



The Lost Boy

Peter Pan & Related Fandoms · Not Rated · 1863 words

by Arukir

Contents

The Lost Boy 3

The Lost Boy

Fandom: Peter Pan & Related Fandoms Rating: Not Rated Category: Gen

Warnings: Creator chose not to add warnings, Major character death

Relationships: Wendy Darling & Peter Pan (Peter Pan), Darling Family & Peter Pan (Peter Pan)

Characters: Peter Pan (Peter Pan), Wendy Darling (Peter Pan), Darling Family (Peter Pan)

Tags: Peter Pan Needs a Hug (Peter Pan), Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Family, Non-Linear Narrative, Sort Of, as well Wendy dies but it's only mentioned briefly no details, Character Study, Memory Loss, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Bittersweet, Immortality, Aging, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Implied/Referenced Character Death, During Canon, Post-Canon, Post-Canon Fix-It, of sorts, Time Skips, Introspection, One Shot, This has some of the darkest tags I've ever put on a fic but I SWEAR it's not actually all that dark, it's almost fluffy actually, First time I've used Major Character Death tag yikes, My second work in this fandom, my 299th fic overall!, Conversations, Promises, not exactly unrequited love, Peter can't actually fall in love but wishes he could fall for Wendy

Words: 1863 Chapters: 1 chapter Status: Complete Published: 2026-07-11

Peter will never grow up, will never grow old, will never grow into a man. But that doesn't mean he can't grow in a different sort of way.

Wendy can't be his mother nor his mate, can't stay with him forever. But that doesn't mean she can't offer him a different sort of love.

A conversation between Peter and Wendy leads to a promise that changes the Boy Who Would Never Grow Up's life forever.

(Number of fics until I reach 300: 1...)

"I'll never grow up," he tells her, as he has told her so many times, but it's different this time. Quieter. Almost sad. "I'll never have love or children or whatever else it is that grown-ups get to have."

"Peter..." she starts, and she doesn't quite know how to continue. Eternal youth, eternal play, eternal freedom — they seem like good things to her, really they do.

But she remembers the smiles her Mother and Father give each other, the soft ones so unlike anything Wendy has ever given anyone. She remembers her Mother's arms around her, a soft voice calling her *My Angel*. She remembers how her parents often say that she and her brothers are the greatest joy they've ever been given.

Suddenly, eternity seems like a very long time to be a child, without children of your own.

Peter surprises her by grinning, then, gesturing to his Lost Boys, who are off playing in the nearby bushes with her brothers. "But they will. When they're ready. When

they've forgotten whatever chased them to me in the first place, and they feel safe enough to leave. And then they'll grow up, fall in love, have kids of their very own. All those things grown-ups get to do."

He jumps and twirls into the air, clapping his hands next to his face. Despite his show of joy, Wendy can see the sadness lingering in his features. Especially behind his eyes, which suddenly seem far too old — ancient, even.

"The Lost Boys will leave?" Wendy asks, instead of what she really wants to ask. Are you alright, Peter? She knows he wouldn't answer it properly, anyways.

"Oh, they always do," he answers flippantly, drifting back down to sit beside her between the roots of an old oak tree. He plucks at the grass blades as he speaks, not looking at her. "When they don't need me watching over them anymore, they leave and find families. Sometimes I try to visit them, but... they never recognize me..." He frowns as he trails off, sad again.

Wendy puts her hand on his arm, wanting to soothe, and he startles when she does. He looks down at her hand as if he doesn't quite understand what it is or why it's there. He smiles again, though, and sighs. "You know, Wendy, I think I really would've liked being able to fall in love with you."

It's her turn to startle, pulling back as though burned. She has grown fond of Peter during their little misadventure in his world, true, but they are both far too young for talk like *that*.

That's the point, though, she supposes. He isn't really young, is he? Just trapped looking, and feeling, and acting like it. He'll never be a proper age for talk of love and other such things, she realizes. Wendy feels a sharp pang of sorrow for him blossom in her heart.

He laughs uproariously at the look on her face, and she feels the sorrow recede back to a dull thing, easily ignored. She turns from him with a huff, her arms crossed.

"Will you do me a favor, Wendy?" Peter asks once he's calmed, still grinning. "After... After you leave?" He says it with his face scrunched up in distaste, looking as if he still wishes to talk her out of it, but has accepted finally that he cannot.

"It depends," Wendy says slowly, turning back to him, "on what the favor is."

"Will you tell your children about me? About Neverland?" he asks, most unexpectedly. "You aren't Lost, and you're already so old—" she has grown used to his comments

on her age, she thinks distantly, no longer taking the offense she used to at his words "—you won't forget. Your brothers might, but you won't."

Wendy feels something twist restlessly inside her at that. *She won't forget.* She isn't sure how to feel about that. It might be easier if she could write all that has happened off as youthful folly, a childhood dream, nothing more.

But... she can't help smiling inside, when she considers it a moment longer. She won't forget. She won't forget him, forget this place, forget *magic*.

