PETER AND THE STARCATCHER

A Play by Rick Elice

Based on the novel by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

ACTING EDITION
Play script © 2012 Rick Elice

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Peter and the Starcatcher was commissioned and developed by Disney Theatrical Productions and produced at New York Theatre Workshop (James C. Nicola, Artistic Director & William Russo, Managing Director), February—April 2011. This production transferred to Broadway and opened on April 15, 2012, at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre, where it was presented by Nancy Nagel Gibbs, Greg Schaffert, Tom Smedes, Eva Price, and Disney Theatrical Productions. The production was conceived and directed by Roger Rees and Alex Timbers, with music by Wayne Barker, movement by Steven Hoggett, scenic design by Donyale Werle, costume design by Paloma Young, lighting design by Jeff Croiter, sound design by Darron L. West, music direction by Marco Paguia, fight direction by Jacob Gringolia-Rosenbaum, dramaturgy by Ken Cerniglia, technical supervision by David Benken, casting by Jim Carnahan/Jack Doulin/Tara Rubin, press by O&M Co., general management by 321 Theatrical Management, assistant stage management by Katherine Wallace, and production supervision by Clifford Schwartz. The cast was as follows:

BLACK STACHE.......................... Christian Borle
MOLLY................................. Celia Keenan-Bolger
BOY (PETER).......................... Adam Chanler-Berat
GREMPKIN/MACK/SÁNCHEZ/     FIGHTING PRAWN.......................... Teddy Bergman
MRS. BUMBRAKE/TEACHER........... Arnie Burton
SLANK/HAWKING CLAM.............. Matt D’Amico
SMEE................................... Kevin Del Aguila
PRENTISS............................. Carson Elrod
ALF..................................... Greg Hildreth
LORD ASTER.......................... Rick Eirod
CAPTAIN SCOTT...................... Isaiah Johnson
TED................................. David Rossmer

The understudies were Betsy Hogg, Orville Mendoza, Jason Ralph, and John Sanders. The musicians were Marco Paguia (conductor/piano) and Deane Prouty (drums/percussion).

Originally Presented as a “Page To Stage” Workshop Production by La Jolla Playhouse, February—March 2009
Christopher Ashley, Artistic Director & Michael S. Rosenberg, Managing Director
"To have faith is to have wings..."

When I came on board as playwright, Roger Rees, Alex Timbers, and Disney's brilliant dramaturg, Ken Cerniglia, had already hit on a great organizing principle. Act One would take place on board two ships at sea—all cramped quarters, tiny cabins, claustrophobic, dark, wet, sinister. Act Two would take place on a tropical island, with bright sky and big, open spaces. In order to create a simple, stark environment in which to tell a young person's story in an adult, muscular, and surprising way, the directors embraced the style of Story Theater, or Poor Theater—a favorite technique of Alex's and the trademark of Roger's great Royal Shakespeare Company triumph, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*. The dozen actors would play everyone and everything—sailors, pirates, orphans, natives, fish, mermaids, birds... even doors, passageways, masts, storms, jungles. They would also narrate action and memory, giving each of them a privileged relationship with the audience. This would encourage the audience to be more than spectators; it would invite them to play along, to participate, to imagine.

The early workshops of the play gave me great faith in their concept. I aimed to write a play seasoned with the contemporary, irreverent tone of Dave and Ridley's *Peter and the Starcatchers* and the stylistic flourishes employed by J. M. Barrie a hundred years earlier for the original *Peter Pan*—high comedy and low, alliteration, puns, broad physical gags, songs, meta-theatrical anachronisms, sentiment delivered so deftly that the end of the play breaks your heart. My challenge would be to write this new play in such a way that it merged the two disparate styles but also connected the dots between the now-mythic characters and plot points of Barrie's original with Dave and Ridley's reboot. The marriage of classic and modern in the writing brings the Story Theater aspect of the play into sharper focus. And the Story Theater style gave me the freedom to create a vast landscape of far-flung places, physical and emotional. And the wings to take you there.

―Rick Elice, 2014

CHARACTERS

THE ORPHANS

**Boy (Peter):** A boy who doesn't miss much. Nameless, homeless, and friendless at the beginning of the play and a hero by the end. A survivor. More than anything in the world, he wants a home and a family. If he could grow up, he'd fall for Molly in a big way. But it'll never happen.

**Prentiss:** Ambitious, hyper-articulate, logical; yearns to be a leader, even as he knows in his heart that he never shall be one. A bit of a blowhard with just the teeny-tiniest touch of cowardice.

**Ted:** Obsessed with food: the eating of, the fighting over, the dreaming about. A natural actor, an easy wit, perhaps a future poet. Called "Tubby" by Prentiss, though not due to girth, of which orphans, given their meager diets, have very little indeed.

THE BRITISH SUBJECTS

**Lord Leonard Aster:** The very model of a Victorian English gentleman, loyal subject to the Queen, devoted father, faithful friend. Also, and not irrelevant to our story, Lord Aster is a Starcatcher—dedicated to protecting the Earth and all who dwell thereon from the awesome power of starstuff.
Molly Aster: A true leader at a time when girls are mostly followers. Will risk everything for the sake of Doing Right. Curious, intelligent, beginning to feel things she doesn't yet understand—romantic longings that revert to childish tantrums under pressure—because, after all, she's a thirteen-year-old kid. She'll be a great woman one day.

Mrs. Bumbrake: Molly's nanny. British to the bone. Still has enough of her girlish charm to turn a sailor's head and leaven his dreams. Stiff in the lip, loose in the hip, fun on a ship.

Captain Robert Falcon Scott: Captain of Britain's fastest frigate, the Wasp. Years later, he will lead an expeditionary team to the South Pole, freeze to death, and become the iconic British hero, Scott of the Antarctic.

Grempkkin: The mean and malodorous schoolmaster of St. Norbert's Orphanage for Lost Boys. Likes to keep his boys in the dark, as sunlight is known to feed rebellious notions, and on account of the preference in certain quarters for lads that are white and pasty.

THE SEAFARERS

Bill Slank: The Neverland's vicious captain, without the skill or quality to lead anyone but himself, and always into disaster. A greedy bastard who'd sell his own mother for a ship to command and send boys to their doom for the favor of those who would use starstuff for personal gain, global domination, or worse. An orphan, too.

Alf: An old sea dog. Something about him appeals to the feminine sensibility—might be his bowlegs, his saucy gait, or his kind heart.

Mack: A very bad sailor who wants to be anywhere but under the thumb of Bill Slank.

Black Stache: Long after everyone else got out of the pirate business, Black Stache continues to terrorize the seven seas in search of a hero worthy of his villainy. Famous for his face foliage, he started shaving at age ten, had a bushy handlebar by eleven, and the blood of twenty crews on his hands by twelve. Heartless and hirsute, suspiciously well read, partial to the poetical and theatrical, and given to a ferocity from which no good shall ever spring.

Smee: First mate to Black Stache. Single-mindedly dedicated to his captain's every whim. His motto: "'Tis good to be busy."

Sánchez: A hardworking Spanish pirate with an identity crisis.

THE NATIVES

Fighting Prawn: King of the Mollusks, son of Jumbo Prawn and Littleneck Clam. Kidnapped by British sailors and brought in chains to England, he served as sous-chef in a country estate in Derbyshire, where, for no good reason, he learned Italian wines and mastered Italian cuisine. Since returning to his island kingdom, he vengefully murders any English with the temerity to land on his Mollusk Isle domain.

Hawking Clam: Son of Fighting Prawn and Sweet'n'Sour Shrimp. One day, he will ascend the Clam throne as head of the Royal Clam Clan.

Teacher: Formerly a salmon, now an ancient, knowledgeable mermaid.
CASTING NOTE

Actors doubling in roles is terrific fun when it serves a dramatic purpose, and this play was conceived with specific doubling in mind. For example, the actor playing Grempkin and Fighting Prawn (two sources of anguish) doubles the roles of Mack and Sánchez (two victims of abuse). The actor playing Slank (who abuses Mack) in Act One doubles as Hawking Clam (neglected by Fighting Prawn) in Act Two. The actor playing Mrs. Bumbrake doubles as Teacher, a coup which seems to give the audience particular delight. (We chose to cast a male actor in these female roles, so that the actress playing our hero, Molly, would be the only female in the cast, thereby reflecting the isolation of females in general, and young girls in particular, during the reign of Queen Victoria—a time when a woman had the top job, but all other women were expected to be seen and not heard.) Finally, since the point of the play is a celebration of “all”-ness (see the final scene), all the actors should serve variously as sailors, seamen, seafarers, orphans, pirates, mermaids, Mollusks . . . and narrators. In those cases where the actors are narrators, character names accompany the attribution for clarity.

Act One

PROLOGUE

A Bare Stage

A COMPANY OF MEN enters with a purpose, the BOY in the middle.

Boy When I was a boy, I wished I could fly.

Prentiss Me too.

Scott So did I!

Boy Out the window and over the trees—

Smee — high as a cloud and lighter than air—

Molly (pushing through the MEN) — then loop the loop and up to the stars! I dreamed about flying all the time. (off the looks from the MEN) What? Girls dream.

Boy Up to the stars — I like that.

Molly Me too.

A moment of connection between them, the first of many.

Aster Eventually, of course, we dream other dreams.

Prentiss We change.

Ted We grow up.

Aster It always happens. Nothing is forever.

Boy That’s the rule.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Molly Everything ends.
Stache And so our story begins. 

STACHE claps his hands twice quickly. The lights change.
Smee Supposing all these planks and ropes are now the British Empire . . .
Aster And we are lords —
Scott — and captains —
Molly — mothers —
Prentiss — orphans —
Alf — sailors —
Stache — pirates —
Fighting Prawn — tropical kings.
Scott And use your thoughts to hoist the sails and deck the ships awaiting us this early, gray, and misty dawn in 1885 —
Aster — a crucial year in the reign of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria —
All GOD SAVE HER!
Slank — who, by her grace, had only just knighted a new peer of the realm —
Aster — Lord Leonard Aster, dedicated minister to the Queen and devoted father —
Molly — to Molly Aster, whose mother flew up to heaven when Molly was six years old.
Mrs. Bumbrake In the years that followed, a nanny was employed to care for Molly, and provide her with the essentials of young womanhood —
Aster — while, taking her with him on each royal mission, Lord Aster gave Molly a life few girls would normally know —
Molly — a life that made her insatiably curious,

insufferably bright, and pretty much friendless at school.
PRENTISS and TED seize on that, poking vicious fun at the BOY.
Prentiss Friendless! Ha!
Ted Friendless? You mean like —
Boy Leave me alone!
GREMPKIN, their schoolmaster, is suddenly, brutally, on them.
Grempkin Orphans! Most useless creatures on earth. Look at 'em —
Slank — cast out by mothers who can't feed 'em or love 'em.
Boy No mothers at St. Norbert's, only schoolmasters.
Grempkin (grabbing the BOY by the scruff of his neck) Much as I hate to lose you, mule — (to PRENTISS and TED) and you, and you — I won't stand in the way of opportunity. Here's to yer trip on a ship!
Ted What ship? What trip?
Prentiss Sorry, I'm lost.
Ted Me too.
Molly Boys!
Prentiss, Ted We're lost!
Molly BOYS!
Stache And so it was, on the brink of a new adventure —
Prentiss, Ted, Boy — that three filthy orphans —
Aster — and Lord Leonard Aster —
Molly — his friendless Molly —
Mrs. Bumbrake — and her nanny, Mrs. Bumbrake —
All JOURNEYED AT DAWN TO THE DOCKS OF PORTSMOUTH!

A hubbub while two trunks are carried downstage.
Alf  – where two trunks are delivered to two ships, sharing the very same dock!
Smee  Two trunks, deliberately similar to each other in their . . . trunkness.
Aster  One of them, containing a precious cargo belonging to the Queen –
Stache  – to be accompanied by Leonard Aster, aboard one of the ships, a spanking new frigate –
Scott  – commanded by Leonard’s old school chum, the legendary Robert Falcon Scott, Captain of . . . the Wasp!
(A model of the Wasp appears and is passed briskly along to him.) Fastest ship afloat. Bound for the remote kingdom of Rundoon!

   SCOTT, now holding the Wasp, beams with pride.
   The OTHERS applaud.

Slank  (pushing through) And the other trunk, full o’ sand, courtesy o’ me, Bill Slank, captain of this other ship – (Someone holds up a model of the Neverland.) The Neverland.

   EVERYONE scoffs and groans as the unimpressive Neverland model is passed along.

Stache  The Neverland – a slower ship –
Smee  – and long in the poop.

   The Neverland model arrives in ALF’s hands in time for:

Alf  – a merchant ship, taking a longer route to Rundoon, just to be safe.

Slank  And while nobody’s lookin’ – (EVERYONE turns away, occupied elsewhere.) I’ll just mark the Queen’s trunk, the one s’posed to go on the Wasp. (makes a chalk X on the top trunk) Then, at the last sec –
Scott  ALL ASHORE WHO’S GOING ASHORE!

Act One: Scene One

Slank  – I’ll switch ’em. (smacks the chalk-marked trunk)
Get this trunk on board the Neverland, y’garbage!

Grempkin  And I’ll sell these boys into slavery. (to the BOYS) Cheer up, lads – you’re off to Rundoon, to be helpers to the King!

Slank  (aside, to GREMPKIN) Food for snakes, more like.
(pays GREMPKIN for the boys, then hollers to his crew)
Crate o’ boys comin’ aboard!

Scott  MAKE YER COURSE! SAY YER G’BYES!
Prentiss  G’bye to who?
Ted  There’s nobody who cares.
Boy  Which is why I hate, I hate, I hate grown-ups!

Alf  STOW YER CARGO! START YER PLAY! ADIEU! ADIEU!

   MOLLY and MRS. BUMBRAKE help ASTER into his coat. The other men become MERCHANT SAILORS, ordered about by SLANK.

SCENE ONE

The Neverland—On Deck

   SLANK cracks his whip and the SAILORS scurry.

Slank  Stow that trunk in my cabin, y’salt junkies!

Sailors  (singing)

   THERE’S WIND IN THE FORETOP,
   THERE’S BOYS IN THE HOLD –
   TO ME WAY, TO ME WAY HI-HO!

Slank  Swabbers to the manacle!

Sailors

   OH, THE FORETOP’LL SWELL,
Peter and the Starcatcher

THE BOYS'LL BE SOLD,
OR IT'S DOWN, OR IT'S DOWN WE GO.

