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The Magic of Mrs. Crowling
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More Great Plays From Original Works Publishing

Asleep on a Bicycle

by Tony Foster

2 Males, 7 Females

Synopsis: The story takes place in the deep recesses of a woman's mind as she peacefully sleeps. However, she suddenly begins to realize that perhaps she is unable to return to her waking life due to a bizarre bicycle accident rendering her helpless. Now she must confront her subconscious demons head on. The very nature of marriage, family, career and the mysteries of life and death manifest itself in the forms of strange and whimsical characters such as an Italian movie star, an ax murderer, and even a lesbian nun. Falling asleep is easy compared with the challenges of waking up.

American Way

by Jeremy Gable

3 Males, 1 Female

Synopsis: It's not easy being a superhero. When not busy looking danger straight in the eye, there's comic book sales, public complaints and failed marketing strategies to deal with. Sometimes it seems the only solace for a hard day of crime-fighting is a trip to the secret café. Our heroes - the explosive Firebang, the voluptuous Mandible Maiden and the recently retired Crescent Wonder - gather to have a drink and welcome the newest apprentice, an eager kid with an unusual name. But the day is young, and there is danger lurking. "American Way" shows what happens when those with superpowers suddenly realize that they are powerless. With a mixture of humor and tragedy, it shows us what truly makes a superhero.

THE MAGIC OF MRS. CROWLING

A play in two acts
by Brian Silliman

THE MAGIC OF MRS. CROWLING had its premiere production at the Kraine Theatre in New York City, produced by Royal Circus and presented by Horse Trade Theatre (Erez Ziv, Managing Director) on July 24, 2007. It was directed by Abe Goldfarb; the set and costume design was by Robin Mates; the lighting design was by Sabrina Braswell; the sound design and original music was by Larry Lees; the fight choreography was by Christopher Doering; and the production stage manager was Stephanie Cox-Williams. The cast was as follows:

MRS. CROWLING - Shelly Shenoy

KICKEN - Paul Wyatt

RAMSEY - Brian Silliman

DAZZELIN - Patrick Shearer

VALIAARE - Dennis Hurley

CHARCANE - Ronica V. Reddick

In the second week of performances, the role of KICKEN was played by Collin McConnell.

Dramatis Personae

A.R. CROWLING - a famous author of fantasy (40's)

KICKEN PETCHIO - a young boy (about 12-14 years old)

RAMSEY PETCHIO - his father (40's)

DAZZELIN - a wizard of Temn

VALIAARE - a slightly older wizard of Temn

CHARCANE - a witch of the Barag

The characters re-enact sequences from:

Book 1: Henry Shield and the Castle of Mystery

Book 2: Henry Shield and the Destiny Staff

Book 3: Henry Shield and the Curse of Vangon

Book 4: Henry Shield and the League Fantastical

Book 5: Henry Shield and the Ocean of Fire

Book 6: Henry Shield and the War of the Brigands

Book 7: Henry Shield and the Groglock Imperium

(When lines appear in quotes, the characters are speaking lines from these books.)

NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION

Since all of the fantasy names in this play are original and fictitious, the following guidelines are provided.

Olodrin: AH-LOH-DRIN

Temn: TEM-EN

Rojs: ROH-JIS

Barag: BAA-RAG

Va: VAH

Dazzelin: DAZZ-EL-IN

Valiaare: VAL-EE-ARR

Charcane: SHAR-CANE

Winxandi: WIN-ZAN-DEE

Tierenarn: TEER-EN-ARN

Akkenbow: ACK-EN-BOE

Miliaara: MILL-E-ARE-A

Shylandris: SHI-LAN-DRIS

Iolindis: EYE-O-LIN-DIS

Vangon: VAN-GONE

Sedaine: SEH-DANE

Horaffi: HOR-AH-FEE

Purgentus: PURR-JEN-TUSS

THE MAGIC OF MRS. CROWLING

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: A BARE STAGE

(The lights come up on KICKEN PETCHIO, a young boy. He holds an open book.)