"Whyever would you ask a thing like that of me, Peter?" she asks, truly curious. Why would he want her to tell her children of Neverland?

"Someone should remember," he tells her softly, his eyes sparkling. "Someone should know. I need— I shouldn't just— I want—" He cuts off each sentence as he starts it, as if not knowing how to word his desire. "Please, Wendy. Even if it's just as bedtime stories, at least this way I get to be *real*."

"Peter..." Wendy starts, as she did before, but this time she knows what to say after. "Of course I will tell them of you, of all of Neverland. You can even come to visit them, if you wish."

"I can?" Peter asks, eyes going wide. "You mean it? I can come visit?"

"Yes," Wendy confirms, giggling at the delighted look on his face. Then, very sternly, she adds, "But you may not take them here, Peter. I will not have my future children lost amongst Indians and crocodiles and pirate captains."

"Oh, I can't believe a single child of yours would ever be Lost, Wendy," he tells her, and though she doesn't quite understand what that means, it sounds like assurance. He zips into the air, every bit the distractible child again, face split nearly in two by a bright grin. His shadow waves cheekily at her as Peter flies off with a delighted shout of, "Tink! Tink, come here! You'll never guess what Wendy just said — *we can visit!*"

Wendy shakes her head, amused, and goes back to watching the other boys play. She frowns, though, as she realizes... Well...

It's the silliest thing, really. But she could've sworn that Peter had looked older, somehow, when they were talking. Her age, even.

She shakes her head again, this time to clear it, and waves off the silly notion. It is a sign of how quickly Neverland can affect someone, she'll muse later on, that the idea of a boy ageing was sillier to her than one that couldn't.

Wendy will grow up, fall in love, have children of her own. Then someday she will grow old, and she will die. That is how the story goes, and there is no avoiding that.

But Wendy's children, in this version of the story, will grow up with a most unusual playmate. Far older than them, at first, tasked with watching them sometimes despite being dreadful at it. He will grow better with time, however, and Wendy will think again of her silly little notion.

Then they will be the same age as him, equals and thick as thieves and just old enough to realize that something is unusual about him, but not yet old enough to realize quite how much.

And then he will be younger than them, their imaginary friend that stuck around after they got older. The silly child they remembered fondly, and treated indulgently, and noticed in a bittersweet way was always exactly the same as they remembered.

Then they will grow up, fell in love, and have children of their own. And those children will grow up with a most unusual playmate. First older than them, helping to take care of them in his childish way. Then the same age as them, treated like one of their mortal friends. Then younger, and treated almost like a particularly troublemaking but beloved nephew.

And the cycle will continue, almost the same if not quite each time. Peter will learn, over so much time, how to care for the newborn members of the Darling family, better than even the new parents could.

Sometimes, he will bring Lost Ones to them. They will forget their days in Neverland, forget the years and years they spent with Peter, as the Lost always do in the end. But he will not lose them entirely, for they will get to know him again with the rest of his children.

His children. Generation after generation, he will raise them. Play with them. Be one of them. Be raised by them in turn, in a sense, as much as he ever can be.

Eventually, long after he has forgotten Wendy and how his bond to the Darlings began, he will even get to start bringing them to visit Neverland again.

Finally, Neverland will be remembered and spoken of by those that know it as more than just stories or dreams. Finally Neverland will be *real*. And so will Peter.

And no-one will ever realize how his features will slowly sharpen. How his body will stretch, reaching new heights. No-one will ever know him long enough to notice.

Well, Tinkerbell will. As will Hook and his Pirates. The Indians, the Mermaids, the Crocodile. But none of them will ever speak a word of it, merely sharing glances and shrugging and continuing on as they always have.

Peter will grow older, as he learns to be something *more* for his Lost Ones and other children than just a playmate, but he will never grow up. Almost but never quite a man.

He will never fall in love, or have children of his own blood, or all those other things grown-ups get to do. That is how the story goes, and there is no avoiding that.

But he will still love, and be loved. He will care for the Lost, the abandoned and abused, growing better at it as he cares for his Darlings. He will know family, if not quite in the way he longs for.

He has helped many other children grow up, at the cost of remaining eternally one of them. *The Lost One*.

But as he has been Lost, he will also be Found. Peter Pan will never grow up, but he will grow.

And all of it starts with a girl who wasn't a mother, a shadow with a mind of its own, and a boy that took a chance and asked for something he so desperately wanted — to be remembered, even as he must forget, beyond Neverland.

He peeks into the Darlings' window, watching his Wendy — so old now, he thinks, though she still says she's quite young for a normal woman — hold her baby close to her chest. He smiles softly. He always smiles when he sees a child that he knows will never be Lost, and he can't ever imagine Wendy doing something to make the fairies take her child away.

He smiles at the sight of a never-Lost Child, one that will know him, one that will *remember* him. He smiles at his chance to maybe, finally, feel *real*.

And he doesn't realize, in that moment, that he will gain far more than that.

The Lost Boy

— end of "The Lost Boy" —