Slank  Shroud the hemp and jigger the futtocks!
Sailors

OR IT'S DOWN, OR IT'S DOWN WE GO!

Narrator Alf  With everything safely aboard, final preparations are made on the deck of the Neverland.

Trimly uniformed BRITISH SEAMEN march on, accompanied by a military cadence.

Seamen

CALL ALL HANDS TO MAN THE CAPSTAN,
RUN THE CABLE DOWN THE CHROME.
HEAVE AWAY, AND SAY G'BYE, BOYS,
FAR FROM ENGLAND, FAR FROM HOME.

The SEAMEN snap to attention, smart and neat.

Narrator Seaman Prentiss  A squadron of British Navy seamen in bright, smart uniforms boards the Neverland –

Narrator Seaman Greggors  – led by one Lieutenant Greggors, ready to accompany Lord Leonard Aster to Her Majesty’s vessel, the Wasp.

GREGGORS wears a naval officer’s hat. The Neverland’s ragtag sailors stare jealously at the grandeur of these navy sea dogs.

Greggors  Captain Scott’s compliments, your Lordship . . . but could you join him aboard the Wasp as soon as possible!

Aster  A moment. Captain Slank!

SLANK emerges from the shadows, whip in hand.

Slank  Here, yer Lordship.
Aster  I’m taking the Queen’s treasure to Rundoon aboard the Wasp, but I leave a more precious cargo here on the Neverland. Guard her well. (gives SLANK a gold coin, calls) Mrs. Bumbrake, bring her to me! (MOLLY runs to ASTER’s outstretched arms.) Molly, my Molly.

Molly  Please let me come with you. I don’t like it on this ship.

Aster  You’re safer here on the Neverland. By the time you arrive in Rundoon, I’ll have completed my mission, and we’ll be together again.

The ship’s cat sidles up to MOLLY’s legs, meowing affectionately.

Molly  Look, Daddy – the cat, the ship’s cat. A lucky sign! Here, puss, puss . . .

Aster  Molly! Careful!

Molly  It’s all right, Daddy. Him’s a sweet little puss, isn’t him . . .

The cat mews sweetly in MOLLY’s arms.

Mrs. Bumbrake  Our Molly loves all God’s little creatures.

MRS. BUMBRAKE hands the purring cat to a passing SAILOR.

Molly  (ever so bravely) Daddy . . . I know you don’t need my help in Rundoon, but I’ve got to start pulling my weight sometime.

Aster  You’re all grown up, aren’t you.

Molly  I am, Daddy. Courage now, promise?

Aster  Promise.

Molly  (giving in to tears) Oh dear.

Two SAILORS topple a crate very near to Molly’s head.

Narrator Slank  Just then, the crate of boys bursts open!
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Narrator Boy One of the boys almost falls out!
Narrator Molly Hanging upside down just over Molly’s head!
Narrator Boy He stares at her.
Narrator Molly She stares at him.
Narrator Boy He has an air about him.
Narrator Molly The look of a boy who doesn’t miss much, or say much about it.
Slank (lifting the BOY back into the crate and slamming it shut) Back in the box, y’monkeys!
Narrator Molly Something about the boy makes Molly feel like she just grew up a little.
Aster (confidentially) Daughter. (MOLLY can’t take her eyes off the BOY, fascinated.) A word. (His stern tone snaps MOLLY to attention.) There isn’t any treasure in the Queen’s trunk, and what is in it has to be destroyed, by order of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria.
Molly God Save Her.
All GOD SAVE HER.
Aster I’ll have to move quickly before the King of Run-doon even knows I’m there.
Molly But how are you going to destroy it?
Aster Can you keep it a secret?
Molly I can.

EVERYONE ELSE on the ship crowds around them to eavesdrop.

All WE CAN.

To avoid being overheard, ASTER speaks in Dodo.

Aster (holding an amulet in his hand, ad libs) Cwah cheep wirp reet reet burp.

Molly (speaking with great difficulty) Click ... bleep ... cwaaah!
Molly Yes, Nana.
Aster Soon as I'm done in Rundoon, we'll take a few weeks in the Antipodes – scare up some rare bird eggs, hmm? I might even teach you to speak Porpoise.
Molly Yes, Daddy.
Aster There's my little Starcatcher.
Molly Just an apprentice. If I were a Starcatcher, I'd be on the Wasp with you!
Across the deck, SLANK twitches.
Narrator Slank Slank hears that word, "Starcatcher" – but a cannon is fired from the deck of the Wasp!
We hear a cannon's BOOM!
Aster Patience, daughter. Keep a keen eye, Mrs. Bumbrake!
ASTER signs an autograph for one of the SAILORS.
Mrs. Bumbrake Don't you worry, my Lord! We'll be British to the bone!
Aster We'll meet again in Rundoon. God's speed!
Slank Off ye go, Yer Lordship. TTFN. (waves cordially as the SEAMEN march ASTER away to the Wasp, then to MRS. BUMBRAKE) Comfy, are we? That's nice. Now – (suddenly and terribly evil) Alf, where are ye, ye good-for-nothing bucket o' scum!
Alf Here.
Slank Lock these two in their cabin for safekeeping. I'm takin' no chances.
Mrs. Bumbrake Wait just a –
Slank I don't fancy no dainty daughters roamin' my deck. Now, hop it!
Mrs. Bumbrake With pleasure. The cabin could smell no worse than you.
SCENE TWO
Molly's Cabin

MOLLY and MRS. BUMBRAKE are crammed tightly in the “Junior Suite,” a very tiny cabin. The lonely sound of a fiddle wafts by.

Mrs. Bumbrake First Class ain't what it used to be. 'Course, back in my salad days, I was a green girl bringing up brats in a big, breezy brownstone in Brighton. That was a tight spot, too, and hell on the household help. Especially the kitchen boy – a lovely island lad who cooked a cunning cannelloni, plus a pasta fazool to make you drool. But oh, it made the master mad how the mistress moaned fer 'is manicotti. He beat that boy something brutal, but the boy didn't say boo. Point is – we must button our beaks and be brave like that boy, or my name's not Betty Bumbrake. Now, you might well be afraid you'll never clap eyes on your father again, and it cuts me to the core, but never show that sorry Blank the slightest sniff of fear. There are men who can smell it on you, Molly, and they make you pay...

Molly That’s a stupid example if you’re going to cry halfway through. Be a woman!

Mrs. Bumbrake Nothing too rich, pray. We girls must watch our waistlines.

Alf Been thinking 'bout getting in shape, me-self.

Molly Round is a shape.

Alf Sorry?

Mrs. Bumbrake So true. You're quite the specimen.

Alf No, I have flabby thighs. But fortunately my stomach covers 'em. Best be off. (passes gas) TTFN.

Alf exits but forgets, in his flirtation, to lock the cabin door.

Mrs. Bumbrake He's rough, but he's ready, that Alf.

Molly He smelt like smelt.

Mrs. Bumbrake True . . . but there's a whiff of hero about him, mark my words.

Molly Left the cabin door ajar. I could follow him and feed the piggies! May I, Nana, please?

Mrs. Bumbrake Molly, come back here. Don't make me
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come after you! (turns green as the ship creaks and the cabin lists) Oh. Oh dear... (calling off) Best bring back a bucket before Betty Bumbrake blows her bloomin' breakfast!

**SCENE THREE**

Bowels of the Ship

Careful not to be seen, MOLLY follows ALF down the dim and damp gangways, passing MACK and another SAILOR.

**Mack** C'mon up for some poker, Alf?

**Alf** Slank put me on pig duty, the rat bastard. Goin' down to the bilge to feed the swine. (MOLLY follows ALF through a swinging door and down another cramped passageway, both of them on their knees. ALF breaks wind in her face.) God Save Her.

ALF goes one way, MOLLY another – jumping down a hatch into the bowels of the ship. Darkness and dripping. There are many doors to many cabins. MOLLY opens a first door and finds a mob of gamblers. After a frenzied roll of the dice, and much shouting, MOLLY slams the door shut. She makes her way down the gangway. Behind a second door, worshipers gather in prayer.

**All** (singing)

*ETERNAL FATHER STRONG TO SAVE,*  
*WHOSE ARM DOOTH BIND THE RESTLESS WAVE,*  
*WHO BIDD'ST THE –*  
MOLLY slams the door shut. She makes her way to a third door. She opens it to find SLANK wielding a branding iron over MACK'S hand.

**Slank** I said port, you idjit! Port! Which way is port?

**Mack** The right! The right!

The other SAILORS cringe.

**Slank** Left, y’fool! Gimme his left! A nice big P – help you remember!

*SLANK brands MACK's hand with a giant letter P – a horrible hissing of burning flesh. MACK howls.*  
MOLLY slams the door shut. The ship’s a scary place, but she’s not afraid.

**Molly** Pigs!? Where’s the pigs?

MOLLY spots ALF and follows him through one final, wretched door.

**SCENE FOUR**

Bilge Dungeon

Three filthy urchins, the **BOYS** from the crate, huddle together. MOLLY slips in behind ALF and stays hidden by the door.

**Alf** If it ain't the three little piggies! Got yer sea legs?

**Prentiss, Ted** Oh thank you! Get us out of here! Hungry! Please! Help!

(Shutting them up) Oi!!

**Prentiss** Excuse me, sir. Quick question for the Captain –

**Alf** What are you, piggy spokesman?

**Prentiss** I’m the leader.

**Ted** No, you’re not.
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Prentiss  Yes I am. I'm the oldest.
Alf  I'm the oldest and I say pipe down.
Ted  But I'm hungry!
Alf  It's yer lucky day then, ain't it?
    ALF throws TED the bucket.
Ted  Finally!
Alf  You'll wanna swallow that down quick. Bone uppity.
    TED devours the contents.
Prentiss  Any good?
Ted  IT'S ALIVE!
    PRENTISS peers inside the bucket.
Prentiss  It's worms!
Ted  He fed me worms!
Prentiss  I won't eat that.
Ted  (to ALF) Please, sir – is there a vegetarian alternative?
Alf  In my day, pigs weren't quite so particular.
    ALF starts to leave. The BOYS fight over the worms.
Prentiss  Don't hog it all. Gimme!
Ted  You said you wouldn't eat it!
Boy  (another tack) A question, Mister?
Alf  One.
Boy  Do we have to stay down here in the dark?
Alf  'Til Slank hands ye over to King Zarboff.
Boy  Is the King nice to his helpers?
Alf  That's two.
    ALF exits. The door slams shut behind him.
Ted  I got a sick feeling about this.
Prentiss  I'll think of something.
    MOLLY steps from the shadows.
Molly  No you won't. (The BOYS scream, terrified!) In my experience, boys are sadly slow thinkers.
Ted  What is it?!
Prentiss  What are you?
Molly  I'm a girl.
    They edge away, the BOY hiding behind TED and PRENTISS.
Prentiss  No way.
Ted  We saw a girl once –
Prentiss  – headmaster's daughter.
Ted  It was nothing like you. It was all – (characterizing that awful girl of yore) "aarrgh, rowrrr, gonna getcha!"
Molly  (the boss) Who's the leader here?
Prentiss  Who wants to know?
Molly  Molly Aster. Doctor Pretorius back home says I have an extraordinarily high level of brain power.
Prentiss  If you're so smart, how come you're stuck on this dirt bucket?
Molly  I'm not stuck. I'm going to meet my father in Rundoon. He has important things to do.
Prentiss  We have important things to do.
Ted  No we don't.
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Prentiss I'm the leader, and I say we got some things.
Boy (to MOLLY) He's not the leader.

MOLLY recognizes the upside-down BOY from the crate.

Molly You.
Boy You.
Molly How old are you?
Boy How old are you?
Molly I'm thirteen.
Boy I'm thirteen.
Molly Wait—I just remembered today's my birthday. I'm fifteen.
Boy If you were thirteen and today's your birthday, you'd be fourteen.
Molly I only celebrate odd-numbered birthdays.
Prentiss Wait a minute, wait a minute, doesn't matter how old you are! I'm still the leader. The leader has to be a boy.
Molly (to TED) Hey—up our end of the ship we get served proper food. I can lead you there—(to PRENTISS, pointedly) which would make me the leader.

Ted (drooling) Proper food? Really?
Molly Just tell me your names.
Boy Why should we?
Molly (conspiratorially) Only that... if you have names, they serve you meat.
Ted TED! I'm TED!
Prentiss But I call him Tubby, 'cuz he's food-obsessed.
Ted I am not food ob—
Prentiss D'you write poems about pie?
Ted To pass the time—
Prentiss Hide beans in your blanket?

Ted It's a blood-sugar thing.
Prentiss Faint at the merest whisper of—(to MOLLY, gleeful) get this—(back to TED) sticky pudding!
Ted (faints to his knees) Sticky pudding, it's so good...
Prentiss Like I said, food-obsessed. I'm Prentiss. I'm in charge here.
Molly (turns to TED) Ever notice, Ted—the more you claim leadership, the more it eludes you?
Ted (to PRENTISS) Oh, snap!
Molly And what are you, boy?
Boy (rudely) Leave me alone.
Molly Sorry.
Ted Don't take it personally.
Prentiss He's rude to everybody.
Ted It's why he gets beatings.
Prentiss And why he's got no friends.
Ted Go on. Tell her your name, why don't you?

PRENTISS and TED laugh cruelly.

Molly What's so funny?
Boy Thanks, Ted.
Ted He doesn't have a name.
Prentiss Been orphan'd too long to remember.
Ted Grempkin calls him—
Ted, Prentiss (mocking)—mule!
Boy Go on! You and your stupid names go follow some stupid girl.
Prentiss Like we need your permission, friendless.
Molly (defending the BOY) Doesn't cost any more to be nice, charmless.
Ted What about the food?
Prentiss (to MOLLY) You can be like temporary leader—but only 'til we eat.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Molly  (to the BOY, fascinated) Fair warning, boy – I shall expose you utterly.

Narrator Grempkin  As no one had ever shown the slightest interest in him before, the boy’s eyes began to sparkle and the lure of competition wiped some of the misery from his face.

Molly  Right. Follow me.

MOLLY exits the bilge dungeon.

Ted  Right. Follow Mother –
Boy  Molly.
Ted  That’s what I said. Follow Molly.

TED and PRENTISS exit, leaving the BOY alone.

