

DAILY Actor

'DENTITY CRISIS by Christopher Durang

JANE: Well, a few days ago I woke up and I heard this voice saying "It wasn't enough." Then it started to come back to me. When I was eight years old, someone brought me to a theatre with lots of other children. We had come to see a production of *Peter Pan*. And I remember something seemed wrong with the whole production, odd things kept happening. Like when the children would fly, the ropes would keep breaking and the actors would come thumping to the ground and they'd have to be carried off by the stagehands. There seemed to be an unlimited supply of understudies to take the children's places, and then *they'd* fall to the ground. And the crocodile that chases Captain Hook seemed to be a real crocodile, it wasn't an actor, and at one point it fell off the stage, crushing several children in the front row.

Several understudies came and took their places in the audience. And from scene to scene Wendy seemed to get fatter and fatter until finally by the second act she was immobile and had to be moved with a cart.

The voice belonged to the actress playing Peter Pan. You remember how in the second act Tinkerbell drinks some poison that Peter's about to drink in order to save him? And then Peter turns to the audience and he says that Tinkerbell's going to die because not enough people believe in fairies, but that if everybody in the audience claps real hard to show that they *do* believe in fairies, then maybe Tinkerbell won't die. And so then all the children start to clap. We clapped very hard and very long. My palms hurt and even started to bleed I clapped so hard. Then suddenly the actress playing Peter Pan turned to the audience and said "That wasn't enough. You didn't clap hard enough. Tinkerbell's dead." Uh... well, and... and then everyone started to cry. The actress stalked offstage and refused to continue with the play, and they finally had to bring down the curtain. No one could see anything through all the tears, and the ushers had to come help the

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children up the aisles and out into the street. I don't think any of us were ever the same after that experience.