KICKEN: Henry Shield was born in our world, but was brought into the magical realm of Olodrin when he was but one year old. The purpose behind this was always the great mystery of Henry's life, and it still continues to be.

(Music begins to build under him.)

KICKEN: *(continued)* Raised in the company of wizards, he grew into his full power as the years went on, always learning and growing throughout the course of their many grand adventures. Now, in the sixteenth year of his life, Henry Shield finds himself faced with an old nemesis, and his greatest challenge thus far...

(We hear the "action" theme. Flashes of light and smoke come from all sides of the stage. DAZZELIN enters and approaches Kicken, who assumes the role of young Henry Shield.)

DAZZELIN: "We don't have much time. Distract Charcane while I find the crystal...she can't control the Brigands without it."

KICKEN: "Master it's too dangerous for you! You're powers were..."

DAZZELIN: "...destroyed, yes. Make sure you are wary of her purgentus, for it will strip away your powers just as it stripped away mine."

KICKEN: "That's why you have to go!"

DAZZELIN: "Oh, I think I can still be of some use."

(Dazzelin exits. We hear the "evil" theme. As the smoke clears, CHARCANE, an evil witch of the Barag, is revealed. She stands opposing Kicken. They are squared off against each other, both holding a staff.)

CHARCANE: "It has come down to this, has it? The outlander slave versus the might of the Barag?"

KICKEN: "Is that what you call it?"

CHARCANE: "You defeated me once, you won't be so lucky again!"

(She casts a wicked spell at him. He brilliantly repels it.)

KICKEN: "Is that the best you can do?"

CHARCANE: "Silly child! You dare to mock me?"

KICKEN: "I'm not daring to mock you. I'm actually mocking you."

CHARCANE: "SILLY, INSIGNIFICANT BOY!"

(They fight, staff to staff, magically. Charcane slams Kicken with a spell and he falls backwards. Charcane laughs.)

CHARCANE: "You and your idiot friends have failed! The Crystal of Caladora will guide my armies of brigands in utter destruction, and there is nothing you can do to stop me!"

(Dazzelin enters with the CRYSTAL OF CALADORA.)

DAZZELIN: "Oh, isn't there though?"

CHARCANE: "Well look at this...I've stripped your master of his powers, yet he still manages to get in my way."

DAZZELIN: "Take one more step and I'll destroy it."

CHARCANE: "You and I both know that the magic in that crystal is the only thing that can bring your powers back. You would never give that up, now would you?"

DAZZELIN: "Those who do evil will never understand the motives of those who don't."

(Dazzelin smashes the crystal. Lights and smoke and magical stuff goes here, there, and everywhere. Charcane slowly turns to face Dazzelin, flashing him a look of utter evil. She raises her staff in white fury and blasts Dazzelin who falls to the floor.)

KICKEN: "DAZZELIN!!!!!!!!!"

CHARCANE: "Watch your master perish, foolish boy!"

KICKEN: "It's over, Charcane...the brigands are freed."

CHARCANE: "Yes, I suppose you've stopped me. Which is just what I knew you would do."

KICKEN: "What do you mean?"

CHARCANE: "The crystal, the brigands, all of it...all of it just to get you here. Now. And you fell right into it. Prepare to be stripped of your powers, silly child! PURGENTUS!"

(She launches a spell at Kicken, but the spell deflects off of him and lands back on her.)

CHARCANE: "What have you done?"

(She attempts to launch a spell at him, but nothing happens. Her purgentus has fully rebounded and her powers are stripped.)

CHARCANE: "This is IMPOSSIBLE!"

(She frantically tries to perform a spell, and is unsuccessful.)

KICKEN: "It would appear that your purgentus has rebounded."

CHARCANE: "NOBODY can deflect the purgentus! How...how did you...?"

(We hear a trumpet blast. The stage is suddenly bathed in a pure, magical light. Charcane runs.)

KICKEN: "Valiaare's signal..."

DAZZELIN: "Henry."

KICKEN: "I'm here, master!"

(The "destiny" theme begins.)

DAZZELIN: "You have to know the truth...sixteen years ago...when you were brought here..."

