

**Enid Blyton**

# **Peters Good Luck**

(Illustrated by Elizabeth Wall)

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Two short stories find in a book called

**DAILY MAIL**

**ANNUAL**

**for boys and girls**

(Edited by Susan French)



# Peter's Good Luck

by  
*Enid Blyton*

Illustrated by ELIZABETH WALL

ONE day, when Peter and his friends were racing home from school, they saw something lying in the gutter. They went up to see what it was. "It's a weight," said Peter, trying to lift it. "It belongs to someone's scales. Perhaps it fell off Mr. Timmins' cart when he went round selling his potatoes. My, isn't it heavy!"

"It's a fourteen-pound weight!" said Jim, looking at it. "What shall we do with it? Shall we take it into the school playground and leave it there till to-morrow? Then we can play that we are strong men and take it in turns to lift it over our heads, like the man did at the circus last week."

"No, we ought to take it back to Mr. Timmins," said Peter. "It doesn't belong to us."

"Finding is keeping," said Harry, trying to lift the weight.

"No, it isn't," said Peter. "You



have to find the owner. My mother says so. We must take it back to Mr. Timmins."



"Hallo, Peter," she said, "what is this?"

"What! Carry that dreadful heavy weight all the way to the greengrocer's!" said Jim. "You must be mad. And you know what a cross old man Timmins is. He's quite likely to think you're playing a joke on him or something and hit you."

"Come on, Peter, let's drag it into the playground," said Harry. "You surely don't mean to carry it through the village to Mr. Timmins' shop."

"Well, won't one of you help me?" asked Peter.

"No, thanks!" cried all the boys, and they ran off home, laughing to think of Peter going to the greengrocer's with the heavy fourteen-pound weight.

Peter lifted it on to his shoulder. It *was* heavy! He went off down the road with it. He didn't at all want to carry it to Mr. Timmins', but he knew that the old greengrocer would want it for his weighing, and would be sorry to have lost it.

"I wish I hadn't seen it now," thought Peter. "It was bad luck, because I really don't want to waste time taking it to that cross old man."

He carried the weight all the way to Mr. Timmins' shop, and it seemed heavier and heavier as he went. He was glad when he reached the shop and could put the weight down on the counter.

Mr. Timmins wasn't there, but his wife was. She was a nice, fat person with a red face and twinkling eyes. She looked at Peter in surprise.

" Hallo, Peter," she said, " what is this?"

" I found it in the road," said Peter. " I thought it might belong to Mr. Timmins. I know he uses heavy weights when he weighs out his potatoes."

Mrs. Timmins glanced over the weights behind the counter. Then she shook her head. " No," she said, " it isn't ours, Peter. I've got the fourteen-pounder down here. Poor old son ! I'm sorry you've had to carry it all this way for nothing. You look quite tired out. I'm just going to sit down to my tea. You come along in and have a piece of my new chocolate cake. I only made it this morning."

Peter was delighted. Chocolate cake was his favourite. He followed Mrs. Timmins into her parlour at the back of the shop, and saw the table laid for tea.

" Sit down," said Mrs. Timmins.

"Oh, I don't think I ought to stop," said Peter. " May I just have a piece of that lovely cake ? "

So Mrs. Timmins cut him a piece—and a very big slice it was, too—and gave it to him. He stood munching it, and how he enjoyed it! It was the nicest cake he had ever tasted !

" Thank you very much," he said, when it was gone. " Now I must go, I suppose I had better take the weight with me. I wonder who it belongs to."

" I expect it's old Mrs. Lumkins, the

grocer's wife, who dropped it off her cart," said Mrs. Timmins. " She keeps her scales too near the back, I always think."

" Well, that's not very far away, I'll take it there," said Peter. So off he went again, the weight on his shoulder. It certainly was very heavy and his shoulder began to feel tired. But he arrived at last at Mrs. Lumkins', and put the weight down on her counter. Mrs. Lumkins was behind her piles of sugar, biscuit tins, and jam jars, knitting. She was surprised to see Peter.

"What's that you've brought?" she asked, peering over her glasses at the weight.

" Oh, isn't it yours ? " said Peter, disappointed. " It's a fourteen-pound weight I found in the road. I took it to Mr. Timmins' shop first, but it isn't his."

" No, I've got my heavy weights here, all of them," said Mrs. Lumkins. " Poor Peter ! It's a heavy load to carry about on that small shoulder of yours. Sit down and take a rest. Look, I've just been sorting out some broken biscuits from my biscuit tins. They are in that box. Help yourself. I like to see a boy like you, picking up something in the street and doing his best to find the right owner."