The ship groans. The BOY quickly gets frightened, claustrophobic.

Narrator Boy  The boy may have wished to be alone, but he didn’t really mean it. The sparkle in his eyes fades, and strange sounds in the dark make him remember the orphanage, make him think about –

Grempkin  WHERE’S THAT MULE!!

Flashback: St. Norbert’s Orphanage for Lost Boys. Many ORPHANS stand shivering in a cold, barren school yard. GREMPKIN holds sway, brandishing a wooden switch.

Boy  Here, sir.

Grempkin  (grabs the BOY by the scruff of the neck) You are all shades of nasty, mule. Oi – lookit this filth!

Boy  (knowing what’s coming) Don’t hit me, sir! Cesspit’s dirty work!

Grempkin  A mule afraid of his own shadow. Be a man!

Boy  Thank you, Mister Grempkin.
Act One: Scene Five

quite dark. A tattered Union Jack covers something large and unidentified.

Aster Awfully cramped for a captain's quarters.
Greggors No frills on a frigate, sir. Sánchez, pull the door to . . . There's a good fellow.

Aster Where's the Captain, Lieutenant?
Greggors (smiles modestly) I'm no lieutenant. I told a lie.

Aster Unthinkable — British never lie.
G Greggor s Well, pirates do. Don't we, boys!

Aster I demand to see Captain Scott!
Smee Why didn't you say so? Presto Scotto!

SMEE lifts the Union Jack to reveal CAPTAIN SCOTT, trussed like a chicken with a gag in his mouth.

Aster What? Robbie! (to SMEE) How dare you, sir? Release this man!

Instead, SMEE strips ASTER of His Lordship's coat.

Smee I'll take the key to that treasure trunk o' yours.
Aster You'll have to kill me first.
Smee (eyeing his two prisoners) We were going to kill you second, but I'm flexible.

Stache (from off) A-choo!

Immediate terror.

Pirate Alf He's coming aft!
Sánchez In a nasty mood!

SCENE FIVE

The Wasp—Captain's Cabin

Crammed in a doorway are ASTER, GREGGORS, and the SEAMEN.

Narrator Greggors We shift our attention now to the other ship, barreling due south at a brisk twelve knots. That fine British frigate —

Narrator Aster — where Molly’s father, Lord Aster, has been ushered roughly below deck.

G Greggor s Captain Scott's cabin, Your Lordship. Do go in.

GREGGORS pushes ASTER inside. The cabin is

22
Pirate Boy  A foul and nasty mood!
Aster  What are you playing at?
Smee  “Pirates,” sir. The Wasp is now a pirate ship. Yer British crew’s in chains below!
Aster  There’ve been no pirates in these parts for a hundred years!
Smee  We’ve been keeping a very low profile.
Aster  And you’re the Captain, I suppose?
Smee  I, sir?
Smee  No, sir. Not Smee, sir.
Aster  Smee, sir?
Smee  That’s me, sir. But no Captain I, sir.
Aster  You lie, sir.
Smee  Oh no, sir. The devil himself’s in charge hereabouts.
Aster  The devil, you say.
Smee  The Prince of Darkness. Our Satanic Supervisor. Foul and Nasty with the Cloven Hoof.
Aster  And how would one identify him in a crowd?
Smee  By his legendary cookie-duster, that’s how!
Aster  Whiskers?
Smee  By his celebrated mouth-brow, that’s how!
Aster  Well, does he have a name?
Smee  The pirate captain they call . . . BLACK STACHE!

The PIRATES shriek and bemoan the hearing of this terrible name. And suddenly, there he stands – THE BLACK STACHE, carrying a bucket . . . into which he pukes and spits.

Stache (waving cordially to ASTER) Hallo. (The PIRATES shriek again and bemoan what might happen next. STACHE continues, winsomely.)
Act One: Scene Five

**Peter and the Starcatcher**

the amoeba. Yet, for us, the face foliage has been, oh, so much more than a lawn on the lip, sir. 'Tis what we are, and why we are it. And when everyone else got out of the pirate business, The Stache stuck it out, knowing one day my ship would come in. This is the day. This is the ship. (menacingly) Now, cough up that key, my Lord.

**Aster** Not a chance, you thug.

**Stache** (to **SMEE**) Why is that my Lord's coat you're holding?

**SMEE** helps **STACHE** on with Aster’s coat.

**Smee** Looks to be about your size, Cap’n.

**Stache** What the well-dressed “thug” is wearing this season.

**Smee** So comme il faut, Cap’n. So very comme il faut.

**STACHE** surveys his reflection in a mirror. He’s pleased with what he sees.

**Stache** I say, Smee – what is it the men call me?

**Smee** Nancy, sir?

**Stache** No, the other thing.

**Smee** Ruthless, sir. Ruthless, Heartless, and Peerless.

**Stache** (so sweetly) Guilty as charged. (to **ASTER**) Now, give us the key!

**Aster** Never.

**Stache** Playing games is for children, Lord Aster, and I hate, I hate, I hate children! (hurls his bucket at the mirror, smashing it) Bring it in, Gómez!

**Sánchez** It’s Sánchez, sir.

**Stache** (so hard to find good help these days) Just... bring it in. Thanks ever so. (PIRATES drag in the 

trunk.) The Wasp is my ship now, and everything aboard her belongs to me, including the treasure Victoria thinks nobody knows about. Silly old queen.

**Aster** God Save Her.

**Stache** Queen.

**Aster** God Save Her.

**Stache** Victoria.

**Aster** God Save Her.

**Stache** Banana.

**Aster** God Save –

**Stache** (gotcha!) Oopsy! (The PIRATES appreciate **ASTER**’s humiliation. **STACHE** perches on the trunk.) Here’s two things. When I open this swag, I’ll be the single most significant pirate in the world, the solar system, or other places yet to be discovered anywhere in the universe.

* A moment passes.

**Aster** That’s only one thing –

**Stache** The second thing is a dilemma, a large one, the Cadillac Escalade of dilemmas, in point of fact – for a little bird tells me that your darling daughter is sailing to Rundoon on the safer southern route, aboard the Navel Nerd.

**Smee** The Neverland, sir.

**Stache** Huh?

**Smee** The Neverland, sir.

**Stache** Same letters: Navel Nerd – Neverland. I was close. I was pretty darn close! Splitting rabbits, really...

**Smee** Hairs, sir.

**Stache** Splitting hares, that too. (to **ASTER**, cheerfully) Oh! OH! Just a sec! I know you love your Molly above
rubies. What say you to a quick detour, we pluck her off the Neverland, and you can watch her die! Unless you're feeling a weensy bit more amenable? (eyes ASTER, whose hand gives him away) Love yer locket! But what's in yer pocket? Oh, allow me! (reaches in and extracts the key) Done 'n' dusted, kippers 'n' custard. Here's the key, boys!

*The PIRATES are so focused on the key, they don't notice that the amulet around Aster's neck begins to glow. There is a sound of bells. Freeze.*

**SCENE SIX**

*The Neverland—Passageway*

*Molly's matching amulet begins to glow as well. Bells ring.*

**Molly** (holding the amulet) My father. He's in trouble.

**Prentiss** Your neck-thing is glowing.

**Ted** And ringing.

**Molly** Don't ask me about that.

**Prentiss** I can ask whatever I want. I'm the leader.

**Boy** Lay off, Prentiss. (to MOLLY) C'mon, you have to tell.

**Molly** All right, listen. (furtively) My father is going to Rundoon on a secret mission for the Queen.

**Boy** What's a mission?

**Mrs. Bumbrake** (from off) Molly! Where are you, girl?

*MOLLY bundles the BOYS down another corridor.*

**Molly** Ssssh! Down this gangway, and keep it quiet!

**Ted** Tell me again, what was it called, what we ate?

**Molly** Pork chops, pork salad, and pork belly pie.

**Ted** Greatest night of my life.

**Molly** Sssshhh! There's more tomorrow if we don't get caught.

**Ted** "Pork" – beautiful word.

*A different, louder bell is heard outside Slank's cabin.*

**Boy** There's the ringing again –

**Prentiss** Her neck-thing –

**Molly** No, it's coming from someplace else.

*The shadow of a cat appears on Slank's cabin door, a glow emanating from within.*

**Boy** Behind this door.

**Molly** Get away, Boy! Don't open that cabin!

*The BOY opens it anyway. The horrible ship's cat flies gently out, floating, lighter than air, gurgling and cooing sweetly.*
Act One: Scene Seven

MOLLY is moved by this glimpse into the boy’s soul. So are TED and PRENTISS.

Prentiss Well, that’s more than he said in the last thirteen years.

Boy So, bedtime stories? Not a big priority, okay?

Molly No, it’s not okay. I’m giving you one. It’s a gift. Least I can do. Like, um – Sleeping Beauty. Sleeping Beauty’s a good one. You’ll like it. There’s a kiss in it. True Love’s Kiss.

Ted Yeah! (then) I don’t know what that is.

Molly Then I’ll tell you. C’mon – back to your cabin and I’ll be Mother. Now – the story of Sleeping Beauty. “Once upon a time” – that’s how they always start – “Once upon a time, a beautiful baby was born...”

MOLLY, Pied Piper-like, lures the BOYS off.

SCENE SEVEN

The Wasp—Captain’s Cabin

STACHE enters, finishing his own fairy tale.

Stache “... and that beautiful baby had a big, bushy handlebar, and it grew out as he grew up and they both lived awfully ever after. The end.” (rises, exultant, key in hand) From this day forth, it’ll be nothing but pleasure cruises and the odd America’s Cup for me. Now, open – (unlocks the trunk and throws open the lid) and perpend! (A Piratical Silence of Great Awfulness.) What is that?

Smee It’s sand, sir.
Act One: Scene Eight

The Neverland—Bilge Dungeon

With the BOYS curled at her feet, MOLLY finishes her bedtime story.

Molly And, as the Princess slept, a thick forest grew up around the castle, keeping everybody out. Everybody but one man. Boys?

Boy (nearly asleep) The Prince, right?
Peter and the Starcatcher

Molly  The Prince, yes, very good. He chopped his way to Sleeping Beauty's room, saw his true love and kissed her, just once, sweetly on the lips.

Ted  (in his sleep) Mmm . . . pork.

Molly  And True Love's Kiss broke the spell, the Princess found her Prince, and they all lived happily ever – (Her amulet suddenly glows and rings.) The amulet again! Talk to me, Daddy!

MOLLY leaves the sleeping boys and heads for the deck. ASTER appears on the Wasp.

Narrator Aster  With the Wasp racing at flank speed for the Neverland, Leonard Aster clears his mind and tries to reach Molly.

They lift their amulets away from their chests for better reception.

Molly  Daddy, are you there? Hello, hello?

Aster  Can you hear me now? (adjusts amulet) Can you hear me now?

Molly  Daddy – the Queen's trunk is here, on board the Neverland!

Aster  Not in English! Too dangerous.

Molly  Oh dear, please don't speak in –

Aster  (ad libs) Brump burp wheee!

Molly  Oh Daddy, not Dodo.

Aster  Myah myah vrrreeep!

Molly  Parrots? A flock of parrots?

Aster  Vrrrraaap, vrrrrrreeep! Eeeep!

Molly  Parrots have taken over your ship? Well, what genius brought parrots –?

Aster  PIRATES! We've been taken over by pirates!

Molly  Pirates! Oh, that hard "i" sound is so tricky –

Aster  MOLLY! The Wasp is bearing down on the

SCENE NINE

The Neverland—On Deck

MOLLY turns to find the BOY on the deck behind her.

Molly  Sorry, what? Um – get below, boy. If Slank sees you on deck, he'll rear up like the –

Boy  You were talking to your neck-thing.

Molly  No, I wasn't.

Boy  I know what I saw.

Molly  Well, there was . . . there was a porpoise swimming alongside the ship, and it was making those funny noises that porpoises make, and I thought I'd make some funny noises too, that's all.

Boy  So you were talking to a fish.

Molly  Porpoises are not fish. They're mammals, just like you. Or Germans.
Boy Then how come your neck-thing glows and rings all by itself?

Molly (not very convincing) It’s for swimming. I’m a good swimmer. It’s a swimming medal.

Boy Right. Swimming. Sure. And what’s starstuff?

Molly Decision. I’m going to trust you.

Boy Why? I’m just a boy.

Molly I know. Pity. (remembers the boy’s “sorry” manifesto, looks at the sky) You like to look at the stars?

Well, there they are –

Boy There’s so many . . .

Molly They look safe, don’t they, sparkling up there like diamonds.

Boy I like when they shoot across the sky! Shoom!

Molly (suddenly very like her father) Sometimes pieces of them fall to earth – little bits that look like sand. Can you keep a secret?

Boy I can. All WE CAN.

Molly Those little bits are starstuff. The trunk in Slank’s cabin is full of it. (grabs her amulet) There’s some in here too, in case I’m ever in trouble.

Boy (tries to touch the amulet) Starstuff?? Lemme see!!

Molly NO!! (pulls the amulet away) It changes people if they touch it.

Boy How?

Molly Different ways – depending on what they want to be.

Boy So if somebody gets their hands on this starstuff and –

Molly – and they’re evil and greedy like Genghis Khan, or they’re hungry for world domination like Caesar or Napoleon or, you know, Ayn Rand –

Boy Who’s that?

Molly Uch, didn’t you learn anything at that orphanage?

Boy Was kinda busy trying not to die.

Molly Oh.

Boy So if starstuff’s so dangerous, why’re you after it?

Molly I’m a Starcatcher. We have special powers that we use in secret – to keep starstuff away from tyrants who try to rule the world.

Boy You mean, like Queen Victoria?

Molly God Save Her. And no, that’s different. She doesn’t need starstuff to rule the world. She’s British.

Boy So you’re a – what is it?

Molly Starcatcher. There’s only six and a half of us on the planet.

Boy Six and a half?

Molly I’m still an apprentice.

Boy Okay, so prove it.

Molly What?

Boy Go on, amaze me with your special powers.

Molly It’s not a magic show. I’m not like some magician guy.

Boy Well, I mean if you can’t actually do anything . . .

Molly Fine, whatever. (then) To have faith is to have wings.

MOLLY clasps the amulet tightly, closes her eyes, and floats a few inches off the deck . . . then down again.

Boy Whoa.

Molly Satisfied?

Boy Satisfied?

Molly Satisfied?

Boy So the cat was flying. C’mon, I wanna fly, too! Like you and the cat!