KICKEN: "Yes?"

DAZZELIN: "You were brought here because..."

RAMSEY: (O.S.) KICKEN!

DAZZELIN: "...because..."

KICKEN: "Why? Why was I brought here?"

RAMSEY: (O.S.) KICKEN, OPEN THIS DOOR!

KICKEN: "DAZZELIN!"

(RAMSEY PETCHIO bursts in. The music completely stops. He is dressed as a typical man of our modern time. He is real, and not a part of the book.)

RAMSEY: What the hell are you doing in here? Would you stop reading that geeky shit for one damn second?

KICKEN: I was right at the cliffhanger!

RAMSEY: Too much reading is bad for you. Did you fill out those forms like I asked?

KICKEN: I'm on the last couple of chapters!

RAMSEY: You've read that toilet paper a thousand times. I need you to fill out the change of address forms. It's vital.

KICKEN: I'm not moving.

RAMSEY: You are in a manner of speaking.

KICKEN: I'll be out in a minute.

RAMSEY: See to it!

(He moves to exit.)

RAMSEY: Oh, the doctor called. By the by.

KICKEN: And?

RAMSEY: Yeah.

KICKEN: Oh. How long, then?

RAMSEY: Two months. Maybe a month and a half.

KICKEN: I'm going to die in two months?

RAMSEY: Or a month and a half.

KICKEN: There's nothing more they can do?

RAMSEY: Nothing that would help. They say that when the time comes they probably won't even be in the room.

KICKEN: The new book...

RAMSEY: I guess we're changing the subject. What?

KICKEN: The new book! SEVEN of SEVEN!

RAMSEY: When does it come out?

KICKEN: A year. Maybe more, I don't know. It's been delayed three times.

RAMSEY: Oh. Well that's a shame.

(He exits.)

KICKEN: Dazzelin?

DAZZELIN: If you liked book 6, you'll love Book 7! HENRY SHIELD AND THE GROGLOCK IMPERIUM! Coming soon!

(Pause.)

KICKEN: Not soon enough.

(Kicken slams the book shut. Blackout.)

SCENE 2: THE PETCHIO LIVING ROOM

(The Petchios have a nice, middle class looking home. There is a front door, and stairs that go up to the bedrooms. There is also a small doorway that leads to the basement, and another doorway that leads to the kitchen. Ramsey sits at a table with some paperwork. Kicken enters looking extremely depressed.)

RAMSEY: Well, look who decided to join us. What's your word for today?

KICKEN: I already know all of the words, it's the same calendar every year. Same words. Aplomb is probably the word today. Do we have any waffles?

RAMSEY: I don't think so.

KICKEN: I want a waffle.

RAMSEY: Have toast.

KICKEN: I don't want toast, I want a waffle.

RAMSEY: Tough nuts!

KICKEN: I'm going back to bed.

RAMSEY: Hey! Stay where you are!

KICKEN: What?

RAMSEY: Don't talk to your father like that! Apologize at once!

KICKEN: I'm sorry.

RAMSEY: Not that way, the official way.

KICKEN: I sincerely apologize dearest father.

RAMSEY: Good.

KICKEN: Can I go back to bed now?

RAMSEY: Absolutely not. You have way too much work to do.

KICKEN: I don't want to fill out any forms!

RAMSEY: Well I'm sure you don't want to die either, but you really have no choice.

(Kicken takes Ramsey's papers and throws them up in the air, scattering them.)

RAMSEY: Is something wrong?

KICKEN: How can you talk about paperwork, of all things!

RAMSEY: You're the one who stayed in bed for three days, alright? You can't neglect this stuff! After a while it all just piles up, like garbage. You have to attack it at once. You can't wait around. You must attack the garbage.

KICKEN: I don't care about the garbage.

RAMSEY: You should get your will in order at the very least. Maybe that should be your goal for the first part of the day.

KICKEN: This is so STUPID!

RAMSEY: Kicken, I'm going to be blunt.

KICKEN: Go ahead.

RAMSEY: What crawled up your ass?

KICKEN: What?