" Thank you very much," said Peter, " but I've just had a big piece of chocolate cake at Mrs. Timmins', and I feel rather full up. I don't think I can manage a biscuit."

"It *must* have been a large piece of cake !" said Mrs. Lumkins. " Well, here's a paper bag. Fill it with biscuits, and take them home with you. You'll be able to eat them some time, I'm sure ! Now, fill it right up to the top. It's a pleasure to give anything to a boy like you ! "

Peter went red with pleasure. He filled the paper bag to the top and



"I've brought the weight you wanted, sir," said Peter.

stuffed it into his pocket. Then he picked up the weight and turned to go.

" I wish I knew whose weight this was," he said. " I can't think of anyone else."

" It looks quite a new one to me," said Mrs. Lumkins. " If you took it to Jones, the ironmonger, he could tell you whose it was, I expect. I dare say it fell off his cart when the boy went his rounds. He might have been taking it to some one that had ordered it from Mr. Jones."

"Well, I'll take it there," said Peter, and off he went. This time the weight felt heavier than ever, for he really had carried it rather a long way now. He staggered along wishing that Mr. Jones's shop was not quite so far away. He had to sit down and rest a little while before he reached it, but at last he got there. He walked into the shop, put the weight down with a bump on the counter, and sank on to a chair, really quite out of breath.

Mr. Jones was there, polishing some rods. He looked at Peter in surprise—then he picked up the weight,

" Hallo !" he said, in delight. " Where did you get this ? That stupid boy of mine, Alfred, dropped it off his cart this morning, and it was a special order

for the Red House, Captain Page wanted it to-day for something important. My word, I'm glad to see it! The Captain has been in for it already, and a rare temper he was in when he knew Alfred had dropped it."

"Well," said Peter, "I'm very glad it's yours. Do you know, I've been to Mrs. Timmins, and it wasn't hers. And I've been to Mrs. Lumkins, and it wasn't hers."

"Do you mean to say you've carried the weight all that distance!" cried Mr. Jones in surprise. "I don't know any other boy who would have troubled himself to find the owner, especially if it meant carrying such a weight about.

Why, most boys would have dragged it off some where to play with. Look here, Peter, you come to me whenever you want a job, and I'll give you one. See? I'd like a boy like you. A nice honest boy who'll take a bit of trouble over things. You come to me in the holidays and I'll give you a job and pay you well. Will you do that?

"Oh, I'd like to," said Peter, full of delight. "My dad is out of work, and I'd like to earn a little money to give to Mother."

"Then you come along to me," said Mr. Jones, beaming. "

And when you leave school, if you've worked well, I'll take you on here. I want to retire some day, you know, and leave my business to a hard-working young man to manage. Alfred's no good. Half asleep most of the time, and always losing things."

Peter could hardly believe his ears. A job for the holidays —and a job when he left school! When it was so hard to get work, too! What luck!

"Oh, thank you, sir, you're very kind," he said. "Shall I take this weight to Captain Page's as I go home? It's on my way."

"Do," said Mr. Jones. "I'd be grateful if you would. That big lump of an Alfred is out somewhere and goodness knows when he'll be back. I can't leave the shop, or I'd go myself. Thanks, my boy. Now, off you go —and don't forget to come along to me in a week's time when the schools break up."

"Thank" you, sir," said Peter, and he took the weight on his shoulder

again. It didn't seem at all heavy this time, because Peter was so happy. He felt almost as if he



*Peter took the bag of biscuits to school with him and shared them with the other boys.*

could run with it. He soon came to the Red House and saw Captain Page standing in the garden.

"I've brought the weight you wanted, sir," said Peter, and handed it over.

" Why didn't you bring it sooner, you lazy rascal ? " said the Captain. " Mr. Jones said you had gone out with it a long time ago. You want a good whipping, to make you hurry a bit!"

"I'm not Mr. Jones's boy," said Peter, feeling rather frightened when he saw how fierce the Captain looked. " I just told Mr. Jones I'd bring it along for you on my way home. His boy dropped it on his rounds this morning, and I found it."

"Dear me, I beg your pardon," said the Captain. " I shouldn't have gone for you like that if I'd known you were doing a kindness. I'm much obliged to you for bringing it along for me. Here's something for your trouble!"

He gave Peter a shilling. A whole shilling ! Peter couldn't believe his eyes.

" Thank you very much, sir," he said. " It's very generous of you."

