

Video Part 1: <https://youtu.be/lSq2zjMgubY>

Video Part 2: <https://youtu.be/dmvR-7hqn5c>



Mr.

Darling--the father



Mrs. Darling--the mother



Nana--the Nursemaid



Wendy--the oldest child



John--the middle child



Michael--the youngest child



Liza--the servant

Chapter 1 Questions:

1. Who is Nana?
2. What was Nana's job?
3. Where did Nana sleep?
4. How did Mr. Darling feel about Nana? What did he worry about?

From Chapter 1

Mrs. Darling loved to have everything arranged in just a certain way, and Mr. Darling had a passion for being exactly like his neighbors; so, of course, they had a nurse [*in this case, a nurse, or nursemaid, refers to someone who looks after the children when the parents are busy*]. As they were poor, because of the huge amount of milk the children drank, this nurse was a prim Newfoundland dog, called Nana, who had belonged to no one in particular until the Darlings hired her.

Nana had always thought children were important, however, and the Darlings had become acquainted with her in Kensington Gardens, where she spent most of her spare time peeping into baby carriages, and was much hated by careless nursemaids, whom Nana actually followed to their homes and complained of to their mistresses. She proved to be quite a treasure of a nurse. She was very thorough at bath-time, and she would jump up at any moment of the night if one of the children made the slightest cry. Of course her kennel [*a small bed for dogs*] was in the nursery [*a place where the children sleep*].

Nana had a genius for knowing when a cough is a thing not to worry about and when a cough means the child needs a warm scarf around his throat. She believed strongly in old-fashioned cures like rhubarb-leaves, and she made sounds of contempt over all this new talk about germs, and so on. It was a lesson in propriety to see her taking the children to school, walking calmly by their side when they were well behaved, and butting them back into line if they strayed. On John's football days she never once forgot his sweater, and she usually carried an umbrella in her mouth in case of rain. There is a room in the basement of Miss Fulsom's school where the nurses wait. They sat on chairs, while Nana lay on the floor, but that was the only difference. The other nurses pretended to ignore Nana as someone of an inferior social status to themselves, and she despised their light talk. She resented visits to the nursery from Mrs. Darling's friends, but if they did come she first whipped off Michael's pinafore [*an apron*] and put him into the shirt with blue braiding, and smoothed out Wendy and made a dash at John's hair.

No nursery could possibly have been conducted more correctly, and Mr. Darling knew it, yet he sometimes wondered uneasily whether the neighbors talked.

He had his position in the city to consider.

Nana also troubled him in another way. He had sometimes a feeling that she did not admire him. "I know she admires you tremendously, George," Mrs. Darling would assure him, and then she would sign to the children to be especially nice to father.

Answers for Chapter 1:

1. Who is Nana?

A dog

2. What was Nana's job?

The nursemaid--she looked after the children

3. Where did Nana sleep?

In the nursery with the children

4. How did Mr. Darling feel about Nana? What did he worry about?

He felt uneasy about Nana. He worried that the neighbors were talking. He also worried that Nana did not admire him.

Chapter 2: Read through this extract for Chapter 2. What happened? Why did Nana end up having to sleep outside instead of in the Nursery? See if you and your partner can retell the chain of events that lead up to Nana being sent outside.

## From Chapter 2

*[Summary of the previous chapter: One night, Mrs. Darling, on Nana's night off, sat with the children as they slept. Drowsing, she was awakened by a slight draft from the window, and, looking around, she saw a strange boy in the room. She screamed, and Nana, who had just returned home, lunged for the intruder, but the boy leapt out the window, leaving only his shadow behind. He had been accompanied also by a ball of light, but it too had escaped. Mrs. Darling rolled up the boy's shadow and put it in a drawer, thinking that the boy would come back for it sometime soon and thus may be caught. When Mr. Darling was told of the incident he considered the whole thing very silly, and refused to be concerned.]*

**The scene:** *Mr. Darling and Mrs. Darling are getting ready to go out for the night to an office dinner party (a dinner party held by Mr. Darling's office). Meanwhile, Nana is busy preparing the three children for bed.*

It had begun so uneventfully, so precisely like a hundred other evenings, with Nana putting on the water for Michael's bath and carrying him to it on her back.