Molly Get serious, will you?! The starstuff has to be destroyed.
Boy  *(not believing in himself yet)*  You want me to destroy it??

Molly  Don't be ridiculous. My father is going to throw it into the world's hottest active volcano – Mount Jalapeño.

Boy  Where's that?

Molly  Rundoon, wouldn't you know it. Problem is, King Zarboff would kill for even a thimble of starstuff!

Boy  Hey, I can help. See, I'm gonna be the king's new helper. So when we get to Rundoon, I'll just ask him –

Molly  You're not going to be his helper. You're going to be snake food! Zarboff likes to buy orphans and feed them to his snakes!

Boy  So Grempkin lied.

Molly  King Zarboff the Third is evil – he's the worst Zarboff yet!

Boy  Grown-ups always lie! It's all they ever do!

Molly  You want to help? Then help me get that trunk to my father!

Boy  Hey, you know what? Forget it! Why should I help anybody?? WHAT'S ANYBODY EVER DONE FOR ME??

Out of nowhere, SLANK!

Slank  You!

Boy  *(furious)*  Snake food? Really?

Slank  *(circling the BOY like a shark about to attack)*  I told you to stay in yer crate, orphan sludge.

Boy  When exactly were you gonna tell us we were –

Slank  That's it. Bill Slank is drawin' the line! I may not have been born with a silver spoon up me bum, but that don't mean I won't stir my tea with one!

Molly  Ew.

Boy  That's gross.

Molly  Get below, boy!

SLANK gets safely out of harm's way, but SLANK brutally hurls his whip and snags the BOY.

Slank  He ain't goin' below, he's goin' over!

Boy  Let go! Lemme go!

SLANK reels the BOY in, close to the rail of the ship. The Neverland is lurching now, the sea below churning and getting wilder.

Slank  Zarboff promised me his whole bleedin' fleet in exchange for the trunk in my cabin.

Narrator Alf  Strong gusts blowing, winds hit 34 knots!

Boy  *(fighting for his life)*  I HATE GROWN-UPS!

Slank  Make like a kitten – take a long, long time to drown! Bottom's up, boy!

SLANK lifts the BOY overhead, holding him perilously aloft.

Boy  Not overboard! Please! I can't –

Slank  Can't what?

Boy  SWIM!

SLANK tosses the BOY into the sea. He sinks below the waves, then claws his way to the surface, spitting up water. MOLLY swims on.

Molly  Here I am, boy! All will be well!

MOLLY saves the BOY and backstrokes him to the ship and safety. A gull flies over the waves, squawking at the rising storm and the roiling sea.
Peter and the Starcatcher

SCENE TEN

The Neverland and The Wasp

Narrator Scott  Winds approaching 40 knots, whitecaps heavy, crests overhanging!

On the Neverland, a SAILOR spots the Wasp on the horizon and yells down to the deck below.

Sailor Smee  Ship off the forward bow! From the cut of 'er jib, she could be the Wasp!

Sailor Scott  The Wasp? After us? Better tell Slank!

Thunder! MOLLY drags the BOY on and drops him with a thud.

Molly  Backstroke is my event, and I do so like to finish first. I win more medals at school than anyone, except for Daphne Cooper – but Daphne Cooper’s a swot. (kicks the BOY in the side) Deep breaths. There we go.

Boy  (spits and coughs, then) You saved my life.

Molly  Of course.

Boy  Why?

Molly  Because I’m the leader.

Boy  But you don’t even like me.

Molly  The leader can’t go about saving only the people she likes.

Boy  The leader has to be a boy.

Molly  Only if the boy knows there’s more important things in this world than saving his own neck.

Boy  Like what?

Narrator Scott  Winds approaching 40 knots, whitecaps heavy, crests overhanging!

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Boy  The leader has to be a boy.

Molly  Only if the boy knows there’s more important things in this world than saving his own neck.

Boy  Like what?
Narrators Scott, Smee – turning the Neverland hard against the grain –
Narrator Smee – and jolting two people in a tiny cabin below!

ALF and MRS. BUMBRAKE, in her tiny cabin.

Alf, Mrs. Bumbrake (singing)
I'VE WAITED FOR LOVE,
I'VE WAITED FOR BLISS,
I'VE WAITED FOR THIS –

ALF is about to kiss MRS. BUMBRAKE, but she pushes him away –

Mrs. Bumbrake No! No more nattering. I'm still a Nana and I must find Molly. (JOLT! They stagger.) Spit me over, what was that?!

Alf We're changing course is all – straight for the Isle of Love –

Mrs. Bumbrake But where's my Molly? (ALF begins kissing up her arm.) She's been lost ever so long. (Kiss kiss kiss.) Cease and desist, sir! (suddenly stands up with a manly voice) HEY!! Cut the canoodling! I gotta grab the girl, get it?! (instantly all flirty again) But do come with.

ALF, MRS. BUMBRAKE, and the cabin are gone.

Narrators Aster, Ted, Boy, Scott Wind 55 knots!
Strong gale, rolling seas, blowing spray!

Narrators Prentiss, Ted, Molly The Neverland crashes into the waves!

Narrators Stache, Smee Bucking and barreling straight for the Wasp!

STACHE stands at the bow of the Wasp, his PIRATES crouching around the mast.

Act One: Scene Ten

Stache Sweeten the choppers 'n' reef the expedient. This wind'll throw guano something fierce in yer face! Oi! D'you see what I see, Smee?

Smee The Neverland, Cap'n! She's headin' right for us!

Stache This is too easy! I think I'm even feeling a weensy bit guilty. (pouts a moment) And . . . I'm over it. (barks the command) Up the gunter! Prepare to board!

Smee Up the gunter!

The PIRATES buck with a huge, rolling wave!

Stache And keep the Union Jack flying so Bill Slank thinks we'll be polite!

Smee So devious! So very devious!

Stache Neverland, HO! Victory is OURS! Well, MINE!

Narrators WIND 63 KNOTS: HURRICANO! VIOLENT STORM! VISIBILITY GONE! WHOLE WAVES! BLACK SKIES! RED OVER WHITE OVER RED!

On the deck of the Neverland, looking up at the Wasp:

Slank Pucker up, lads! We'll kiss her any minute now!

Sailor Scott But she's one of ours! We'll be ramming a British ship!!

Mack The damn'd orphan boy – he's ruined us!

Slank Orphans ruin everything! Hold on to yer ditty bag, boys! Here comes the Wasp!

Narrator Mack Two ships make toward each other tiny craft against the bounding main.

A long shot of the open sea. TWO CREWS assemble behind two captains, steering two tiny ships and two similar trunks toward a moment of reckoning. STACHE and his PIRATES, with the sand trunk on the Wasp, behave like British twits.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Stache Lordy, lordy – just in time for tea.
Pirate Bumbrake Scones from Fortnum’s!
Pirate Aster Devon cream!
Slank (on the Neverland) We can beat her, boys! She’s only a ship full o’ fops!
Smee (on the Wasp) Now, Boss?
Stache Now! Run up the Jolly Roger!

A PIRATE replaces the Union Jack with the pirate flag. The PIRATES abandon their foppishness and turn instantly vicious.

Slank It’s pirates! (to fleeing SAILORS) Come back, ye cowards!!

But it’s too late. STACHE stands on the deck of the Neverland, behind him a phalanx of PIRATES.

Stache Hallo, Neverland. I believe this trunk belongs to you. And you have something of ours.

Melee! Then, freeze!

Slank (to himself, edging away) Save yer trunk, Bill. Get the trunk to Zarboff and you’ll be too posh to push!

Melee! Then, freeze!

Narrator Prentiss Wind 67 knots! That’s 200 miles – (suddenly self-conscious) Everybody!

Narrators THAT’S 200 MILES PER HOUR! LARGE WAVES OVER 50 FEET! DISASTER! DESTRUCTION! DESTRUCTION!

MOLLY finds the BOYS below deck in the bilge dungeon.

Molly You! Boy! You turned us around so the Wasp could catch us!

Act One: Scene Ten

Boy Pretty cheeky, huh?
Molly (delighted by this fellow) Pretty cheeky.
Prentiss Yeah, awesome – and now there’s pirates everywhere! Good move, ace.
Molly He did something big, Prentiss.
Boy I could do more.
Prentiss Well, I’m still the leader.
Molly Then help me get the trunk out of Slank’s cabin and onto the Wasp!
Prentiss Sorry, not our issue.
Molly Never mind, I’ll do it myself. Mrs. Bumbrake! Mrs. Bumbrake!

MOLLY runs out. The door slams.

Ted (to the BOY) You’re different, you know that? (to PRENTISS) Don’t you think he’s different?
Prentiss We should definitely wait here. We’ll be safer.
Boy There’s more important things in this world than saving your own neck.
Prentiss, Ted Like what?
Boy Like helping Molly.

The BOY runs off. A boxing bell rings: DING, DING, DING!

Narrator Scott And, up on deck, two captains square off for the greatest of grand prizes!

A boxing ring forms around SLANK and STACHE.

Boxing Announcer Prentiss Ladies and gentlemen, thanks for coming out on this stormy night for our featured bout! In this corner, direct from Slough by way of Despond, with the intimacy issues and the clingy knickers, it’s no mother’s son and no man’s pal: BILL “THE RAT BASTARD” SLANK! (ALL cheer.) And in this corner, sporting his famous flavor-saver since the
tender age of ten, the most fearsome pirate on the pike, all hands on deck for THE BLACK STACHE! (SMEE, alone, cheers STACHE.) This is a one-round knockout match. Kicking, spitting, and gouging is preferred. Hitting below the belt is not required, though the fans tend to like it.

All WE LOVE IT!!

Boxing Announcer Prentiss Now shake hands and come out rhyming!

A (s)word fight between SLANK and STACHE.

Slank Take a hike, y'mingy crumb! The trunk is mine, so kiss me bum!

Stache I'll kiss ya, Bill, with me French-roaster, rolly-coaster, upper-cutter flipper-flopper!

Slank Which I dodge like so, behind-your-backsie, which needs-a-waxy, by the by!

Stache Or me God's-anointed, double-jointed, triple-pointed belly-whopper!

Slank Or me on-yer-kneesy, easy-peasy, Java-neesy battle-cry!

Stache Me dog's dinner!

Slank Me shark-shanker!

Stache Me winkle-pinner!

Slank Me walk-the-planker!

Stache “Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?” (cold-cocks SLANK) There he lies - a jumped-up cabin boy who doesn't know his place. (approaching SLANK lethally) Gimme the Queen's trunk or say yer g'byes, y' bathtub captain!

STACHE raises his weapon. But - CRACK!!! Lightning strikes the Neverland. EVERYONE scatters. MOLLY, atop the Queen's trunk, hurtes
Peter and the Starcatcher

Act One: Scene Ten

SMEE enters with the trunk full of sand.

Smee (airport-style announcement) Check your trunks! Some trunks may appear identical to other trunks!

Pirate Alf (running past SMEE) Save yerself! SMEE runs off. The BOY runs on. MOLLY, atop the Queen’s trunk on the other half of the Neverland, spots him.

Molly Help, Boy! I need more time to get the Queen’s trunk to my father!

Boy (sees the sand trunk just sitting there) Don’t worry! I’ll stall the pirates! (sits on the trunk, all innocence, as STACHE runs past) Some crazy weather, huh?

Stache (stops dead, spins) What are you?

Boy What are you?

Stache WHAT AM I??

Pirates BLACK STACHE!!!

Boy Never heard o’ you.

Stache Liar! The Stache is on everyone’s lips. (nonchalantly) Why, is that the Queen’s trunk you’re sitting on?

Boy Oh yeah, Queen’s trunk, totally. Molly Aster told me to protect it.

Stache From who?

Boy Pirates like you.

Stache But we have all the fun!

Boy You do?

Stache Abso-loony. A little swash, a bit o’ buckle – you’d love it more than bread! Now, give us the trunk and join the party . . . er . . . appellation, please. (off the BOY’s blank face) Yer name, bub.

Boy No name. Orphan.
Stache  *(affecting pity)* You’re more at sea than Columbus, boy. If you were a pirate, you’d have a proper name.

Boy  You could do that?

Stache  I’m the boss, ain’t I? How about Bluebeard Bob? *(nixes this)* Long John Larry? *(a thought)* Oooh! We hung a blöke from the yardarm week ago Wednesday – Pirate Pete. That’s available.

Boy  *(hereafter called PETER)* Peter. Yeah. I like that.

Stache  Iconic as the moonwalk in a Michael Jackson video. Now, gimme the trunk.

Peter  And what would I do?

Stache  You’d star in my nasty crew. Infamy! Calamity! Fraternity! You need to connect, boy.

Peter  Peter.

Stache  You need to connect, Peter. No man is an archipelago. Now, be a good Peter and give your captain his GREAT BIG TREASURE!! *(throws PETER off the trunk and flings it open!)* Sand again!

Peter  You blew it, Stache! The Queen’s trunk’s safe on the Wasp! *(calling off)* We saved the treasure, Molly!! We saved the world!!!

Stache  You’re killing my buzz, boy – to which I say die!

Peter  Not again!

STACHE throws PETER overboard.

Peter  *(hereafter called PETER)* Not again! The boy’s gone overboard!!

Aster  Molly, bring me the trunk!

Peter  Help! I can’t swim!

Molly  But Daddy, the boy needs help!

Aster  Molly, this is a direct order! BRING THE TRUNK TO ME!

Molly  This trunk floats, boy!

Peter  My name’s Peter!

Molly  Peter! I like it!

Peter  Me too!

Molly  There’s an island, Peter! Ride the trunk to the island!

MOLLY pushes the Queen’s trunk overboard.

Aster  Molly, no!!

Tempest-tossed by the terrible storm, everyone prepares to abandon ship.

All  *(singing)*

CRACK AND RIP AND CRACK AGAIN!

SOAKED BY SEA AND SOAKED BY RAIN!

SOON, WE PRAY, THE STORM BE DONE,

AND WHEN IT’S DONE,

PRAY YOU SEE THE SUN!

From out of the sea-spray, ALF clings to MRS. BUMBRAKE.

Alf  GRAB A SPAR, MRS. BUMBRAKE, GRAB A SPAR!

Mrs. Bumbrake  WHAT’S A SPAR?