He ran all the way home, full of

joy. To think of the luck that heavy weight had brought him ! He

gave his mother the shilling and told her the whole story. She was so proud when she heard it all.

Next day Peter took the bag of biscuits to school with him and shared them with the other boys at playtime. They began to tease him about the weight he had carried away the day before.

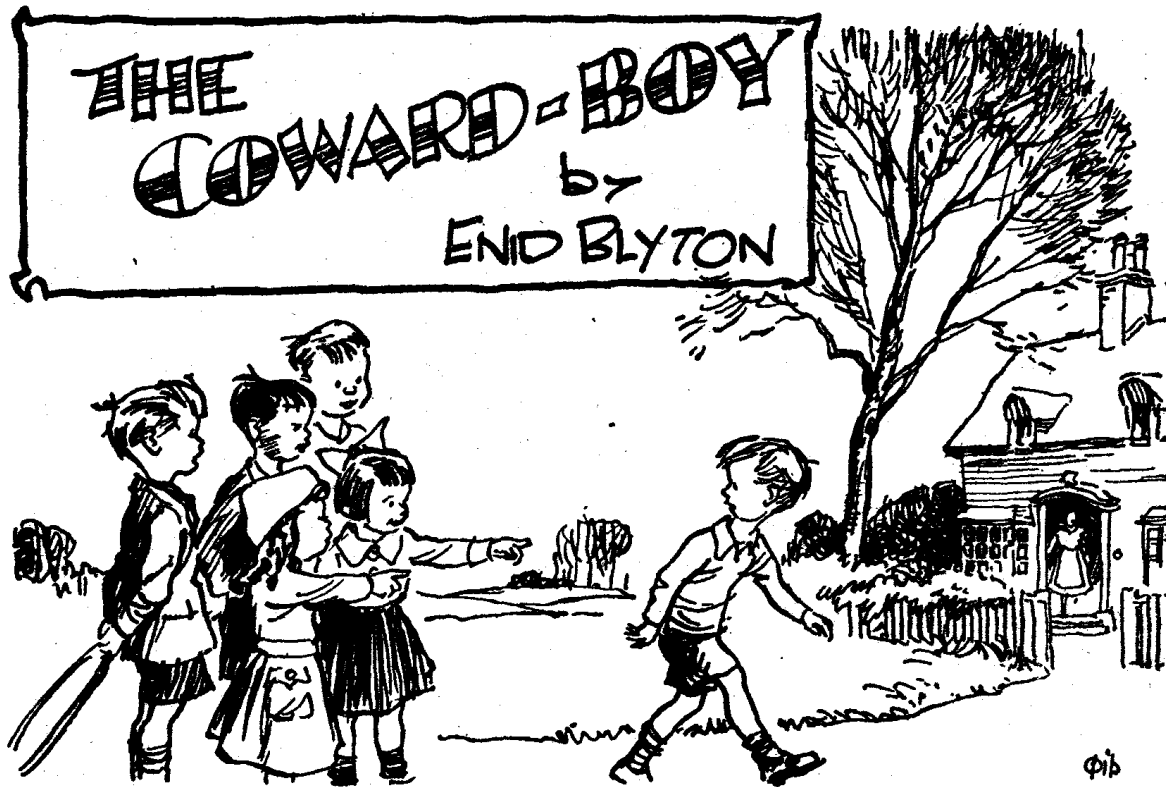
"I guess you were sorry you thought you would try to find out who that weight belonged to ! " said Jim.

" Well, I'm *not* sorry ! " said Peter. " It brought me a large piece of chocolate cake—these biscuits we're eating—the promise of a job in the holidays—and a whole shilling! What do you think of that?"

" Tell us about it," begged the boys. So Peter told them, and they all listened.

" So instead of being *bad* luck to find that heavy weight and carry it all that way, it was the best piece of luck I ever had ! " said Peter.

" Next time we find anything we'll do the same as you ! " cried the boys. I wonder if they will, don't you ? You should see Peter now ! He is seventeen years old, and manages Mr. Jones's shop for him —and all because he once carried a fourteen-pound weight when he was a small boy !



LESLIE was very small for his age, and because he had often been ill when he was very little, his mother took great care of him. He wasn't allowed to run very fast, he was always wrapped up in coats and scarves, and he had to drink twice as much milk as other children.

When the others went off to climb trees, Leslie wouldn't go. He was smaller than the other boys, and afraid of falling. When they went running races, he shook his head if they called to him to come too. He was afraid of falling down if he ran too fast. So the children laughed at him and called him all sorts of names.

"Poor little Mummy's boy!" said the girls.

