

Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens: Chapter 3

“The Thrush’s Nest”

A young poet named Shelley made a paper boat from a banknote, and sent it sailing on the Serpentine. It reached the island at night. It was taken to Solomon Caw, who gave it to Peter to play with.

Peter knew what it was and thought of all the ways he could use it to reach Kensington Gardens. After planning together, Peter and Solomon called the thrushes to a meeting. Solomon told them how **impressed** he was by their nest-building, and this put them in a good **mood** at once. “If,” he said, “a finch’s nest is placed on the Serpentine it fills with water and breaks to pieces, but a thrush’s nest stays dry.” The thrushes were very happy and applauded! After this Solomon explained to the thrushes that their young friend, Peter Pan, wanted to cross the Serpentine to Kensington Gardens. He needed their help to build a thrush’s nest large enough to hold Peter, like a boat.

At first, the thrushes were very sulky. “We are very busy people,” they **grumbled**, “and this would be a big job.”

“Quite so,” said Solomon, “and, of course, Peter will pay you sixpence a day.”

Then all the thrushes hopped for joy, and began building the boat **immediately**. Peter paid them every evening. They stood in rows on the branches waiting **politely** while he cut the paper sixpences out of his banknote.

After months of hard work, the boat was finished. Peter made a sail from his old nightgown, and when the full moon rose, he left the island. He had promised the thrushes to begin by making short voyages, with them as his guides, but when he saw Kensington Gardens he could not wait. At first, his boat turned round and round, but eventually his sail caught a wind that carried him under the bridge and in sight of Kensington Gardens. Then, he was caught in a storm, which carried him to land in a small bay.

He was not safe yet **though**. As he tried to get out of his boat, the fairies armed with holly leaves shouted at him to leave because it was past Lock-out Time. Peter told them that he was not an ordinary human and wanted to be their friend. When the fairies saw that the sail on his boat was a baby's nightgown, they felt sorry for him and led him to their queen. The fairy queen told Peter he could go where he wanted after Lock-out Time in the Gardens.

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