Alf  THIS IS NO TIME TO ARGUE,

AND WE CAN’T STAY WHERE WE ARE!
Mrs. Bumbrake
OH, THE WIND IS LIKE A WHIP!
Alf
TAKE ME HAND! ABANDON SHIP!
Mrs. Bumbrake
BUT MY MOLLY, OH MY MOLLY –
WHAT A BLOODY AWFUL TRIP!
ALF and MRS. BUMBRAKE jump! STACHE and SMEE appear, railing against the storm.

Stache
BLOW YOU WINDS! OH, YOU WINDS!
I'M STILL THE MAN!
Smee
YOU'RE THE MAN!
Stache
THANK YOU, SMEE. CARRY ME
AND ALL THE OTHER CRAP YOU CAN!
EVEN IN THE CHURNING SEA,
STILL AM I THE CAPTAIN, SMEE.
AND THE PIRATE CODE I FOLLOW:
“ONE FOR ALL, AND ALL FOR ME!”
STACHE and SMEE jump!

Prentiss
I'M THE LEADER!
Ted
NO, YOU'RE NOT!
Prentiss
YES I AM!
Ted
WHEN THERE'S A FEW OF US,
THERE CAN'T BE A LEADER NOW!

Prentiss
WHY NOT?
Ted
THERE'S ONLY TWO OF US!
Prentiss
JUMP! C'MON TED! WE'LL JUMP TOGETHER!
Ted
I WAS THINKING WE COULD MAYBE
WAIT FOR SLIGHTLY BETTER WEATHER!
PRENTISS and TED jump! MOLLY appears, preparing to dive into the sea.

All (except Molly)
THE NEVERLAND HAS COME APART!
SCREW YOUR COURAGE, STEEL YOUR HEART!
Molly
SOMEBEWHERE OUT THERE, SEARCH FOR HIM!
DIVE, MOLLY ASTER, AND SWIM!
All
SWIM ON AGAINST THE CURRENT.
SWIM ON AGAINST THE SEA,
THO' THE TIDE MAY TURN AGAINST US,
THO' TOO STRONG THE TIDE MAY BE,
THO' EACH STROKE, EACH STROKE GROWS HEAVY,
THO' EACH BREATH IS AGONY,
WE TRY, TIL WE CAN BREATHE NO MORE.
TO CLAMBER UP THE NEAREST SHORE,
AND FALL UPON OUR KNEES BEFORE
THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE –

PETER floats atop the Queen’s trunk, fashioning a mast from a branch. He pulls off his shirt and drapes it on the branch, making a sail. It catches the wind and PETER is blown toward the island.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Stache  Follow that trunk, Smee! Get me to that island!
Molly  Get to the island, Peter! And don’t let that trunk out of your sight!!

The clouds lift, and the low, setting sun breaks through.

All

SWIM ON AGAINST THE CURRENT.
SWIM ON AGAINST THE SEA,
THO’ THE TIDE MAY TURN AGAINST YOU,
THO’ TOO STRONG THE TIDE MAY BE.
AND THO’ YOUR ARMS BE LEADEN
SLICING THROUGH THE SPRAY AND FOAM,
SWIM ON, SWIM ON,
SWIM ON, SWIM ON.
SWIM ON AGAINST THE CURRENT
TIL YOUR COURAGE BRINGS YOU HOME,
TIL YOU STAND
ON THE LAND
SAFELY HOME!

PETER, now jubilant atop the trunk, sails toward the green island. BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT ONE.

Act Two

PROLOGUE
Mollusk Island—Shore

A fetching mob of MERMAIDS enters in front of the curtain to celebrate their encounter with starstuff.

Mermaid Stache  (singing)
YOU’RE LIKELY WOND’RING WHAT WE’VE HAD TO DRINK NOW.
AND YOU MIGHT THINK, “NOW, THEY’VE GONE TOO FAR.”
BUT SOMETHING WE SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO
WE GOT TOO CLOSE TO
BY SWIMMING AFT
OF PETER’S RAFT,
AND HERE WE ARE.
AND IT WAS STARSTUFF FROM THE SKIES
THAT MADE EACH FISH THE LOVELY DISH
BEFORE YOUR EYES.
NOW FINS ARE FINGERS,
HUMAN-STYLE.
BECAUSE OF STARSTUFF
WE SMILE.

All
AND IT WAS STARSTUFF
FROM ABOVE.

Mermaid Stache
IT GAVE US NECKS.
IT GAVE US PECS.
WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE?

All
OH, HOW WE TINGLE,
AND EV'RY DAY'S SPRING.
BECAUSE OF STARSTUFF
WE SING.
OH YES, IT'S STARSTUFF

Mermaid Alf
I WAS A FLOUNDER, YESSIR!

All
WE ADORE.

Mermaid Ted
AND I, A SMELT.

All
I GOT A BUZZ.
OH, WHAT IT DOES!
I WANT SOME MORE!

Mermaid Molly
I WAS A YELLOWTAIL TUNA 'TIL I FELT

All
I'M ALL WARM AND FUZZY

Mermaid Molly
A WARM AND FUZZY FEELING –

Act Two: Prologue

All
I'M WILD AND FREE!

Mermaid Molly
MY FINGERS TINGLED
AND MY HEART STARTED REELING –

All
I LOVE HOW STARSTUFF
(MM-MM)

Mermaid Molly
'TIL STARSTUFF MADE MY TUNA MELT!

All
IT MADE A MERMAID OUTTA ME!
IT WAS THE STARSTUFF

Mermaid Scott
AND OH WHAT A GLOW
AS YOUR FINS START A-GROWING SOME MORE.

All
THAT DISSOLVED.

Mermaid Smee
GO WITH THE FLOW
AS THE GLOW GETS YA GOIN' SOME MORE.

All
YOU GET A THRILL,

Mermaid Alf
SOON YOU'RE BREATHIN' AIR.

All
YOU LOSE A GILL,

Mermaid Stache
SOON YOU'RE GROWING HAIR.

All
YOUR PROBLEM'S SOLVED.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Mermaid Aster  
SOON IT’S LONG AND CURLY.

Mermaids Prentiss, Bumbrake  
SOON YOU’RE ACTING GIRLY.

Mermaid Group  
EACH ARROWTOOTH AND AHI,  
EACH MANLY MAHI-MAHI,

All  
ARE NOW THE COOLEST CREATURES IN THE SEA.  
HOO-WEE!

TO THE SURF ADD THE TURF  
FOR THE STARSTUFF MADE A MERMAID OUTTA ME.  
MERMAIDS ARE WE!

Dance break.

AND EACH OF US WERE MADE,  
EACH HIM AND HER MADE,  
INTO A –

Mermaid Stache  
MERMAID!

All (except MERMAID STACHE)  
BREAK THE OLDEST OF NATURE’S LAWS!  
WE’LL NEVER BE FISH AGAIN BECAUSE –

All  
STARSTUFF  
MADE A MERMAID OUTTA ME!  
MADE A MERMAID OUTTA ME!  
MADE A MERMAID OUTTA ME!  
IT MAKES YOU WHAT YOU WANNA BE!  
SHOOP!

The MERMAIDS exit, alluringly.

Act Two: Scene One

Mountaintop, Mollusk Island

A sense of enormous space, clear skies, bright sun, clean air. PETER is asleep on the Queen’s trunk.

Peter (dreaming) That you, Molly? I’m coming! Wait for me! (bolts upright, awake) Molly, wait! (realizes, alarmed) No, not s’posed to sleep! S’posed to be guarding the trunk, not – What if she came and – (stands on trunk and searches horizon) I DID WHAT YOU SAID, MOL – dragged it right up a mountain! (silence) Nope, no Molly. (blinded by the glare) So . . . bright. Holy – Know what that is? That must be the sun! I’m feeling you, sun! (realizing how much he can see) And check – it – out!! Space. Light. Air. I’m finally FREE! (Echo of FREE, FREE, FREE. This delights him.) And I’m gonna have . . . freedoms! Whatever I want. (A yellow bird enters suddenly and alights on his shoulder!) Whoa. Hey bird, wassup? Me? Well, let’s see . . . Saved the world. Got a name. Not too shabby. I just – I wonder if Teddy and Prentiss made it off the ship before it sank. I mean, how weird would it be if they – (a chill up his spine, looks up) Please let them be okay. (scared now, a lost boy) Bird, we should make a pact. I don’t leave you, you don’t leave me. Deal? (The bird flies off.) No! Come back! I don’t wanna be alone! COME BACK! (Echo of BACK, BACK, BACK. This leaves him desolate, but he tries to rally.) Hey, fine. No Molly,
Peter and the Starcatcher

no Teddy, no Prentiss . . . so what? This is perfect. Nobody's after me with a stick. Nothing between me and the sky. I can just be a boy for a while. It's all I want anyway. (giving in to the lost feeling) I gotta get outta here!

TED staggers on.

Ted Sorry, did you wanna be alone?
Peter No! Stay with me.
Ted Good answer.
Peter (to heaven) Thank you!

PRENTISS appears.

Prentiss You ready for this? Teddy floats! We jumped overboard and I held on to Teddy, and the two of us bobbed all the way here!

Peter Prentiss!
Prentiss No-name!
Peter I got one now. It's Peter.
Ted Solid.
Prentiss Whatever.

PETER stands atop the trunk and has a good look around.

Peter Look, the Wasp! Way out there, you see it? It's still in one piece.

Prentiss Oh no – I see where this is going.

Ted Where's Mother?
Prentiss For the love of – her name is Molly! And she probably drowned.

TED is instantly bereft. PETER instinctively comforts him.

Peter No! She dove off the ship as it went down. She's like a real swimmer. I think maybe she made it to the

Wasp. Or maybe she's floating on what's left of the Neverland –

Split scene: MRS. BUMBRAKE and ALF, adrift on Neverland flotsam.

Mrs. Bumbrake Ride this wreckage, Romeo! Get us to shore and make it fast!

Alf You want speed? Find me a sail!

Mrs. Bumbrake We'll end up in China drifting like this. And I'm in no mood for moo shoo, Alf! Tried it once – went through me like the winter wind in Wessex!

ALF and MRS. BUMBRAKE float off.

Peter (looking down the mountain) Or maybe Molly's down there, in the jungle.

Jungle noises threaten. The BOYS consider this.

Prentiss I say we wait for her up here.

Peter (summoning his courage) C'mon! Help me hide the trunk, and we'll find some branches down the beach.

Ted At some point we're gonna need food.

PETER and PRENTISS hide the trunk.

Peter Branches. What we need are branches.

Ted (spies a pineapple) Hey, I think I found some – (sniffs it) Sweet! (tries to bite into it) Ow!

Prentiss Branches, branches . . . guy's got a jones for branches –

Peter To build a raft, you know, so we can float out to the Wasp. We get to the Wasp, Molly's father'll have to take us.

Prentiss Where?

Peter Home. (offers his hand) C'mon – everybody holds hands and nobody gets lost. Clear?

Ted Crystal. (to PRENTISS) Ew. Your hand's all sweaty.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Prentiss Yeah, 'cuz perspiration's the mark of true leadership.

The sunlight disappears as the BOYS head down into the dark jungle.

SCENE TWO

Jungle

The BOYS cling to each other as they enter the heart of darkness.

Peter Are we good?
Ted, Prentiss Yes!
Ted You there, Peter?
Peter Here! You there, Ted?
Ted Present!
Peter You there, Prentiss? (Nothing.) Prentiss? You there? (Nothing.) Teddy, you holding on to Prentiss? (Nothing.) Teddy? (realizing his hand is empty) Guys? Where is everybody??

And suddenly, they're separated, lost deep in the jungle! A tribal chant begins as strange faces appear and disappear behind giant foliage.

Mollusks VINO BIANCO! TREBBIANO!
MOUSCAT! PINOT GRIGIO!
Prentiss You said hang on to each other, Peter!
Mollusks GNOCCHI!
Ted Where are you, Peter?
Mollusks CANNOLI!
Peter I'm here, Ted!
Mollusks GNOCCHI!

Act Two: Scene Two

Ted I'm scared, Peter!
Mollusks CANNOLI!
Prentiss I can't see a thing!
Mollusks GNOCCHI!
Ted Help! Gorillas!
Stache Oh, hello!
Peter Who was that?
Fighting Prawn CANNELLONI!
Mollusks CHIANTI!
Smee It's Smee, sir!
Fighting Prawn LINGUINI!
Mollusks VINO ROSSO! MONTEPULCIANO!
Stache Hot enough for ya?
Ted (re: the pineapple) How do you eat this?
Mollusks TOCAI E DOLCETTO!
Stache There! Footprints!
Prentiss Something's chasing me!
Fighting Prawn MONTEPULCIANO!
Mollusks MONTEPULCIANO!
Peter Who's that? What the –?
Fighting Prawn CHIANTI!
Stache I'm right behind you!
Mollusks LINGUINI!
Stache And I want that trunk!
Smee D'ya want some tea?
Mollusks LINGUINI!
Stache And a biscuit, Smee!
Ted Help, I'm hungry!
Prentiss Help, I'm lost!
Stache I'm gonna find you!
Mollusks CHIANTI!
Peter I'll find you, Ted! Keep heading down!
Stache I'm sweating, Smee!
PRENTISS Which way is down?
PETER Prentiss! Teddy! Guys! You hear me??
TED HUNGRY, PETER!
STACHE WANT THAT TREASURE!
PRENTISS I'M THE LEADER!
SMEE WANT THAT TREASURE!
TED, PRENTISS HELP ME, PETER!
STACHE, SMEE WANT THAT TRUNK!

MOLLY suddenly appears from behind a tree.

World-class swimmer that we know me to be, I
reached the island in record time! I'm awfully glad
I saved the boy, even if Daddy's furious. Saving the
whole world's a bit abstract for a thirteen-year-
old. Putting a human face on it makes it more jolly.
(adjust herself) Oh, this training bra is so irksome!
(fixes it) Now, I really must fetch Daddy's trunk and
bring it back to the Wasp, or my first-ever mission'll
be my last. Don't worry, Peter, wherever you are! I'll
find you!

MOLLUSKS VINO ROSSO! MONTEPULCIANO!
TOCAI E DOLCETTO!

FIGHTING PRAWN, King of the Mollusks, reveals
himself. He wears a British top hat with a green
feather in the band.

FIGHTING PRAWN PRIMI PRANZO – DOPO GABIN-
ETTO! (realizing the BOYS don't understand) Hallo. I
am King of this island, and you boys are my prisoners.
("Seize them!") LASAGNA!