"I won't go to bed," he shouted, like one who still believed that he had the last word on the subject, "I won't, I won't. Nana, it isn't six o'clock yet. Oh dear, oh dear, I shan't love you any more, Nana. I tell you I won't be bathed, I won't, I won't!"

Then Mrs. Darling came in, wearing her white evening-gown. She had dressed early because Wendy so loved to see her in her evening-gown, with the necklace George had given her. She was wearing Wendy's bracelet on her arm; she had asked for the loan of it. Wendy loved to lend her bracelet to her mother.

Mrs Darling had found her two older children playing at being herself and father on the occasion of Wendy's birth, and John was saying:

"I am happy to inform you, Mrs. Darling, that you are now a mother," in just such a tone as Mr. Darling himself may have used on the real occasion.

Wendy had danced with joy, just as the real Mrs. Darling must have done.

Then John was born, with the extra pomp that he imagined due to the birth of a male, and Michael came from his bath to ask to be born also, but John said brutally that they did not want any more children.

Michael had nearly cried. "Nobody wants me," he said, and of course Mrs. Darling could not stand that.

"I do," she said, "I do so want a third child."

"Boy or girl?" asked Michael, not too hopefully.

"Boy."

Then he leapt into her arms.

It was then that Mr. Darling rushed in like a tornado.

Perhaps there was some excuse for him. He, too, had been dressing for the party, and all had gone well with him until he came to his tie. It is an astounding thing to have to tell, but this man, though he knew about stocks and shares, had no real mastery of his tie. Sometimes the

thing yielded to him without a contest, but there were occasions when it would have been better for the house if he had swallowed his pride and used a clip-on tie.

This was such an occasion. He came rushing into the nursery with the crumpled little brute of a tie in his hand.

"Why, what is the matter, father dear?"

"Matter!" he yelled; he really yelled. "This tie, it will not tie." He became dangerously sarcastic. "Not round my neck! Round the bed-post! Oh yes, twenty times have I made it up round the bed-post, but round my neck, no! Oh dear no! begs to be excused!"

He thought Mrs. Darling was not sufficiently impressed, and he went on sternly, "I warn you of this, mother, that unless this tie is round my neck we don't go out to dinner tonight, and if I don't go out to dinner tonight, I never go to the office again, and if I don't go to the office again, you and I starve, and our children will be flung into the streets."

Even after this, Mrs. Darling was still calm. "Let me try, dear," she said, and indeed that was what he had come to ask her to do, and with her nice cool hands she tied his tie for him, while the children stood around to see their fate decided. Some men would have resented her being able to do it so easily, but Mr. Darling had far too fine a nature for that; he thanked her carelessly, at once forgot his rage, and in another moment was dancing round the room with Michael on his back.

The dance ended with the appearance of Nana, and most unluckily Mr. Darling collided against her, covering his pants with dog hairs. They were not only new pants, but they were the first pants Mr. Darling had ever had with braid on them, and he had to bite his lip to prevent the tears coming. Of course Mrs. Darling brushed the hair off of his pants for him, but he still began to talk again about it being a mistake to have a dog for a nurse.

"George, Nana is a treasure," said Mrs. Darling.

"No doubt, but I have an uneasy feeling at times that she thinks the children are puppies.

"Oh no, dear one, I feel sure she knows they have souls."

"I wonder," Mr. Darling said thoughtfully, "I wonder."

They were still discussing it when Nana came in with Michael's medicine.

Strong man though Mr. Darling was, there is no doubt that he always behaved rather foolishly over the medicine. If he had a weakness, it was for thinking that all his life he had taken medicine boldly, and so now, when Michael dodged the spoon in Nana's mouth, he said reprovingly, "Be a man, Michael."

"Won't; won't!" Michael cried naughtily. Mrs. Darling left the room to get a chocolate for Michael, but Mr. Darling thought that this was not being strict enough.

"Mother, don't pamper him," he called after her. "Michael, when I was your age I took medicine without a murmur. I said, 'Thank you, kind parents, for giving me bottles to make me well.'"

He really thought this was true, and Wendy, who was now in her night-gown, believed it also, and she said, to encourage Michael, "That medicine you sometimes take, father, is much nastier than Michael's medicine, isn't it?"

"Ever so much nastier," Mr. Darling said bravely, "and I would take it now as an example to you, Michael, if I hadn't lost the bottle."