RAMSEY: You're acting like a little priss. You used to be such a nice boy. Is this about dying? Everybody dies.

KICKEN: Not at my age.

RAMSEY: Some do at your age. Look at Teddy Roosevelt.

KICKEN: He didn't die at my age.

RAMSEY: I didn't say that. I just said to look at him. He would never whine like a little priss if he found out he was dying. And I bet he'd get all of his affairs in order, too.

KICKEN: I'm a kid. I don't have "affairs."

RAMSEY: Are you going to fill out these papers or am I going to have to force you?

(Kicken throws himself on the couch.)

KICKEN: No hope! NO HOPE!

RAMSEY: That doesn't answer my question.

KICKEN: It's all worthless!

RAMSEY: Listen, Kicken. You have to...

KICKEN: WOOOOOORRRTHLESSSSSSSS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

(Pause.)

RAMSEY: This is about those stupid books.

KICKEN: Of COURSE it is!

RAMSEY: All of this drama over some stupid geeky shit? Grow up.

KICKEN: Do I make fun of your stupid sports?

RAMSEY: Stupid sports? The kids in your class don't think sports are stupid.

KICKEN: Don't you get it?

RAMSEY: Get what?

KICKEN: I'll never know!

RAMSEY: Never know what?

KICKEN: I'll never know why Henry Shield was brought to Olodrin!

(Pause.)

RAMSEY: Do you realize how stupid you just sounded?

KICKEN: Henry Shield was a little baby when a mysterious figure brought him out of our world, SEDAINÉ, and into the world of OLODRIN...but Henry has never found out why. All he remembers is a dark figure leaning over him and whispering the words, "Come wax fantastical, and off to the mountain we go!" WHY was he brought, and more importantly, WHY was it Henry who was chosen? Why HIM, out of all the other children? It's the great mystery of his life, of MY life, and by the time it's revealed in the seventh book, I'll be DEAD! SO THAT'S WHY I'M BEING A LITTLE PRISS, YOU BIG FAT JERK!

(Pause. Ramsey glares at him.)

KICKEN: I sincerely apologize dearest father.

RAMSEY: It isn't real, Kicken!

KICKEN: Who cares what I like or don't like? If I like geeky...stuff, what's it to you?

RAMSEY: You made me take you to that convention last year.

KICKEN: You scowled the whole time and then punched out the Marina Sirtis T-shirt salesman.

RAMSEY: He wouldn't get out of my face!

KICKEN: You then proceeded to get in fights with the Henry Shield fans, the 501st Brigade, the Web-Heads, the Bat-Freaks, the Browncoats, the Ringers, the Trekkers, the Trekkies, the Trekinomenators, the Willowers, the Young Indiana Jones Adventure Society, the Galacticans, the Slayers, the "Bring back Angel" activist circle, the Whovians, the Ice and Fire Friends, the X-Folk, the X-Filers, the Narnians, the Dust Lovers, the Temerarians, the Sons of Jor-El, and all of the people who like those other books about a boy wizard. And THEN you started a brawl at the movie audition!

RAMSEY: Who wants to make a movie out of this crap, anyway? That was the worst day of my life. One thousand million little brats all wearing wizard costumes.

KICKEN: Every kid in the world wanted to play Henry Shield in the movie.

RAMSEY: Including you! You didn't even get to audition.

KICKEN: They probably knew that the guy who started the brawl was my father. Still, the convention was worse...by the time everyone stopped fighting, three Browncoats, two Stormtroopers and a Hobbit accidentally set Aslan loose, who then proceeded to maim three of the poor people protesting the Matrix sequels.

RAMSEY: It was like the geek version of the Triangle Factory fire.

KICKEN: Mom was so pissed at you.

RAMSEY: She certainly was. But then she laughed about it. (*slight pause*) And now she's dead.

(*Pause.*)

RAMSEY: You miss her.

KICKEN: Yeah.

RAMSEY: I miss her too.

(Pause.)

RAMSEY: Tell you what...are you listening?

KICKEN: I'm listening.

RAMSEY: What if I can, I don't know, find out what happens in the book you're going to miss. What would you say to that?