The MOLLUSKS raise a great hue and cry as they
surround the BOYS with spears.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Act Two: Scene Three

Fighting Prawn Bring me the holy relic of my captivity!

Hawking Clam Here, Mighty Father. The kitchen timer.

HAWKING CLAM hands over the timer. FIGHTING PRAWN winds it.

Fighting Prawn One minute, starting . . . NOW!

We hear a Jeopardy-like tick-tock under the boys’ presentation:

Prentiss Um . . . One at a time –

Ted (remembering MOLLY) Once upon a time – that’s how they always start! Upon a time, upon a time!!

Fighting Prawn Tick-tock, tick-tock . . . hungry, Mister Grin?

Mister Grin roars!

Prentiss Okay, okay! Once upon a time, there was a beautiful baby Princess (cries) Waah!

One of the MOLLUSKS pokes TED, scaring him into action.

Ted And an evil witch with a curse: A-ha-ha!

Prentiss Waah!

Ted A-ha-ha!

PETER slaps PRENTISS – move it along!

Prentiss Waah!

Ted A-ha-ha!

PRENTISS smacks TED. They start to smack each other. PETER interrupts with:

Peter And the curse was very terrible, for every time the baby cried –

Prentiss Waah!

Peter – the whole kingdom would fall asleep!

PETER snores grossly then conducts the following:
Act Two: Scene Three

**Peter, Prentiss, Ted** (edging away to safety, singing)

*AND BEAUTY WAS HER NAME-OH!*

_Mister Grin roars! The BOYS, frightened, return to their “stage.”_

**Prentiss** So the King marched over to his favorite horse!

**Ted** (becoming a horse) Naaaaayyy!

**Prentiss** (jumping on TED's back) And he rode to the tallest tree — (PETER assumes the shape of a tree. TED and PRENTISS gallop to him.) And he climbed up to speak to the wise old owl!

**Ted** (becoming an owl, perched on PETER's arm-branch) Whoooo?

**Prentiss** The King, a real leader, sorta like me —

**Ted** (as horse) Naaaaayyy!

 TED drops PRENTISS hard.

**Prentiss** Focus, piggy boy!

**Ted** (deeply insulted) PIGGY BOY??

 TED goes for PRENTISS but accidentally smacks PETER.

**Peter** Sticky pudding!

**Ted** (fainting) Sticky pudding, it's so good . . .

_Mister Grin roars!_

---

**Fighting Prawn** Fifteen seconds, Mister Grin!

_The BOYS press on, now with courtly elegance._

**Ted** And soon the Princess was old enough to talk —

**Prentiss** “Hi. I'm sixteen, I'm beautiful, and I'm in the market for something long-term . . .”

**Peter** But nobody could stay awake long enough to kiss her!

**Prentiss** (as a record slowing down) And everybody got so sleepy all of a suddennnn . . .

_The BOYS give a big snore in unison._

**Ted** And that's the story of Sticky Pudding — (faints again)

**Peter, Prentiss** SLEEPING BEAUTY!

**Molly** (not able to stand this any longer, comes out of hiding) That's not the end! They missed the whole emotional arc of the story!

**Peter** (to MOLLY) Where'd you come from??

**Fighting Prawn** Goody, another English! (DING! from the kitchen timer.) And your minute is up!

_Mister Grin roars! MOLLY and the BOYS tremble._

**Peter** You shoulda stayed hidden, Molly!

_The MOLLUSKS gasp._

**Molly** You abused the concept of the theater collective — it was too much for me.

**Mollusks** (rocking with laughter) Molly! Molly! Molly!

**Molly** Although Ted has real talent.

**Prentiss** Hey, I have talent!

**Ted** (Sally Field at the Oscars) They liked me! They really liked me!

**Mollusks** Molly! Molly! Molly!

**Peter** What's so funny?
Fighting Prawn You called her “Molly”!

Molly Well, it's my name. Molly. *(The MOLLUSKS giggle.*) What?

Fighting Prawn In our language, “Molly” means squid poop.

*The MOLLUSKS howl with laughter.*

Hawking Clam WAIT! *(getting back to the matter at hand)* Entertained, Mighty Father?

FIGHTING PRAWN hands the kitchen timer to PRENTISS.

Fighting Prawn First prize – you got me with squid poop. Two thumbs up! Two thumbs way up!

Peter So you let us live, right? That was the deal.

Prentiss *(finishing the thought to close the deal)* Which is so great, see, ’cuz you need us! We can do all the things you guys don’t wanna do anymore. We’re foreigners – that’s what we’re for!

Fighting Prawn Nice try. But, the law is the law! All English must die! *(“Kill them!”)* CALAMARI!

*The MOLLUSKS point their spears at MOLLY and the BOYS.*

**SCENE FOUR**

*Mister Grin’s Cage*

Narrator Aster Such life and death decisions are generally made by the English, not for the English. Worse yet, the walls of Mister Grin’s cage are very high. Too high for any boy or girl to climb. Too dark to see the crocodile in front of your face. And those hard things

Act Two: Scene Four

the boys are sitting on – they feel like bones. All in all, it’s a bad day to be British.

MOLLY and the BOYS cower and huddle. TED clings to his pineapple. From an adjacent enclosure, Mister Grin roars!

Prentiss Teddy, I hope that was your stomach.

Ted I wanna go home.

Prentiss What home?

Peter He made a deal with us, and he lied, just like they always do. I hate grown-ups!

Ted Do something, Prentiss! You’re the leader! Have a plan!

Prentiss *(grabs the timer and shouts to Mister Grin)* Eat the kitchen timer and leave us alone!!

PRENTISS throws the kitchen timer deep into the cage. Mister Grin roars! A chomping sound, then “tick-tock, tick-tock...” PRENTISS collapses in tears.

Ted Great, now we can count the seconds ’til we die.

Peter *(building to a tantrum)* This is all your fault, Molly. Makin’ me feel like this big man who’s gonna save the world! Well, I’m not a big man, and I can’t save anything!

Molly Not a good time for a hissy, Peter. You failed, so you try again. My father always says that.

Peter THEN LET HIM SAVE US!

*Mister Grin roars! The BOYS cringe.*

Molly Should’ve given the trunk to my father. Then he’d have all the starstuff and – *(remembers her amulet)* Molly, you idiot!

Prentiss She’s cracking up.

Ted No, maybe she has a plan.

Molly I do! I have a plan!
Peter and the Starcatcher

Mister Grin roars! Giant red eyes appear!

Prentiss  (shrieking) Eyes! Look at the eyes!
Molly  (undeterred) This amulet is my plan! The starstuff inside is my plan! (pointedly, to PETER) You with us, boy, or is it sulk-and-die?
Peter  I'm with you, I'm with you.
Molly  Good. (kisses PETER) It's a better team with you on it, Peter.
     PETER is stunned. But Mister Grin's enclosure ratchets open!
Prentiss  HERE IT COMES!
Molly  Now, Peter! Get him to open wide!!
     Roar!!! TED and PRENTISS scream! PETER flings himself into action before he can think better of it.
Peter  (waving his arms) Tasty boy! Fresh today! Come and eat me!!
     Mister Grin opens his gaping maw.
Molly  Duck!!
     MOLLY throws her amulet in Mister Grin's mouth. A moment of extreme tension. And then . . . a satisfied burp.

Narrator Prentiss  The ringing of bells fills the air.
Narrator Ted  And Mister Grin begins to coo, gurgle –
Narrator Peter  – and GROW!
Narrator Molly  Bigger every second!
Narrator Peter  Giant mouth!
Narrator Prentiss  Giant teeth!
Narrator Ted  Giant appetite!
Narrator Molly  Until the crocodile shatters through his bamboo enclosure –
Narrators Peter, Ted, Prentiss, Molly  – an airborne

Act Two: Scene Four

leviathan!

Peter  So basically I'm thinking: Let's –
Ted  – get outta –
Prentiss  – HERE!!!

     The BOYS and MOLLY run off, pursued by the giant Mister Grin. FIGHTING PRAWN appears with HAWKING CLAM in another part of the jungle.

Fighting Prawn  Those dirty, filthy, rotten, stinking English!
Hawking Clam  They ruin bedtime story!
Fighting Prawn  English ruin everything! Why they make Mister Grin so big?
Hawking Clam  We catch and kill them, Mighty Father!
Fighting Prawn  But leave Peter Boy and Little Miss Squid Poop for me. Them, Fighting Prawn will butterfly and deep fat fry! ("After them!") SCAMPI!!
Mollusks  (chanting from off) BUTTERFLY AND DEEP FAT FRY! BUTTERFLY AND DEEP FAT FRY!! BUTTERFLY AND DEEP FAT FRY!!
     HAWKING CLAM, FIGHTING PRAWN, and the rest of the MOLLUSKS pursue the boys, running deeper into the jungle.
SCENE FIVE

Beach

STACHE enters, carried on by SMEE.

Stache Set me down, you dozy prat. I can't go another step.

Smee That trunk is hard to find, Cap'n.

Stache So it is. Elusive as the melody in a Philip Glass opera.

Smee Rest yerself a while. Smee'll track yer treasure solo.

Stache Negaroni. We'll trick the pewling spawn and make 'em bring it hither. But how to do it? How to smoke 'em out –

Smee We could lure 'em, Cap'n!

Stache Lure 'em, y'say?

Smee (smacks himself on the head) Stupid idea, Smee. Stupid, stupid!

Stache Lure 'em, yes. Down here to the butch.

Smee Beach.

Stache Beach. In which case, we shall need –

Smee A magnet. A really big one. That'll attract 'em!

Stache Smee, Smee ... I know your heart's in the right place, but – (A distant ROAR.) Smee, you've been hitting the three-bean couscous again.

Smee 'Tweren't I, Cap'n.

Stache Wait! I have it!

Smee (sees something shocking overhead) Oh, Captain?

Stache Lucky for me you saved your ukulele!

Act Two: Scene Six

Smee Captain Stache!!!!!

Stache A siren's song is what we need, Smee, and you're going to be the luscious siren – (sees Mister Grin) WHOA! BIG CROC! (runs off)

Smee He's chewing all the scenery, sir.

Stache (runs on) Not in my scene, he ain't! (to Mister Grin) Spare me the theatrics, y'reptilian ham! (Mister Grin roars monstrously!) Abandon spleen!

Smee Scene!

Stache Scene!

Smee, Stache Abandon scene!

STACHE and SMEE run off.

SCENE SIX

Jungle's Edge

MOLLY runs on, followed by the BOYS, who are winded, exhausted, and collapsing. MOLLY continues running, and is gone.

Peter Grab anything that looks like it'll float! We're gettin' outta here.

Molly (runs back on, checking her pulse and other vitals) No – first, take me to the trunk. Remember the mission.

Peter Forget the trunk – the trunk is safe. What we need is a raft!

Molly It's not your decision, Peter. Protect the trunk – that's the mission!

Peter You have to have it your way, don't you! (A bright, strong light blinks in their eyes.) What is that –?
Prentiss Blinking fierce — !

From out on the Wasp, ASTER signals MOLLY.

Molly It's Father! Father — oh, good! He's signaling me all the way from the Wasp!!

Ted What's it mean?

Molly He's using Norse Code! It's Norse Code, everyone!

PRENTISS starts laughing.

Prentiss Um — sorry — I think you mean Morse Code.


Prentiss That's ridiculous.

Peter What's he saying?

Molly Unless I miss my guess, he's saying, “Marla bella furna seena heina furna.” And then he says, “Un, gettsie Molly doozee blingen.” That's: “First, take Molly to the trunk.” “Coom heller high water.” That's: “Remember the mission.”

Peter Very convenient.

Molly “Un gettsie blingen doozee plakken.” That's: “Take the trunk down to the beach.” “Marla bella furna” — “Father'll be there with the longboat.” “Seena heina furna” — “We'll be” “heina furna” — um, “safe, if we can just get past the pirates and make it to the beach.” “Den tooren nder flanken essen, nekon freska tudor! Nayben nay benessa, nay benanka, binta rubalenka sinkin-hookin keep de motor cookin, anka Danke, Papa.” — “Love, Daddy.”

MOLLY takes a proud, deep breath of linguistic expertise.

Prentiss Women are tricky, man.

Peter I feel kinda stupid not knowing Norwegian.

Molly It isn't a contest. Though, if it were, I'd win.
Peter Try'n catch me, Fighting Prawn!

Narrator Stache And the faster he runs, the further he gets —

Narrator Aster — from the terrible beatings —

Narrator Prentiss — the boarded-up garrets —

Narrator Peter — the smell and the filth and the dark of the cave!

Narrator Smee And the further he runs, the more that he smiles —

Narrator Fighting Prawn — from saving the others —

Narrator Stache — and being a leader —

Narrator Molly — 'til, panting and jumping and practically flying, Peter feels something entirely new!

Freeze the chase!

Peter Alive!

Unfreeze the chase!

Narrator Aster And all of a sudden, surrounding his head —

The yellow bird appears among a flock of yellow birds and flits around PETER's head as he runs.

Peter (swatting) Get outta my face, bird. I can't see where I'm going!

Narrator Molly And that's when he misses a ledge and falls!

Peter MOLLY . . . !

Narrator Scott And down and down he bumps and bruises —

Narrator Fighting Prawn — leaving the natives with no one to chase.

Narrator Hawking Clam Banging and buffeting —

Narrator Prentiss — down a deep crevice, as gravity beckons —

Act Two: Scene Eight

Narrator Scott — crooking her finger and winking her eye, and Peter falling for her big time.

Narrator Alf And rushing up to meet him —

Narrator Peter — is a solid sheet of glass!

Narrators SPLASH!

PETER splash-lands in a pool of golden water.

Narrator Scott His brutal fall is broken —

Narrator Aster — and not his neck —

Narrator Ted — and not by glass at all —

Narrator Fighting Prawn — but by a shimmering lake of golden water, far, far underground.

Narrator Aster He should've been drowning, should've been afraid, but he was neither drowning nor afraid. Peter bobbed to the surface, safe as you please, and began to get his bearings.

Narrator Stache And the water was thick like oil, and full of light, too — and warm, like a rich man's bath.

Narrator Prentiss And looking down fondly at Peter was —

Peter — a mermaid!

SCENE EIGHT

Grotto

Perched on a rocky ledge above the water, a grand dame of a MERMAID looks down at PETER.