He had not exactly lost it. He had climbed in the dead of night to the top of the wardrobe and hidden it there. What he did not know was that the faithful Liza had found it, and had put it back on his wash-stand.

"I know where it is, father," Wendy cried, always glad to be of service. "I'll bring it," and she was off before he could stop her. Immediately Mr. Darling's spirits sank in the strangest way.

"John," he whispered, shuddering, "it's most beastly stuff. It's that nasty, sticky, sweet kind."

"It will soon be over, father," John said cheerily, and then he rushed Wendy with the medicine in a glass.

"I have been as quick as I could," she panted.

"You have been wonderfully quick," her father retorted, with a nasty politeness that Wendy didn't even notice. "Michael first," Mr. Darling said doggedly.

"Father first," said Michael, who was of a suspicious nature.

"I shall be sick, you know," Mr. Darling said threateningly.

"Come on, father," said John.

"Hold your tongue, John," his father yelled.

Wendy was quite confused. "I thought you took your medicine quite easily, father."

"That is not the point," he retorted. "The point is, that there is more in my glass than in Michael's spoon." His proud heart was nearly bursting. "And it isn't fair: I would say it though it were with my last breath; it isn't fair."

"Father, I am waiting," said Michael coldly.

"It's all very well to say you are waiting; so am I waiting."

"Father's a cowardly custard."

"So are you a cowardly custard."

"I'm not frightened."

"Neither am I frightened."

"Well, then, take it."

"Well, then, you take it."

Wendy had a splendid idea. "Why not both take it at the same time?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Darling. "Are you ready, Michael?"



Wendy gave the words, one, two, three, and Michael took his medicine, but Mr. Darling slipped his behind his back.

Once Michael realized what his father had done, he yelled with rage.

"O father!" Wendy exclaimed, in a scolding voice.

"What do you mean by 'O father'?" Mr. Darling demanded. "Stop that noise, Michael. I meant to take my medicine, but I--I missed it."

Mr Darling thought it was dreadful the way all the three were looking at him, just as if they did not admire him. "Look here, all of you," he said entreatingly, as soon as Nana had gone into the bathroom. "I have just thought of a splendid joke. I shall pour my medicine into Nana's bowl, and she will drink it, thinking it is milk!"

It was the color of milk; but the children did not have their father's sense of humor, and they looked at him reproachfully as he poured the medicine into Nana's bowl. "What fun!" he said doubtfully, and they did not dare expose him when Mrs. Darling and Nana returned.

"Nana, good dog," he said, patting her, "I have put a little milk into your bowl, Nana."

Nana wagged her tail, ran to the medicine, and began lapping it. Then she gave Mr. Darling such a look, not an angry look: she showed him the great red tear that makes us so sorry for noble dogs, and crept into her kennel.

Mr. Darling was frightfully ashamed of himself, but he would not give in. In a horrid silence Mrs. Darling smelt the bowl. "O George," she said, "it's your medicine!"

"It was only a joke," he roared, while she comforted her boys, and Wendy hugged Nana. "Much good," he said bitterly, "my wearing myself to the bone trying to be funny in this house."

And still Wendy hugged Nana. "That's right," he shouted. "Coddle her! Nobody coddles me. Oh dear no! I am only the breadwinner, why should I be coddled--why, why, why!"

"George," Mrs. Darling entreated him, "not so loud; the servants will hear you." Somehow they had got into the habit of calling Liza "*the servants*", even though Liza was only one person.

"Let them!" he answered recklessly. "Bring in the whole world. But I refuse to allow that dog to lord it in my nursery for an hour longer."

The children wept, and Nana ran to him beseechingly, but he waved her back. He felt he was a strong man again. "In vain, in vain," he cried; "the proper place for you is the yard, and there you go to be tied up this instant."

"George, George," Mrs. Darling whispered, "remember what I told you about that boy?"

