

(A spasm of ill-will to JOHN cuts through MR. DARLING, and is gone. WENDY returns panting)

WENDY

I've been as quick as I could.

MR. DARLING

(With a sarcasm that is completely thrown away on her)

Oh yes, you have been wonderfully quick, precious quick!

(HE is now at the foot of MICHAEL's bed; NANA is by its side, holding the spoon insinuatingly in her mouth.)

WENDY

(Proudly, as she pours out MR. DARLING's medicine)

Michael, you will see how Father takes it.

MR. DARLING

(Hedging)

Michael first.

MICHAEL

(Full of unworthy suspicions)

Father first.

MR. DARLING

It will make me sick, you know.

WENDY

(Disturbed)

I thought you took it quite easily, Father.

MR. DARLING

That's not the point; the point is that there is much more in my glass than there is in Michael's spoon and it isn't fair.

JOHN

Come on, Father!

MR. DARLING

A little less noise there.

MICHAEL

(Coldly)

Father, I'm waiting.

MR. DARLING

You're waiting! What about me—I'm waiting.

MICHAEL

Father's a scare-dy cat.

MR. DARLING

Father's not a scare-dy cat.

(They are now glaring at each other)

MICHAEL

Well, then, take it.

MR. DARLING

Well, then, you take it.

WENDY

(Butting in again)

Why not both take it at the same time?

MR. DARLING

(Haughtily)

Certainly. Ready, Michael? One—two—you know, Michael, I don't think you're going to take yours after all!

MICHAEL

I am. I am.

WENDY

(As nothing has happened)

One—two—three.

(MICHAEL partakes, but MR. DARLING resorts to hanky-panky)

JOHN

Father hasn't taken his!

(MICHAEL howls)

MR. DARLING

Shhh!

MICHAEL

Boo-oo-oo!

WENDY

(Inexpressibly pained)

Oh father!

MR. DARLING

(Who has been hiding the glass behind him)

What do you mean by "Oh Father"? Stop that row, Michael. I meant to take it but I — missed it.

(NANA shakes her head sadly over him, and goes into the bathroom. THEY are all looking as if they did not admire him, and nothing so dashes a temperamental man)

Come on, to bed, the lot of you. Michael, John, Wendy.

(THEY steal to their beds as MRS. DARLING returns with the peppermint stick)

MRS. DARLING

Well, is it all over?

MR. DARLING

Yes, Mother dear, it's all over and quite satisfactory.

MICHAEL

Father didn't—

MR. DARLING

Shhh!

MRS. DARLING

Father didn't what?

MR. DARLING

(Uneasily)

Oh, nothing, nothing at all.

(NANA comes back. MR. DARLING stumbles over her)

Oh! Clumsy, clumsy—just look at my trousers, covered with hair again!

WENDY

(On her knees by the kennel)

Father, she's crying.

MR. DARLING

Go on! Coddle her! Nobody ever coddles me. I'm only the bread-winner. Why should I be coddled? Why, why, why?

MRS. DARLING

George, not so loud; the servants will hear you.

(There is only one maid, absurdly small too, but they have got into the way of calling her the servants.)