Teacher Well, well . . . nice of you to drop in. I'm Teacher — that's what I'm called. And yes, I speak
Peter and the Starcatcher

English. I know your name is Peter. I know a lot of things.

Peter Where am I?
Teacher In a hurry.
Peter That's right . . . I was running away from –
Teacher The Mollusk natives.
Peter They're trying to kill us! And we just wanna get home!
Teacher Yeah, life is complicated.
Peter I was gonna build a raft to get to the Wasp, but Molly's father is –
Teacher You don't need a raft to get home, and you don't need the Wasp. All you need is starstuff.
Peter How'd you know about –?
Teacher Listen to Teacher. When you rode the trunk to this island, seawater seeped inside. Then the starstuff in the trunk enchanted the water. Then the water enchanted the fish in the wake of the trunk. Then the waves –
Peter But how'd you know about –?
Teacher I'm not finished. Then the waves washed the water right into this grotto, where I was swimmin'.
Peter So you used to be a fish?
Teacher Scotch salmon. This is way cooler, FYI. (pointedly) The starstuff'll change you, too. It makes you what you want to be.
Peter But I just wanna be a boy for a while. Couldn't I just be a boy?
Teacher Well, I suppose . . . once you sit in the starstuff –
Peter Yeah, then what?
Teacher Sky's the limit. You could even fly yourself home maybe, just like you dreamed.

Act Two: Scene Eight

Peter And find a family.
Teacher In which case, you're going to need something.
Peter A name.
Teacher Instead of Peter?
Teacher In addition to. A family name. (calling to the grotto) And we've come up with a good one, haven't we?
Narrator Alf And in the grotto, or in the water, or both – an echo, or a voice or both, seemed to answer:
Narrators (as echo, gently) PAN.
Teacher What are you, boy?
Peter I'm Peter.
Narrators (as echo, louder) PAN.
Peter (disappointed) Pan? You mean like in the kitchen?
Teacher You are just too cute. I mean two things, actually. First is fun and frolic – anarchy, mischief, all the things a boy likes to –
Peter (he's down with that) Fun! Okay! I'm Peter Pan.
Teacher There. You're changing already.
Peter You said Pan means two things. What's the second thing?
Teacher Shouldn't you be on your way? Molly's going to beat you to that trunk.
Narrators MOLLY!
Peter (quickly out from the golden pool of water) THE TRUNK!

PETER dashes off. Thunder! Lightning! Meanwhile . . .
SCENE NINE
Mountaintop

MOLLY, PRENTISS, and TED have retrieved the trunk.

Molly WINNERS – YES! We beat him to the top! We came in first – I’ll make that very clear when he gets here.

Prentiss If he gets here.

Molly Of course he’ll get here! He has to!

Prentiss Face facts, Molly. The natives got him, and I feel terrible. (TED slams the pineapple on his leg. PRENTISS sees him wince.) We all feel terrible, but Peter’s out of the running. Which means we can finally settle the question of what, for a better word, one might deem “leadership.”

Ted (pointing at something far away) Cripes! A floating tomato!

Prentiss Say what?

Molly That red dot on the horizon!

Split scene: ALF and MRS. BUMBRAKE enter on the raft, her red flannel bloomers catching the wind and carrying them boldly toward Mollusk Island.

Alf Betty, you’re a genius! Whee-ho! A vast behind!

Mrs. Bumbreach My bloomers have stood up to stronger wind than this! Full speed ahead!

As quickly as they appeared, the raft, ALF, MRS. BUMBRAKE, and her dignity are gone.

Molly They’re safe. That’s good. (remembering) I wish Peter were here. (THUNDER! LIGHTNING!) The mission comes first. Get the trunk to the beach. Now, move it!

The COMPANY enters as the rainstorm begins.

Narrator Grempkin The night that Ted and Prentiss spend dragging the trunk down the mountain is worse than any at the orphanage –

Narrator Ted – because the rain isn’t like the rain in England.

Narrator Prentiss It falls like stones and hurts your head!

Narrator Stache And you can’t see, because there’s trees –

Narrator Aster – in front of trees –

Narrator Bumbrake – surrounded by trees smacking your face.

Narrator Molly And you can’t breathe –

Narrator Alf – from the bugs –

Narrator Peter – and the beetles –

Narrator Grempkin – flying –

Narrator Ted – crawling –

Narrator Scott – sticky –

Narrator Bumbrake – crunchy –

Narrator Aster – and they’re in your mouth –

Narrator Stache – and up your nose –

Narrator Molly – and down your front!

Narrator Prentiss So you take cover and wait out the storm –

Narrator Stache – but you can forget about sleep –

Narrator Bumbreach – ’cuz it’s way too scary out here and there’s a trunk to save –
Peter and the Starcatcher

Narrator Aster – and you still have to reach the beach! Molly is revealed guarding the trunk. PRENTISS and TED are sound asleep on the jungle floor.

Molly I said forget about sleep! Teddy!

Suddenly . . . PETER!

Peter He's spark out.

Molly (startled) Peter! Oh, Peter! I thought – Molly throws her arms around PETER’s neck. They’re ecstatic, reunited, like kids.

Peter The most incredible thing – you won’t believe – I met this –

PETER and MOLLY stop, embarrassed.

Molly Right. Well. Good to see you, Peter. Shall we wake the boys?

Peter Been kind of a long day. Leave ’em be.

Molly Just us then.

Peter Yeah. Just us. (jiggles the trunk’s lock) We should open the trunk – make sure the starstuff’s okay.

Molly Oh no, that’s not, no –

Peter I wanna sit in the starstuff –

Molly Very dangerous – exposure to so much of it.

Peter I don’t care!

Molly Well, I do! I was so worried. We waited and waited. I told them you’d come. We waited – (darker, sitting on the ground) and then the rain and the dark and I was so worried –

Peter (leaning in) I’m here. (sits next to MOLLY) Do you think I’ve changed?

Molly You’re dirtier.

Peter So, I’ve been meaning to ask you about the, um . . .

Act Two: Scene Nine

about that, uh – you know – about that thing you did –

Molly What thing?

Peter The kiss, okay? The kiss.

Molly What kiss?

Peter The kiss! The one you gave me!

Molly Oh, the kiss.

Peter “What kiss,” she says.

Molly Well, what about it?

Peter Nobody’s ever wanted to kiss me, that’s all –

Molly Want to? I didn’t want to, we were about to be eaten alive and –

Peter I mean, I was just sitting there and you grabbed me –

Molly Oh for heaven’s sake, such a fuss! Didn’t you like it?

Peter No, it was –

Molly (standing, upset) You didn’t like it. You didn’t like it, and now you’re telling me you didn’t like it! Unbelievable.

Peter I’m not saying I didn’t like it –

Ted (dreaming) Mmm . . . pork.

Molly (keeping her voice down so as not to wake TED) Then what’re you saying?

Peter I’m guess I’m saying – I guess I’m asking –

Molly You stop that right now. I won’t answer any such question. You’re inclining toward the sentimental and that’s all well and good for a boy, but the fact is –

Peter Inclining toward what?

Molly – we girls can’t afford to be sentimental. We must instead be strong. (lifts herself to sit atop the trunk) And when I marry, my husband will have to –
Peter and the Starcatcher

Peter MARRY? Whoa, you thought I was asking you to –
Molly Not you, you swot. Uch, the ego. (starting again)
And when I marry, I shall make it very clear to this person – that sentimentality is not on the calendar. He will have to lump it or leave it. And if he should leave, I’ll stay a spinster and pin my hair back and volunteer weekends at hospital. And I will love words for their own sake, like “hyacinth” and “Piccadilly” and “onyx.” And I’ll have a good old dog, and think what I like, and be part of a different sort of family, with friends, you know? – who understand that things are only worth what you’re willing to give up for them. (then) Even if I – in the face of death, I may have – you know –

Peter (sits next to MOLLY) Wanted to?
Molly I didn’t say that.
Peter (gently, sweetly, holds MOLLY’s hand) Got it.
Molly Good.

Peter (absorbing) Wow.
A moment. They suddenly seem older. MOLLY stifles a yawn.

Molly (giving in to exhaustion) You know, I might just – now you’re here – rest my eyes for a little –

MOLLY hops off the trunk and curls up in front of the lock. Instantly, she’s asleep. Gingerly, PETER tries to jiggle the lock open. The noise disturbs PRENTISS.

Prentiss (dreaming) No, Molly, no! The leader has to be a –!

PRENTISS awakens. PETER’s moment has passed, and he runs off.

Molly (rubs her eyes) Where’s Peter?
Prentiss The Mollusks got him, remember?

Act Two: Scene Ten

It is now morning. TED sits up, shielding his eyes from the dawn’s glare.

Ted Is that the sun? What’s for breakfast? (licks the pineapple) Ow!
Narrator Alf Did he say the sun? But if you can see the sun coming up –
Narrator Bumbrake If you can see the sky at all –
Molly We must be very near the beach! C’mon, boys! We made it!
The strumming of a ukulele is heard, as MOLLY, PRENTISS, and TED push the trunk to the beach.

SCENE TEN

Beach

The sun is coming up over the horizon, revealing jagged debris from the wreck of the Neverland, including a piece of the ship’s bow. A lone mermaid, who has seen better days (SMEE in disguise), plays a siren song on her ukulele.

Mermaid/Smee (singing)
COME TO ME, YE SHIPWRECKED SAILORS.
LOOOKEE HERE, YE WAVE-TOSSSED WHALERS.
OOH AH! OOH AH!
SAILOR BOY, KEEP SAILING NEAR ME.
CLOSER NOW, SO’S YOU CAN HEAR ME.
AS YER SHIP BREAKS TO BITS,
FROM YER DECK, FOR A SEC,
YOU CAN SEE MY LOVELY –
**Peter and the Starcatcher**

*STACHE bursts on!*

**Stache** No, no, no, no, no. The object is to lure 'em, Smee – not send 'em into psychoanalysis! *(pulls SMEE's wig off)* No, simple’s best. We go to Plan B: The Poisoned Fruitcake. The hateful brats arrive – empty beach, tempting morsel. Maybe a note: “Feel free, tuck in.” They eat it, they die –

**Smee** They come, Cap’n!

**Stache** Let’s kill us some kiddies, Smee!

**Smee** So nasty! So very nasty! *(STACHE and SMEE disappear, just as TED and PRENTISS enter, exhausted.)*

**Ted** So hungry. So very hungry.

*MOLLY enters, pulling the trunk.*

**Prentiss** *(pointing off to the lagoon)* There’s the longboat.

**Molly** But where’s Daddy?

*Enter STACHE in disguise, hawking a poisoned fruitcake.*

**Stache** Get yer tasty fruitcake here! Get yer nice slice o’fruitcake!

**Ted** Omigosh, YYYEEESSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSO
Peter and the Starcatcher

Fighting Prawn (from off) And there’s more of us than anybody! ("Surrender!") PROSCIUTTO!

FIGHTING PRAWN enters with the MOLLUSKS and their prisoners: ASTER and SCOTT, bound and gagged.

Molly Daddy! Captain Scott! Not you, too!

Fighting Prawn (to MOLLY) NO ENGLISH MOVE!

Amid the distraction, STACHE hides behind the other prisoners. MRS. BUMBRAKE gets a good look at FIGHTING PRAWN.

Mrs. Bumbrake Prawnie — ? Prawnie, is that you?

Fighting Prawn Betty?

Mrs. Bumbrake (as the servant she once was) “The mistress wants more of your manicotti.”

Fighting Prawn (as the servant he once was) “And a pasta fazool —”

Mrs. Bumbrake “– to make you drool!”

Fighting Prawn Betty Bumbrake, it’s you! (to assembled PRISONERS) This woman only English kind to me when I was kitchen slave!

HAWKING CLAM pushes ASTER forward.

Mrs. Bumbrake Be a prince, Prawnie, and let Lord Aster loose.

Fighting Prawn You are English, so I’ll choose my words carefully. No.

Mrs. Bumbrake But Prawnie —

Fighting Prawn You English invade our island, now Nature’s Laws are all focaccia!

Molly Because of the contents of this trunk, Your Highness. Release my father, and we’ll take the trunk off the island. Nature restored. Mollusks live happily ever after!

Act Two: Scene Ten

STACHE grabs FIGHTING PRAWN from behind, holding his straight razor at the king’s throat.

Stache “Happily ever after” my kebab knife! (to MOLLY)

You, kitty cat! Bring the trunk here or I cut the savage’s throat.

Molly (trapped in a moral dilemma) That’s a terrible choice — I have a sacred duty!

Stache Take yer time. I’ll count to three – THREE!

Echo (Peter) THREE . . . Three . . . three . . .

Stache What’s that? An ECHO?

Echo (Peter) ECHO . . . Echo . . . Echo . . .

Stache Excellent effect! The Stache is CUNNING!

Echo (Peter) CUNNING . . . Cunning . . .

Stache The Stache is BEGUILING!

Echo (Peter) GUILING . . . GUILING . . .

Stache The Stache is SUPREME!

Peter I DON’T THINK SO!

STACHE is flummoxed. PETER leaps into view, holding a branch as a weapon.

Stache You.

Peter Me.

Stache Peter.

Peter Pan!

Prentiss He’s alive!

Ted We’re saved!

Molly (shouting instructions) Thrust and parry, Peter!

Attaque coulé! Balestra!

STACHE hands off FIGHTING PRAWN to SMEE.

PETER thrusts. STACHE easily parries and sends PETER sprawling.

Stache And so we arrive in the belly of the beast.
Peter and the Starcatcher

STACHE holds his razor at PETER's throat, about to strike.

Peter Teddy, throw it!

Ted Yo! Think fast! (throws his pineapple at STACHE, who defends himself by slashing the fruit in two pieces!)

Really, after all that? (STACHE instantly gets TED in a headlock.) Prentiss, PRENTISS!!!

Prentiss (rushes STACHE) WHAT AM I DOING?? Omigod please don't hurt me, I'm just a little kid! I'm not responsible!! (bursts into tears)

Stache (to TED) Is he crying? Seriously? (PRENTISS grabs STACHE's arm and bites his hand.) Aaaaargh! Me hand! (STACHE drops the razor and gets PRENTISS in a headlock. MOLLY picks up Stache's razor.) Next?

Molly (assuming the "praying mantis" martial arts position) Aaaaiiiiiieeee-hunh!

Stache (pointing somewhere) Oh, looky-loo! A baby koala!