**Vocabulary: Match the underlined words with the definitions on the next page.**

1. Then John was born, with the extra pomp that he imagined due to the birth of a male,
2. . It is an astounding thing to have to tell, but this man, though he knew about stocks and shares, had no real mastery of his tie.
3. He became dangerously sarcastic.
4. you and I starve, and our children will be flung into the streets
5. while the children stood around to see their fate decided
6. Mr. Darling collided against her, covering his pants with dog hairs
7. "George, Nana is a treasure," said Mrs. Darling.
8. "Oh no, dear one, I feel sure she knows they have souls."
9. he said reprovingly, "Be a man, Michael."
10. "Mother, don't pamper him,"
11. Michael, when I was your age I took medicine without a murmur.
12. "Father first," said Michael, who was of a suspicious nature.
13. they looked at him reproachfully
14. they did not dare expose him
15. That's right," he shouted. "Coddle her! Nobody coddles me
16. I am only the breadwinner
17. "not so loud; the servants will hear you."
18. But I refuse to allow that dog to lord it in my nursery for an hour longer.
19. Nana ran to him beseechingly
20. "In vain, in vain," he cried

**Definitions:**

\_\_\_\_\_ unsuccessful or useless; of no value

\_\_\_\_\_ splendid and colourful ceremony, especially traditional ceremony on public occasions

\_\_\_\_\_ what happens to a particular person or thing, especially something final or negative, such as death or defeat

\_\_\_\_\_ to become very weak or die because there is not enough food to eat

\_\_\_\_\_ one of the equal parts into which the ownership of a company is divided and which can be bought by members of the public

\_\_\_\_\_ a person who is employed in another person's house, doing jobs such as cooking and cleaning, especially in the past

\_\_\_\_\_ to be brave enough to do something difficult or dangerous

\_\_\_\_\_ the member of a family who earns the money that the family needs

\_\_\_\_\_ to make public something bad or dishonest

\_\_\_\_\_ to protect someone or something too much

\_\_\_\_\_ a manner of doing something in which you are asking or begging someone for something

\_\_\_\_\_ to behave as if you are better than someone and have the right to tell them what to do

\_\_\_\_\_ feeling doubt or no trust in someone or something

\_\_\_\_\_ a manner of doing something which expresses criticism

\_\_\_\_\_ to complain about something that you disagree with or dislike, but not in a public way

\_\_\_\_\_ to treat a person or an animal in a special way by making them as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever they want

\_\_\_\_\_ the use of remarks which clearly mean the opposite of what they say, and which are made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize something in a humorous way

\_\_\_\_\_ in a manner that lets someone know that you disapprove of their bad or silly behaviour

\_\_\_\_\_ the spiritual part of a person which some people believe continues to exist in some form after their body has died, or the part of a person which is not physical and experiences deep feelings and emotions. In the Christian religion, humans are believed to have this, but not animals.

\_\_\_\_\_ someone who is very helpful and valuable to you

\_\_\_\_\_ to throw something or someone suddenly and with a lot of force

\_\_\_\_\_ to hit something violently

## **Definitions: Answers**

vain unsuccessful or useless; of no value

pomp splendid and colourful ceremony, especially traditional ceremony on public occasions

fate what happens to a particular person or thing, especially something final or negative, such as death or defeat

starve to become very weak or die because there is not enough food to eat

stocks and shares one of the equal parts into which the ownership of a company is divided and which can be bought by members of the public

servant a person who is employed in another person's house, doing jobs such as cooking and cleaning, especially in the past

dare to be brave enough to do something difficult or dangerous

breadwinner the member of a family who earns the money that the family needs

expose to make public something bad or dishonest

coddle to protect someone or something too much

beseechingly a manner of doing something in which you are asking or begging someone for something

lord to behave as if you are better than someone and have the right to tell them what to do

suspicious feeling doubt or no trust in someone or something

reproachfully a manner of doing something which expresses criticism

murmur to complain about something that you disagree with or dislike, but not in a public way

pamper to treat a person or an animal in a special way by making them as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever they want

sarcastic the use of remarks which clearly mean the opposite of what they say, and which are made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize something in a humorous way

reprovingly in a manner that lets someone know that you disapprove of their bad or silly behavior

soul the spiritual part of a person which some people believe continues to exist in some form after their body has died, or the part of a person which is not physical and experiences deep feelings and emotions. In the Christian religion, humans are believed to have this, but not animals.

treasure someone who is very helpful and valuable to you

fling to throw something or someone suddenly and with a lot of force

collide to hit something violently

Bonus Questions:

In the 19th century, historians talk about the "bourgeois cult of respectability". This refers to the desire of middle class families in 19th century England to be respected by everyone in society.

Is there any evidence in this story for the "cult of respectability"? What are Mr. Darling's feelings and attitudes about being respected?