"Hallo, milk-and-water!" cried the boys.

"Here comes the little coward-boy!" said Jimmy Brown, who was the tallest and strongest in the school. "Let's call him coward-boy. That name suits him very well!"

So poor Leslie was known as the coward-boy. How he hated that name! He knew he wasn't a coward. It was only because his mother was so fussy that he couldn't do things like the others—and besides, he was so very small for his age that he simply could *not* climb on to walls or up trees like the others.

Leslie went red whenever he heard



himself called coward-boy. He sulked by himself. It wasn't fair. He didn't tell his mother what was happening because he was afraid she would go to the school-teacher and tell her—and then he would be called a tale-teller too ! He was very miserable and unhappy, for he had no friends. The children did not mean to be so unkind, but they didn't Sunk—they just enjoyed calling unkind names after Leslie.

Leslie never played with anyone in the week-ends, but he looked forward to them all the same— because then he could take Ginger, the next-door dog, out for a walk. He loved Ginger, and Ginger loved him. Ginger didn't think Leslie was a coward. He thought he was the nicest boy he knew, for it was Leslie who took him his longest walks, and who gave him his juiciest bones.

Leslie wished he had a dog of his own. He longed to have a cat, or even a canary, for he loved all animals very much. But his mother never would let him have a pet. She said they were dirty things, always bringing mud into the house, and that a canary would scatter seeds all over the carpet. So Leslie had to be content with Ginger on Saturdays and Sundays.

Now one day, as the children were going home from school, they heard a pitiful mewing sound. They looked all round, and at first could not make out where the noise was

coming from. Then they saw where the kitten was. She had

climbed up a tall, straight tree, and could not get down.

" Oh, poor thing !" cried the girls. " One of you boys had better climb up the tree and get it down."

The boys looked at the tree. It was tall and difficult to climb. They had tried before, so they knew. No, they couldn't climb up to get the kitten.

" We'll go and fetch a long ladder !" they said. " Come on, girls, come and help, for it will be heavy to carry."

All the children ran off—and when Leslie, walking behind as usual, arrived at die tree there was no one there. He heard the mewing and looked up. When he saw the kitten, hanging in fright on to a thin branch, he was filled with pity.

" Poor mite !" he thought to himself. " It will fall if no one helps it. Oh, what a pity the boys are all gone home ! One of them could have climbed die tree ! "

There was no one in sight at all. Leslie didn't know *what* to do. He was so afraid die kitten would fall and kill itself. At last he made up his mind.

"I shall have to climb die tree and get die kitten myself!" he thought. " Mother will be cross and upset, but I can't help that."

He took off his coat and scarf and climbed a little way up die tree. It

was very difficult. Leslie's breath became pants and puffs and

his arms soon ached. But the kitten was mewling away above him, and he meant to get it.

Up he went and up. His thin legs squirmed round the trunk, his arms held as tightly as they could. His hands were soon black and scratched with the rough bark, but it couldn't be helped. Once he nearly fell, and his heart beat loudly. But he just managed to hang on, and at last got to a branch on which he could rest for a minute.

"Miaow!" said the kitten. Leslie looked up. Once more he began to climb, and at last he was on the branch near the kitten. He was just stretching out his arm very carefully to reach it, when all the other children came back, carrying a long ladder they had borrowed from a builder.

One of them suddenly saw Leslie and stared in amazement. Then he pointed up into the tree and shouted:

"Look! There's the coward-boy! He's up in the tree and he's got the kitten!"

All the children stared in the greatest astonishment. Was it Leslie, the coward-boy? Yes, there was no doubt about it at all. It was.

"How did you get up there?" called Jimmy.

"I climbed, of course," said Leslie. "I heard the kitten

mewling. I didn't know you'd gone to get a ladder."

"But that tree's a dreadful



Once more he began to climb.

one to climb!" said the boys. "Nobody has ever climbed so high as that!"