Molly (falling for it) A koala? Oh they're just so adora- (STACHE swipes his razor from MOLLY and gets her in a headlock.) Unfair!

Stache (in MOLLY's ear) Say yer good-byes, m'dear-

Peter WAIT! Don't you want the trunk?

Molly Peter, don't!

Peter (to PRENTISS and TED) Are you with me, guys?

Ted Gotta save Mother.

Prentiss She's more important than some trunk.

Peter Even if I never get home.

The BOYS hug in sympathy and understanding, friends.

Act Two: Scene Ten

Stache Are we quite done with the hugging and learning?

Peter Decision. (pushes trunk to STACHE) It's a better world with you in it, Molly. (to STACHE) Now, let her go.

Stache (moved, deeply) 'Dja note that, Smee? 'Dja see it? Genuine heroic sacrifice.

Smee (sarcastic) Inspiring, Cap'n. I've got gooseflesh all over.

Stache Poor Smee. How flat and unprofitable the world must seem from the deck of the HMS Cynic. (inspired, handing MOLLY to PETER) Go, lad. Take yer precious lady and live another day.

Molly (bereft) My first mission, and I've wrecked it!

Stache (tossing key to SMEE) Now, open it, Smee. Open, and elaborate.

Smee (opens the trunk elaborately, then stops cold) It's- it's-

Stache "It's"? I don't like "It's." Bollocks to "It's." (pushes SMEE away and looks inside the trunk, a beat) Do we detect a pattern here? Help me, the linguists among you, what's the turn of phrase?

Smee Empty, Cap'n. The trunk's empty.

Stache So it is. (through gritted teeth) Clean as the sheets in a convent.

Peter (runs to see) Empty, it can't be empty!

Molly You mean all this time-

Stache, Peter WHERE'S MY TREASURE!!

Molly The seawater got in. It must have dissolved-

Stache Moose nuggets! Gold and diamonds don't DISSOLVE!

Molly But starstuff does. Is that right, Daddy?
Peter and the Starcatcher

Aster (incoherent due to the gag in his mouth) Well actually, the molecular framework of starstuff begins to break down when it –

Stache (not quite hearing) Starbucks? Starbucks? What’s Starbucks??

Molly Doesn’t matter now. Nobody gets his hands on it –

Peter Nobody gets what he wants.

Stache (pushes PETER away from the trunk) Enough of this non-versation! (to ASTER) See, this is why I hate, I hate, I HATE –! (slams the trunk in a fury, forgetting his right hand resting on the edge; agony! as he processes the pain of having cut off his own hand) Omigod. Omigod. Omigod. (a few more, perhaps, and then) Omigod. Um – wait –

Smee (runs to STACHE) Sir?

Stache (through the excruciating pain) And you are –?

Smee Smee, sir – your right-hand man.

Stache Not anymore, Smee. Not anymore – thanks in no small part – TO THIS!! (holds up his stump to a collective gasp!)

Smee (weeping) Oh Captain, my Captain!

Stache Crocodile tears, Smee. Opine if ye would, what’m I to do now?

Smee I’m stumped, sir.

Stache You’re stumped? It’s all about you, isn’t it? Sefly-self-self.

Smee I sir? Not me, sir –

Stache Then kindly retrieve it! (lifts trunk lid) I’m not leaving me hand behind for these children to paw!

Smee (holding up a severed hand) Retrieved, Cap’n.

Stache (to PETER) You! You sacrificed, willingly, for the sake of a gill.

Smee Girl.

Stache Girrrrrrl. And that was majestic! You’ve piqued the poet in me, Pan. What say we merge a forger?

Smee Forge a merger.

Stache THANK YOU, SMEE! (to PETER) Picture it, Pete. The ultimate pirate and his worthy opponent.

Peter Molly fights better than me.

Molly I run faster too.

Stache And I bet your milkshake brings all the boys to the yard! But I’m not interested. (to PETER) Consider the possibilities. Foes forever. Adversaries ad
neverendum. I’m talking books, movies, Broadway –

Peter But you just tried to kill me –

Stache Don’t you get it, Peter? You’re my hero!

Peter Me?

Stache You’re the ying to me yang. The semi to me colon. Dammit, Boy, you’re the wind beneath my clipped wing!

Peter Gee, I hadn’t really –

Stache Thanks to you, I am reborn! The complete villain! O, what sublime enemies we’ll be! Forget gold! Time. Time’ll be our treasure. We’ll fight for all eternity. We’s a couple now, boo.

Peter (negotiating) Only if my friends go free.

Stache Oh, bravo, bravissimo! Give the Pan a round of – (tries to clap his hands, but he’s short one) Smee, a little help? (tries to clap the severed hand held by SMEE, but utterly fails, grabs it, and points it at PETER) This is all your doing, ye loathsome Pan. You single-handedly rendered me single-handed!

Peter You cut your hand off, not me!

Stache O, pity the child who lives in a fact-based world!
Peter and the Starcatcher

(standing theatrically atop the trunk) You may think my ship has sailed, but I have an armada of options at my former fingertips. Perhaps I'll never be a concert violinist or a reliable juggler, but I can still win Wimbledon - and I can still destroy you! YOU'VE MADE YOUR BED, PAN!

Peter Go on! (calling off) Get the hook!!

ROAR! Tick-tock, tick-tock . . . Everyone looks up and cowers.

Smee North-northwest! Enormous ticking crocodile, Cap'n! Back for another snack!

Stache Upstaging me still, ye snargletooth'd show-off??

Smee Just not your day, sir.

Stache Hang on! I could use a killer croc on me crew. Bring the beast along, Smee.

Smee How'm I to lure 'im, sir?

Stache Give 'im the hand, y'fool! (tosses his hand to SMEE) Wait - best make it last. Just give 'im the finger. (SMEE tries to pry a finger from Stache's hand as he exits.) Adieu, Pan. But believe this: Where'er you call home, keep your back to the wall. For just when you least expect it, there I'll be! The Stache, right under yer nose! (exits, stops, and returns for:) Clap if you believe!

STACHE exits. Applause, no doubt.

Molly (rushes to ASTER, removes his gag, and hugs him) Daddy! Thank goodness you're safe –

Aster Molly! My Molly.

Mollusks (they just love saying it) Molly! Molly! Molly!

Fighting Prawn Boy! You good son. Fighting Prawn honor that. (puts his top hat on PETER's head) Boy will wear hat of hero. And Fighting Prawn will bend

Act Two: Scene Ten

Mollusk law - allow all English to leave island! (to ALF) You be good to Betty, or I serve you up al dente!

Alf Oh, we've made plans, Your Prawnness. I got down on bended knee and Missus B said –

Mrs. Bumbrake You betcha! Betty's bound for bridal bliss!

Alf Aye, the HMS Bumbrake may have a few barnacles on her bottom, but Alf'll scrape 'em off!

Mrs. Bumbrake Don't speak, dearie. (arms out to FIGHTING PRAWN) Oh, Prawnie! TTFN.

Fighting Prawn Ta-ta for now. Or in my language: TIRAMISU!

All TIRAMISU! TIRAMISU!

The MOLLUSKS vanish back into the jungle.

Scott Len, old sport, it's back to England. And then I can finally set my sights on the South Pole.

Aster The Antarctic?

Scott Or my name's not Robert Falcon Scott. (to his CREW) Trunk to the longboat!

The SEAMEN carry off the empty trunk. MRS. BUMBRAKE and ALF follow them off.

Molly (saluting SCOTT) Good luck, Captain. Don't let the Norwegians beat you to it!

Scott Nobody beats the British, little girl. Rule Britannia! SCOTT exits.

Aster (to MOLLY, of whom he is very proud indeed) Not a little girl. A full-fledged Starcatcher.

Molly (ecstatic) Full-fledged Starcatcher! Just like my wonderful father!

Peter She deserves it, sir. Molly's the real hero.

Molly Thanks, Peter.

Aster Mission fulfilled. We're heading home!
Molly     And you'll come with us! Can't they, Daddy? Can't the boys come home with us?
Prentiss  Mother!
Ted       I told you!
Peter     And Teacher said all I needed to get home was starstuff! Ha! WRONG!
Aster     Who?
Molly     Who's Teacher?
Peter     This tricked-out mermaid. Well, she was a fish, but she swam in the grotto and NOW WE'RE GOING HOME!
Aster     Wait! What grotto?
Peter     The grotto with the golden water.
Aster     Did you go in that water?
Peter     Yeah, it was great – all warm and tingly.
Molly     (to ASTER, realizing) The starstuff.
Aster     And he soaked in it. (taking MOLLY aside) We can't do this.
Molly     (fighting it) But it already dissolved in the waves!
Aster     The waves that turn fish into mermaids. I'm sorry, Peter – we can't take you with us.
Peter     Why? What’d I do?
Molly     But he isn't evil or greedy. And he isn't –
Aster     We don't know what he is. Or what he wants to be.
Peter     I just wanna be a boy for a while. That's all I ever wanted –
Molly     (defiant, to ASTER) There, you see?
Aster     With starstuff, “a while” could be a very long time.
Peter     But I'll be good. I promise!
Molly     The boy deserves a home!
Aster     Of course he does, but – wait – Leonard, old man, you're getting slow! Peter, what if your mermaid was right?
lowers his foot to the ground.) You're going to need something to protect you. Now, it seems to me – (flipping over the hat and removing his amulet) – if we take the last of the starstuff, like so – (drops amulet in the hat, covers it, whooshes it around) – and stir vigorously, I think it's anti-clockwise... Peter, lend a hand, whip the meringue!

Peter (helps stir the hat as the sound of bells fills the air)
Hey, the hat's getting all warm and tingly. Just like –

Aster And so!
ASTER uncovers the hat and a Light flies out, caresses PETER's cheek, then pulls MOLLY's hair.

Peter Wizard!
Molly My hair!
Ted C'mere, you!
The Light vanishes down the beach. TED runs off after it.

Prentiss I can totally do that trick. (turns and hollers)
Hey! Don't eat it, Teddy!
PRENTISS runs off after TED.

Aster (pleased with himself) Nice to know I've still got it.
Molly If you really want to protect him, you'd take him with us.
Scott (from off) Tide's going out, my Lord!
Aster I'm afraid it's time for good-byes.
ASTER steps discreetly away. MOLLY pulls herself together.

Molly Be a woman. (tears a label from inside her pinafore and hands it to PETER) This is my address in London. You don't have to write me every day or anything, just when you feel like it.

Peter Well – you know my address. Molly Island.

Peter (almost frantic) But I don't want it to end!!
Aster Soon, Peter. You'll forget, and it won't hurt anymore.
Molly No! It's supposed to hurt – that's how you know it meant something! (to PETER) This isn't the end. You're going to remember everything, every single detail –

Peter And you're a better leader.
Molly Really?
Peter No.

They laugh, enjoying each other. Then it changes.

Molly You won't stay mad at me forever, will you?
Peter Go on, get lost.
Molly I'm bound to grow up, see? What would we do?
Peter Be friends.
Molly In a year, that'd be hard. In five years, it'd be silly. In twenty years, it would just be sad.
Peter (bitterly) You sound older already.

MOLLY goes to her father. ASTER comforts her gently.

Aster The thing you did, against impossible odds - it's what the two of you will always have.

Peter The thing we did . .

Molly Against impossible odds . . . (deliberately comes back to PETER and kisses him on the mouth) Yes, I wanted to.

MOLLY runs off. ASTER stops PETER from pursuing her, then exits. PETER is alone. A moment. Then the COMPANY enters, one by one.

Narrator Scott Peter watches the Wasp get smaller and smaller, wondering about his adventure, about Molly, about that kiss.

Narrator Stache It would be the only moment that Peter would teeter, at the top of the rolley-coaster, on the verge of becoming what he'd always hated - a grown-up.

Narrator Aster And then, as promised, he began to forget. And stayed right where he was.

Narrator Stache The outsider.

Narrator Alf Molly, true to her word, would remember everything, until one night, many years later -

Narrator Smee she stared out the nursery window watching Peter fly off with her daughter in tow -

Narrator Bumbrake and this grown-up Molly would comfort her new Nana, the good old dog who tended her children -

Narrator Molly "Don't worry, Nana darling. I always hoped, if Peter came to visit, that my daughter would take my place. And once Wendy grows up -"

Narrator Fighting Prawn "I hope she will have a little girl -"

Narrator Hawking Clam "A little girl who will go off with him in turn -"

Narrator Bumbrake (gently singing)

OH, FOR THE WINGS,
FOR THE WINGS OF A DOVE . . .

Narrator Molly And so may we go on and on, dear Nana, as long as children are young and innocent -

Narrator Stache - and rude and juvenile and heartless -

Narrator Aster - past all of the jostles of life -

Narrator Molly - 'til we fly back home.

The singing ends. PETER has just what he always wanted.

Peter Home.

A moment. TED and PRENTISS run on, ducking and swatting, pursued by the Light and the sound of bells.

Ted HELP! That bird-bell thing is after us!!

Prentiss Keep it away! It's tryin' to eat my brains!!

Peter Over here! I'm the one you want!

Ted Get it away! Get it away!!

The Light flutters directly to PETER and speaks to him in Bell.

Peter Okay, okay, calm down - I think . . . yeah, I think she wants me to race you down to the grotto.

Ted (having spotted his pineapple) Look! Stache sliced it open! (finally able to gnaw on the fruit, blissful) Oh, yes - mmm, OH YES!

Prentiss It's hard to believe you're still single.
Peter and the Starcatcher

Peter (to the Light) Wait! How can I race 'em to the grotto if I don't run?? Whoa whoa whoa – I can what???
   The Light flies off, zoom!
Prentiss What'd she say? What'd she say??
Peter “To have faith is to have wings.”
   The COMPANY approaches and surrounds PETER.
Prentiss Wait a minute – did you say grotto?
Peter How'd you like to just be a boy for a while?
Ted The starstuff water can do that?
Peter It makes you what you want to be.
Prentiss A lawyer?
   The COMPANY slowly lifts PETER.
Peter Guys – this is gonna be one awfully big adventure.
Ted, Prentiss All right! You said it!
Peter Ready?
All READY!
Peter Set?
All SET!
Molly (happy for her friend, she sets PETER free) Go!
   Then, supported by the company, PETER shoots up from a crouch –
Peter (crows) Ca ca Ca ca CAAAH!
   – and flies!
   BLACKOUT.

TIRAMISU!