KICKEN: Nobody knows what's going to happen except for A.R. Crowling herself. Everything's a total secret until the book comes out. It's impossible.

RAMSEY: If you do your paperwork for me, maybe I can persuade her to speed it up.

KICKEN: She's the wealthiest woman in Britain, she's not going to listen to you. Besides, she's already delayed it three times. That's why I'm going to miss it.

RAMSEY: Well, maybe I can figure something else out.

KICKEN: Yeah, right.

RAMSEY: Oh, you don't think I can?

KICKEN: No, I don't think you can, Dad.

RAMSEY: Is that a challenge?

KICKEN: Sure. It's a challenge. It's a big stinking challenge.

RAMSEY: And you'll deal with your paperwork?

KICKEN: Yeah. Sure I will.

RAMSEY: Okay then. Challenge accepted.

KICKEN: Great.

RAMSEY: Great.

(Pause.)

RAMSEY: Now go back to bed. You're dying.

(Blackout.)

SCENE 3: KICKEN'S DREAM

(Lights come up on Kicken and VALIAARE, another wizard. We hear an underscore of the "destiny" theme. Kicken weaves in and out of talking as himself and as Henry.)

VALIAARE: Am I your favorite character?

KICKEN: You used to be. Now I kind of like you and Dazzelin the same.

VALIAARE: When did that happen?

KICKEN: Book 4.

VALIAARE: That's the turning point...most people find the whole "hero turned villain turned hero again" thing very interesting. That's the book where it really starts to happen.

KICKEN: "Tell me something. The wizard who brought me to Olodrin..."

VALIAARE: "Yes?"

KICKEN: "It was you, wasn't it?"

VALIAARE: "It was."

KICKEN: "Why did you?"

VALIAARE: "Why did I bring you to Olodrin?"

KICKEN: "Yes...why?"

VALIAARE: "You'll find out soon enough, Henry."

KICKEN: Henry will. I won't.

(The underscore fades out.)

VALIAARE: Do you really think your father can get A.R. Crowling to finish the book faster?

KICKEN: No. I don't. It's been a week and he hasn't mentioned it.

VALIAARE: Was he always such a prick?

KICKEN: Just since my mother died. It's okay, I'm being a...jerk too. We bring that out in each other.

VALIAARE: You're dying. You have prick rights.

KICKEN: Thank you.

VALIAARE: And now I think it's time we woke up.

KICKEN: Do we have to?

VALIAARE: Every moment to the fullest, young Kicken Petchio. Every moment to the fullest. Keep fighting.

KICKEN: Oh, okay.

VALIAARE: Now roll over, and open your eyes.

(Blackout.)

SCENE 4: THE PETCHIO LIVING ROOM

(Ramsey enters, very excited.)

RAMSEY: Kicken!

(No response.)

RAMSEY: Kicken, come out here please!

(No response.)

RAMSEY: KICKEN GOD DAMMIT!

(Kicken enters.)

KICKEN: I was having a really interesting dream. Valiaare was in it.
And you ruined it.

RAMSEY: Oh did I?

KICKEN: Yes. Completely.

RAMSEY: Well I'm sorry. I bought some waffles last night!

KICKEN: Is that what this is about?

RAMSEY: No.

KICKEN: Then what?

RAMSEY: We're having a guest for dinner this evening.

KICKEN: Great.

RAMSEY: Cheer up, buck. You take a look at those papers?

KICKEN: Yes. You find out what happens in book 7?

RAMSEY: No I didn't.

KICKEN: So you didn't get A.R. Crawling to publish it sooner, did you.

RAMSEY: No I didn't.

KICKEN: I KNEW it!

RAMSEY: I'm trying here, Kicken.

KICKEN: I'm DYING here, Dad!

RAMSEY: You sound so much like your mother sometimes. Waffles?

KICKEN: What kind of cancer do I even have, anyway?

RAMSEY: It's undisclosed.

KICKEN: Ah, undisclosed cancer. I think that was on the cover of "Cancer Monthly" last month.

RAMSEY: Would you like me to make you a waffle?