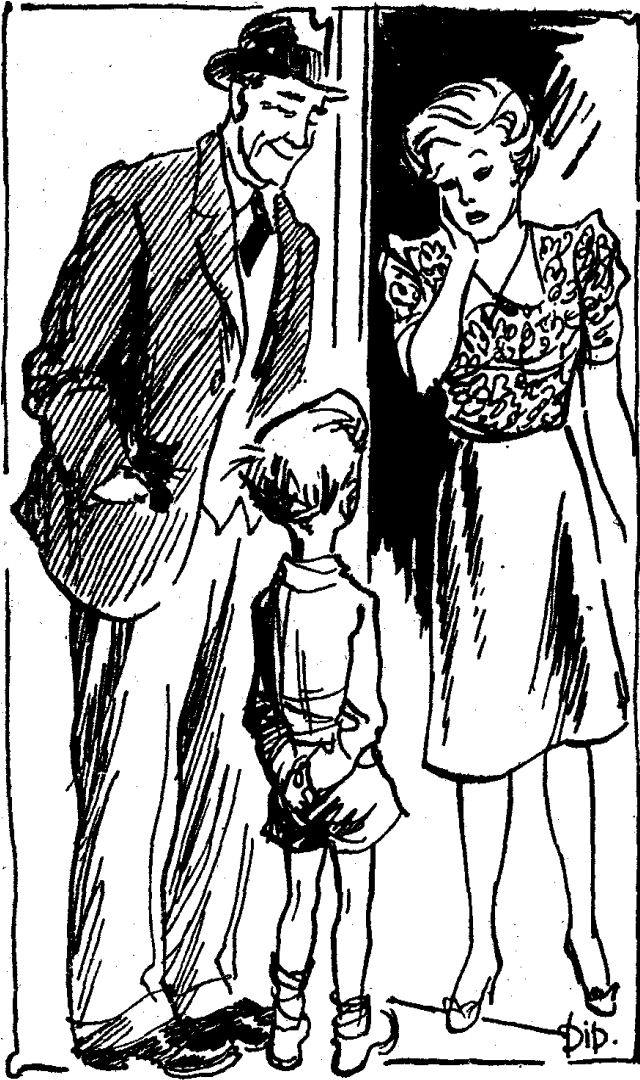
By this time a big crowd had collected at the foot of the tree, and soon everyone knew how Leslie had climbed up by himself to rescue the kitten. A tall man came up and heard the story too.

"Fancy the coward-boy doing that!" said one of the girls.

The tall man heard her. "Oh!" he said, "so that's the name he has,

is it? Well, I hope you'll find another one for a boy like that.

Coward-boy, indeed ! He's the



*Leslie's mother burst into tears.*

pluckiest youngster I've seen for a long time ! "

The children went red. They were sorry now that they had teased Leslie so much, and they were very proud to think that a boy from their school had done such a brave thing.

" That's *my* kitten the boy's saved," said the tall man. "Now, come on, put up that ladder and get the boy and the kitten down

Safely! I want to shake hands with the coward-boy, as you call

him. I shah<sup>1</sup> be proud to know him!"

The ladder was put up and the tall man went up, fetched Leslie and the kitten and carried them down safely. The crowd cheered Leslie, and a great many people came up and patted him on the back. He couldn't think what all the fuss was about.

" Come along, I'll take you home," said the tall man. He went off with Leslie—and for once not a single boy or girl called " little coward - boy ! " after the small boy.

When Leslie's mother heard what he had done, she burst into tears.

" Oh, he might have fallen ! " she sobbed. " Oh, Leslie, it was brave of you, but you know you must never climb trees."

" And why not, Madam ? " asked the tall man impatiently,

" Oh, he's so small and not at all strong," wept Leslie's mother. " Madam, I'm a doctor," said the tall man, " and let me *tell* you this—your boy may be *small*, but he's as strong as anyone else for his size. You coddle him too much ! You're making him into a baby ! Do you know what the other children call him—coward-boy ! Think of that ! And yet he was the only one to climb up a dangerous tree and rescue my kitten. Give the boy a chance,

Madam—let him do what the others do. He's a brave, plucky youngster, and he'll grow big and

strong if only you'll let him. Now, boy, what would you like for a reward ? "

" Nothing, thank you," said Leslie—" unless you've got a kitten to spare ! "

' Yes, I have," said the tall man. " I'll send you one to-morrow. You deserve it."

Off he went, with his kitten in his pocket. Leslie looked shyly at his mother, who was looking at him half proudly and half tearfully.

" I don't think the others will call me ' coward-boy' again," said Leslie, " so don't fret, Mother."

" I won't make a baby of you any

And now you wouldn't know Leslie. He has grown tall and strong, he has dozens of friends, and at home he has a cat, which was once the kitten the tall man gave him, two canaries, and a dog.

None of the children remember that he was once called coward-boy— but Leslie remembers. Then he strokes his cat and says, " Well, Puss, it was all because of a little brother kitten of yours that I lost that horrid name. What a good thing I climbed a tree for the first time in my life!"

more," promised his mother. " I'm proud of you, Leslie, really I am! You shall have that kitten and a dog too, if you like."