Lost Boys and The Darlings

*Scene for 8*

*The boys are eating a pretend meal this evening, with nothing whatever on the table, not a mug, nor a crust, nor a spoon. The pretend meals are not Wendy’s idea; indeed she was rather startled to find, on arriving, that Peter knew of no other kind, and she is not absolutely certain even now that he does eat the other kind, though no one appears to do it more heartily. He insists that the pretend meals should be partaken of with gusto, and we see his band doing their best to obey orders.*

WENDY (*her fingers to her ears, for their chatter and clatter are deafening).* Si-lence. Is your mug empty, Slightly?

SLIGHTLY (*who would not say this if he had a mug).* Not quite empty, thank you.

NIBS. Mummy, he has not even begun to drink his poe-poe.

SLIGHTLY (*seizing his chance, for this is tale-bearing).* I complain of Nibs!

 (JOHN *holds up his hand.)*

WENDY. Well, John?

JOHN. May I sit in Peter’s chair as he is not here?

WENDY. In your father’s chair? Certainly not.

JOHN. He is not really our father. He did not even know how to be a father till I showed him.

 (*This is insubordination.)*

SECOND TWIN. I complain of John!

 (*The gentle TOOTLES* *raises his hand*.)

TOOTLES (*who has the poorest opinion of himself).* I don’t suppose Michael would let me be baby?

MICHAEL. No, I won’t.

TOOTLES. May I be dunce?

FIRST TWIN (*from his perch)*. No. It’s awfully difficult to be dunce.

TOOTLES. As I can’t be anything important would any of you like to see me do a trick?

CURLY. No.

TOOTLES (*subsiding).*  I hadn’t really any hope.

 (*The tale-telling breaks out again*.)

NIBS. Slightly is coughing on the table.

CURLY. The twins began with tape rolls.

SLIGHTLY. I complain of Nibs!

NIBS. I complain of Slightly!

WENDY. Oh dear, I am sure I sometimes think that spinsters are to be envied.

MICHAEL. Wendy, I am too big for a cradle.

WENDY. You are the littlest, and a cradle is such nice homely thing to have about a house. You others can clear away now. (*She sits down on a pumpkin near the fire to her usual evening occupation, darning.)* Every heel with a hole in it!