KICKEN: I wouldn't like anything. I'd like to die now. I wouldn't like to wait. If I know I'm going to die, then why am I sticking around?

RAMSEY: You're kind of like a lame duck congress.

KICKEN: What the heck is that?

RAMSEY: Watch your MOUTH, Kicken!

KICKEN: I sincerely apologize, dearest father.

RAMSEY: You have to live. We're having company.

KICKEN: Company's stupid.

RAMSEY: It is when you have that attitude! C'mon, get excited.

KICKEN: Who is it? Barney from the Men's Wearhouse? Jim from accounting? I don't want to see any of them.

RAMSEY: I bought you waffles, you little...

KICKEN: Do you understand how important Henry Shield is to me? It's my entire life. I'll never have my questions answered, and I'll never read about the return of the Groglock!

RAMSEY: What's a Groglock?

KICKEN: Olodrin was held under the sway of the evil Groglock Imperium for thousands upon millions of years. The realm was freed by Va, the insatiable, who discovered magic and drove the Groglock from the land. They swore to return and take back what was lost to them, cursing Va and his sudden appearance at the height of their powers. They come back, thousands of years later at the end of book 6...and just as they do, I die. So for me, the story ends there. It's like a subway show without game seven.

RAMSEY: Subway SERIES, and they don't always go to game seven.

KICKEN: You know what I mean!

RAMSEY: Calm yourself, Kicken!

KICKEN: You're worse than Charcane, the evil witch of the Barag! I don't need your dumb help, Charcane! Only the High Lord of Olo-drin can help me now. VA HIMSELF! VA THE INSATIABLE! Let me ask him for help! VA, I ASK FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS, MY MOST DESPERATE HOUR! SEND ME HELP! SEND ME HELP!

(There is a knock at the door.)

RAMSEY: Would you get that, Kicken?

(Kicken opens the door. Bright light comes from outside of it. Kicken freezes.)

MRS. CROWLING: (O.S.) Prepare to be dazzled and amazed!

(MRS. CROWLING enters. She is the most magical woman you will ever hope to see, kind of a crazier and richer version of Mary Poppins. She holds herself in a very grand manner and speaks in a clippy British accent. She carries two very large handbags.)

RAMSEY: Kicken, meet our company for the evening. Allow me to introduce...

MRS. CROWLING: ...Arabella Rapunzella Rulinghouse Crowling. You are...Kicken?

KICKEN: Yea...yes.

MRS. CROWLING: Most wonderful! There's only one thing I have to say to you.

(She leans in to him.)

MRS. CROWLING: *(continued)* Come wax fantastical, and off to the mountain we go!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 5: THE PETCHIO LIVING ROOM

(A short while later. Kicken sits almost catatonic on the couch. He is dazed and amazed. Ramsey sits looking at him, looking rather pleased with himself. This goes on for a few moments.)

RAMSEY: Pretty impressive, eh?

KICKEN: How did you...

RAMSEY: How did I do it? Oh, it wasn't all that difficult really. I have a few friends down at "Last Ditch Wish" so I called them up. You know, they arrange wishes for dying kids, like sending them to Legoland or letting them hang out with Rod Stewart for a day. The only thing they could do was arrange for Mrs. Crowling to come over and tell you the ending herself, so that's what we decided to do. That's your official last ditch wish!

KICKEN: What did you say to them?

RAMSEY: That you were hopelessly in love with stupid geeky shit.

(Mrs. Crowling enters from the bathroom.)

MRS. CROWLING: What a spectacular water closet! So much color.

RAMSEY: It's tope.

MRS. CROWLING: So much tope.

RAMSEY: I'm glad you like it.

MRS. CROWLING: Like? Like is for bitter old biddies. LOVE is for those who want to stir life into the muffin mix and have jocularity for Sunday Brunch! Why are you quiet, my dear boy?

RAMSEY: Yeah, say something Kicken! Don't be in a snit.

MRS. CROWLING: My dear old man, you cannot speak to a child that way and expect any kind of wonderful result.

KICKEN: I agree with you!

