

Outdoor Inventions

This is an early scene with Peter and Tara trying out Professor P's inventions on the beach. To make sense of the ending of the book I wanted to show how close Peter, Tara and Professor P had become, and how much fun they had together. But, again, I felt it slowed down the start of the main story so I cut it.

Tara and I ran down the hill to the beach. We jumped down the steps and had almost reached the cliffs when an enormous dog ran up to us barking loudly.

“Oh, it’s you, Sleepy!” I cried, stroking her head.

“Look!” Tara exclaimed. “Professor P’s over there!”

We ran across the pebbles as fast as we could and found Professor P sitting on a yellow blanket surrounded by boxes.

“Hello, Professor P,” I called. “How are you?”

“Oh, hello, Peter, hello, Tara, I’m very well, thank you,” he replied. “I came out to field test some of my new inventions. “This,” he added proudly, “is my new Outdoor Range.

A broad grin spread across his face, “Can I offer you a cup of tea?” He handed me an unusual looking kettle covered in silver tubes. “Would you mind filling the kettle please, Peter?”

“Where’s the water?” I asked, looking for a container.

“Over there,” he chuckled, “plenty in the sea.”

“B...but...” I stammered.

“This is my newest invention, Peter,” he said, with that

PROFESSOR P DELETED SCENES

familiar twinkle in his eyes. “It’s a solar powered filter kettle. You fill it with sea water or even dirty pond water and the kettle makes it completely pure as it boils.”

“That’s a good idea,” I said, examining the strange looking invention.

Sparky and Sleepy followed me as I ran down to the sea and filled the kettle. I left them playing happily in the water and returned with the filled kettle to Professor P. He put it in the sun a short distance away from us.

“Best not to get too close,” he cautioned and pressed the switch on the side.

“How long does it take to boil?” I asked curiously.

“On a nice hot day like this, oh, I’d say it should be ready in about an hour,” Professor P replied.

“An hour!” Tara exclaimed. “That’s a long time to wait for a cup of tea, Professor P!”

“Oh, not really,” he said with a smile, “not if you put it on an hour before you want it.”

“Well, I suppose so,” she said doubtfully.

Professor P continued cheerfully. “Did you come out for a swim? It’s a lovely day.”

“No,” I replied. “We’re going to the cliffs to look for fossils.”

“Fossils? That’s interesting...” he began and then stopped as one of his gadgets started making a loud beeping noise.

I looked on curiously as Professor P picked up a small instrument with brightly coloured wires attached to it.

“Do you want to come and look for fossils with us, Professor P?” Tara asked.

“Oh, err, thank you,” Professor P replied distractedly, “but no, I think I’d better stay here and sort out the problems with this little gadget.”

“OK, see you later then, Professor P,” we called out, as we went over towards the cliffs.

OUTDOOR INVENTIONS

An hour later Professor P called over to us, “Peter, Tara, kettle’s boiled!”

We gathered up our fossil finds and hurried over to him.

“Did the kettle work all right then, Professor P?” I asked, looking curiously at it.

“Of course, Peter, of course. Let’s have that tea now shall we?” He poured the boiling water into the teapot. “The milk is in the cool box, over there.”

He pointed to a large green box with a blue honeycombed panel on the lid.

“It’s a solar powered cool box I’ve been working on,” he explained. “Whatever the weather it always stays cool. In fact the sunnier it gets, the better it works!”

“Good idea!” Tara said, looking very impressed.

I took off the lid and looked inside. It had wires everywhere and tubes coiled into some very strange shapes. I reached into the cool box and after searching through the jungle of wires I eventually pulled out a silver flask.

“Thank you, Peter.” Professor P said, taking the cold flask. He unscrewed the top and attempted to pour the milk into the mugs.

“Hmm! Frozen solid!” he frowned. “Works a bit too well I’m afraid!”

Tara giggled.

Professor P poured some hot water from the kettle into a bowl and placed the flask in it to warm up. “Be all right in a few minutes,” he said.

While we waited for the milk to unfreeze Professor P told us about his plans for his solar powered kettle.

“I believe it could save lives,” he explained. “In many parts of the world people die through drinking dirty water.”

“How does it work, Professor P?” I asked.

“Well, the idea is very simple,” he explained. “It has two section - you fill the one at the back with seawater.

PROFESSOR P DELETED SCENES

When it boils the steam comes off and goes through a small tube to the front section. There it turns back into water – hot pure drinking water – with all the salt and dirt left behind in the first back section.”

“That’s brilliant, Professor P!” I said enthusiastically, and he smiled proudly.

The milk had unfrozen now and so Professor P poured the tea and gave us each a mug. Tara took a sip and screwed up her face. I cautiously tried the tea.

“Good?” Professor P asked.

“Well,” I hesitated, “it’s a little bit... er... salty.”

“Really?” he said in surprise, raising the mug to his lips. “Uck!” he cried. “That’s disgusting! Must be a leak between the two compartments.”

“Oh, it’s not that bad, Professor P,” Tara said politely taking another sip, “you soon get used to it.”

“Thank you, Tara,” he said, “it’s very nice of you to say that, but I’m afraid I don’t think I could.”

He put down the tea. “Would you like a packet of crisps instead?”

“Yes please,” I said eagerly. I was quite hungry and needed something to get the unpleasant taste of the tea out of my mouth.

“What flavour would you like,” he asked grinning. He opened his rucksack and took out a handful of small plastic bags. “There’s peanut butter, strawberry, chocolate...”

“Chocolate!” I exclaimed.

“Yes,” he said, “I made them with my All Flavour Crisp Making Machine. The chocolate flavour does taste rather strange but Sleepy likes them.

“Do you have any plain ones?” Tara asked.

He searched through the pile. “Yes, here you are.”

Tara took out one of the small crinkled brown crisps and tentatively put it in her mouth. She smiled in relief and reached into the packet for another.

OUTDOOR INVENTIONS

“Can I have the same, please, Professor P?” I asked.

As we ate the crisps Professor P told us about his other outdoor inventions.

“This one’s a child finder,” he explained, showing us his watch. “I’ve been testing it out with Sleepy’s help.”

She was lying with Sparky, peacefully asleep in the sun apparently none the worse for the testing.

“She’s wearing a small transmitter around her neck,” Professor P continued. “The digital readout on the watch tells you how far away she is and the pointer shows you the direction. A buzzer sounds to warn you if she goes too far away.”

“My mum would like one of those,” Tara said enthusiastically. “My little sister Rosie is always running off!”

“I’ll let you have one, as soon as the bugs are ironed out.” He frowned at Sleepy. “This one was working fine until Sleepy went into the sea and got it all wet!”