Do the Right Thing

One of the most important messages of this story is to do the right thing. Throughout the story, several characters are presented choices. Whenever a character does the right thing, instead of thinking only for themselves, that behavior is rewarded with success and the loyalty of friends. Many times Peter has the opportunity to save himself at the expense of others. However, Peter always must try to save everyone else, which often puts his own life in great danger. His selfless actions are rewarded in several ways. After using the last of Molly's Starstuff to heal the mermaid, he gains the trust and help of all of the mermaids. This prove vital to his defeat of Slank and Little Richard, and the rescue of Molly. Later, after Fighting Prawn has been stabbed, Peter saves his life as well. Fighting Prawn has promised to kill Peter and his friends, and many w



ould see his critical situation as a problem already solved. Instead, Peter takes Leonard's Starstuff and heals Fighting Prawn, who honors Peter's actions by promising hospitality and protection to Peter and all of his friends who decide to stay.

On the other hand, when someone decides to think only of themselves or to be vengeful, that behavior is punished. Both Black Stache the pirate, and Zarboff's servant Slank are only interested in the power that comes from the Starstuff. They both commit several atrocities, including but certainly not limited to, murder. Despite their efforts, they are thwarted at every turn by Peter and the Starcatchers. Ultimately, Slank is set adrift at sea, and Black Stache finds himself being chased by a giant crocodile, after losing a hand.

## Friendship

Peter values Friendship over anything else in this story. Throughout the story, Peter shows his loyalty to, and responsibility to the other boys from St. Norbert's. When Molly tries to convince Peter to help her get the trunk, Peter refuses to leave his friends in the custody of the Mollusk people. When Molly tries to tell Peter to leave them, he becomes greatly offended. Peter doesn't believe that anything is more important than Friendship. On the ship, when Molly threatens to alert Slank to Peter's involvement with the trunk, Peter feels that his Friendship has been betrayed. Peter becomes very angry, and calls Molly a rat. In the end, Peter's strong sense of Friendship inspires even other characters. Leonard Aster is impressed by Peter's loyalty, and offers him a place in his own home. Alf betrays his orders and teams up with Peter and the boys, defending them at each encounter. Fighting Prawn is so impressed with Peter's loyalty to his friends, that he offers Friendship of the Mollusk people to Peter and his friends, and offers to always welcome and protect them on the island. Peter's friends repay his loyalty with their own continued Friendship. When Peter decides to stay on the island, the boys declare that they will be staying with him.





# Style

## Point of View

The point of view for most of this novel is the subjective third person with multiple perspectives. The narrator follows several different characters, showing us the world around them as well as their own personal thoughts and feelings. In some places in this novel, the authors seem to switch to a reliable omniscient third person viewpoint. In these sections, the narrator is aware of things happening around the characters that none of the characters themselves are aware of. For example, while Slank and Little Richard are in the longboat and are distracted by the mermaids, none of them notice the trunk floating away on the current.

## Setting

This story takes place during the reign of the first Queen Elizabeth. Peter and his fellow orphans start out at a orphanage in England. After they are carried by carriage to the Never Land, the story takes place on the open seas, across the three ships the Never Land, the Wasp, and the Sea Devil. Once at sea, as the narrator jumps from character to character, the setting jumps from ship to ship. While on the ships, a great storm arrives, and destroys the Never Land. After the storm, the setting moves to Mollusk island, which Peter later renames Never Land. On the island, the habit of the setting jumping from place to place as it swaps characters continues across the island.

## Language and Meaning

The language of this story is very informal and simple. It is very easy to understand, and much of the story is told through dialogue. The language of this novel does not focus on physical descriptions. While some basic attributes are given to each character and thing, for the most part the specifics of physical appearances are left to the imagination. Instead, the narrator focuses more on detailing the events that occur in the story.

As the narrator jumps from character character, and dialogue occurs, the language changes to fit the speakers and the characters on which the narrators focus. When the narrator follows Peter and the boys, or when they speak, the language remains simple and child like. On the other hand, when the dialogue is between two sailors, or when the narrator focuses on Black Stache or Slank, the language becomes much rougher. Many words are intentionally misspelled and often times the wrong words are used, such as when the pirates and sailors use me when my should be used. Once again, the language style shifts when Fighting Prawn, who spent many years on a British ship, speaks. His language is smooth and easy and yet formal and distinctively British.



## Structure

This book is made up of seventy-nine, fairly short chapters that span four hundred and fifty-one pages. While the chapters are all fairly short, there is no uniformity in them. They range from one page to twenty one pages long. The chapters are both numbered and named. The names reflect either a person or place, or an event that will happen in that chapter. Most often, when the point of view shifts to another group of characters, there is a chapter change as well.

The purpose of this story is to give background to, and to explain the origins of many aspects of the classic Peter Pan story. The main plot of this story is the development of Peter's character, however, there is another plot line that is not immediately revealed. Instead, it slowly unfolds over the course of the book. First, the boys are taken to the ship to be taken to Rundoon to be slaves. At this point there is no indication of the true plot. However, once on the Never Land, the magical trunk enters the story, and with it the lust of the pirate, as well as Slank, who somehow knows more than he should. Finally, Molly explains to Peter what it is all about, the ancient struggle between the Starcatchers and the mysterious evil Others. This story spans a period of several weeks. The delayed plot development acts as sort of a plot twist and does not hinder the pace of the novel, since it is tied into climatic events.

## Quotes

"Get moving, and if you don't want to feel Little Richard's lash, you'll stay forward until we reach Rundoon. After that, your sorry hides belong to Zarboff" (Chapter 3, p. 28).

"It's true! Black Stache is mad! He says now the crew will have to catch the Wasp. To get the water" (Chapter 8, p. 73).

"Sir, I don't have much of a life now, and from what I'm told, I'll have even less where I'm going. If there's something wonderful on this ship, I want to know what it is. This is my only chance" (Chapter 14, p. 105).

"Because of the power. The power is too great. There's too much danger that it can be used for evil" (Chapter 20, p. 158).

"Hold on to each other, lads! There's a dory this way! Hurry!" (Chapter 32, p. 222).

"Can we move this conversation along, old chap? I'm getting frightfully tired of 'How'" (Chapter 40, p. 263).

"How are you with heights?" (Chapter 56, p. 331).

"I'll find you" (Chapter 59, p. 344).

"Flying, Cap'n. Up in the air. Like a bird. But it weren't no bird. It was the longboat, sure as I'm standing here" (Chapter 61, p. 351).

"I don't care where she went. What I care about is the trunk, and I'm thinking if we didn't see it drift off, them she-devils didn't see it neither" (Chapter 63, p. 357).

"That's exactly where I am" (Chapter 79, p. 451).

## Topics for Discussion

Who are the Starcatchers and what do they do? Why are they necessary?

What do the Others want with the Starstuff? What gives the Starcatchers the advantage over the Others?

Discuss loyalty. What characters show this trait in this story? In what ways do they show loyalty and to whom?

What is the main plot of this story? Are there any subplots?

Discuss the point of view of this novel. What viewpoints are used? Why might the authors have chosen the viewpoint or viewpoints in this story?

This story serves as an explanation for the origin of Peter Pan. What other myths are explained in this story?

One of the primary themes of this story is that power corrupts. Why is that? What examples of this trait is given in this story?