MRS. CROWLING: Oh, of course you do. I'm glad you are talking now.

KICKEN: I'm just a little overwhelmed...

MRS. CROWLING: Big word! I love it. Don't be afraid of me, my dear child. I am utterly harmless, unless your name is mediocrity! I hope that you are ready to have the most magnificently momentous day of your life! Oh, I'm sure you'll find me quite magical!

RAMSEY: Can we get on with it?

MRS. CROWLING: Get on with what?

RAMSEY: Ask your question, Kicken.

KICKEN: What question?

RAMSEY: The one you've been whining about!

KICKEN: Oh, right.

RAMSEY: OH RIGHT, the damn question! Ask the damn question!

(Mrs. Crowling picks up a clock and hurls it to the floor, smashing it.)

MRS. CROWLING: One's world should be ker-speckeled with madness. Don't you agree?

RAMSEY: That's my clock!

MRS. CROWLING: Time is like a ring of Saturn...it looks like a magnificent circle, but it's really just a long string of dust and gas! Teehee!

RAMSEY: This is so much worse than I expected.

MRS. CROWLING: Your question, dear?

KICKEN: Uh...why was Henry Shield brought to Olodrin?

MRS. CROWLING: To get to the other side! Oo hoo hoo!

KICKEN: What?

MRS. CROWLING: What a question! What a question. I can't tell you.

KICKEN: Wha...

MRS. CROWLING: Yet. I can't tell you yet.

KICKEN: Okay, then what is Valiaare's true destiny? Who are the Groglock exactly? Do Miliaara and Akkenbow get back together? Does Henry die at the end? Does Imogen? Does Dazzelin come back? How does Winxandi deal with Dazzelin's death? Do they...

MRS. CROWLING: *(cutting him off)* Oh, one at a time, dear boy! Rest assured, all of your questions will be dealt with in time. First, however, I must have certain assurances. Certain assurances are the very most magical kind of assurances one can have. Remember that.

RAMSEY: Rando over at Last Ditch Wish didn't say anything about assurances.

MRS. CROWLING: It's sickeningly common. Do you know how popular my novels are?

RAMSEY: Novels, you call them?

MRS. CROWLING: I prefer "tomes" actually, but fiddle-flee-me. Do you know how popular they are?

KICKEN: They're very popular!

MRS. CROWLING: They certainly are. The first in the series...

KICKEN: "Henry Shield and the Castle of Mystery."

MRS. CROWLING: Instant success. Caused a sensation. People loved it, wanted more. I wrote another one.

KICKEN: "Henry Shield and the Destiny Staff."

MRS. CROWLING: Even more successful than the first one. But then when the third book came out...

KICKEN: ..."Henry Shield and the Curse of Vangon" ...

MRS. CROWLING: ...I began to attract readers other than children. I generally attribute this phenomenon to the fact that the third book treads some darker ground.

KICKEN: Valiaare, the battleground, the creation, who was evil for the first two books, is discovered to be under the control of his wicked triplet brother Vangon. Only Dazzelin, his finest pupil, believed that Valiaare had not truly turned evil.

MRS. CROWLING: Very wondrously spoken!

RAMSEY: So Curt Schilling, right?

MRS. CROWLING: The fourth and fifth books came next, one on top of the other.

KICKEN: "Henry Shield and the League Fantastical" and then "Henry Shield and the Ocean of Fire", an adventure aboard Akkenbow's "Masterpiece" airship.

MRS. CROWLING: And Castle Tierenarn gets conquered yet again...

KICKEN: For what, the sixteenth time?

(They both laugh their heads off.)

RAMSEY: That's really great.

MRS. CROWLING: Oh, it certainly is. So true! So true what you just said! "That's really great." I can tell you meant every letter of it. After the fifth book, I began to notice spies around my mansion. They were trying to discover the secrets of Olodrin.

RAMSEY: No idea what that means.

MRS. CROWLING: They were trying to find out what happens in the book and sell it off to the spoiler mafia.

KICKEN: So it is real! See Dad? I told you! Spoiler Mafia!

MRS. CROWLING: All TOO real! That is why my mansion is now surrounded by one hundred attack dogs...nobody can get in or out! Not even me, some days. Security surrounding Book 6, "Henry Shield and the War of the Brigands", was tighter than a Horaffi's skull cavity.

KICKEN: Now that's what I call tight!

(They laugh. A lot.)

MRS. CROWLING: Now I must have assurances that neither of you will discuss with ANYONE what we shall discuss here. Both of you have to swear.

RAMSEY: Fine. Fuck. Kicken, go. Say Shit.

MRS. CROWLING: Not what I meant, but that was rather magically un-inhibited!

RAMSEY: Thank you.

MRS. CROWLING: Kicken, you must take the sacred oath of Temn. Do you know the sacred oath of...

KICKEN: *(cutting her off)* "I solemnly swear on the might of Olodrin and the spirit of Temn, that I will uphold the truths we now hold in the light of our eyes. To all and all, my duty and the wonderment."

MRS. CROWLING: My dear boy, you are simply amazing.

(She takes a large uncooked ham out of her bag and drops it on the coffee table.)

MRS. CROWLING: Time for dinner!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 6: THE PETCHIO LIVING ROOM

(It is after dinner. Kicken, Ramsey, and Mrs. Crowling sit in the living room. There is a now a burned ham on the floor.)

MRS. CROWLING: Sorry I burned the ham.

RAMSEY: That's what happens when you turn the oven all the way up.

MRS. CROWLING: I always wondered what happened. Now I know!

KICKEN: Now WE know!

MRS. CROWLING: Good thing that restaurant was open. What was that wonderful place called again?

RAMSEY: McDonald's.

MRS. CROWLING: Yes! Mr. McDonald is a wonderful man.

RAMSEY: Where are you from again?

MRS. CROWLING: Manchester! Lovely old Manchester. With the rolling hills and the flowing rivers.

RAMSEY: Alright, well, you've been here for a few hours now, he's probably going insane with curiosity.

KICKEN: I'm having a good time, Dad.

MRS. CROWLING: Ohohoho, so free with his parents! Too good. Tell me Mr. Petchio, are you at all creative yourself?

RAMSEY: Creative?

MRS. CROWLING: You know, artistic. Have you ever endeavored to create something larger than yourself?

RAMSEY: Once.

MRS. CROWLING: Really!

RAMSEY: Yeah.

MRS. CROWLING: What was it you created?

RAMSEY: Wine Ice Cream.

MRS. CROWLING: Wine...ice cream?

RAMSEY: Yeah, it's ice cream that's wine flavored.

MRS. CROWLING: Oh. What does it taste like?

RAMSEY: Wine.

MRS. CROWLING: That sounds...delightful.

RAMSEY: People didn't really go for it.

MRS. CROWLING: I couldn't possibly imagine why.

RAMSEY: I'm sure Mrs. Crowling has other things to do.

MRS. CROWLING: Actually, I have the whole week free.

KICKEN: Can she stay the night, Dad?

MRS. CROWLING: Yeah, can I stay the night, Dad?

RAMSEY: You're not sleeping in the bed with him. I watch SVU.

MRS. CROWLING: I don't wish to sleep in a bed with a child! I'll be sleeping in your bed with you.

RAMSEY: What?

MRS. CROWLING: There's plenty of room. My thoughts need to ruminate. My thoughts become reality. My inspirations cut the fabric of reality itself. I'm sure you'll find me quite magical.

RAMSEY: I'm sure you'll find the couch quite magical.

KICKEN: You should see my Tierenarn model!

MRS. CROWLING: You have a model? How wonderful!

KICKEN: It's in the basement. It's seven feet tall!

MRS. CROWLING: Why, it's a big-ature!

KICKEN: Wanna see it?

MRS. CROWLING: I would love to.

KICKEN: *(to Ramsey)* I'll have you know that Castle Tierenarn is the center of the wizarding world in Olodrin. It's the height and seat of the Temn faith. It's the home of the seeing-room and the Teers of the long-dead wizards. It's--

RAMSEY: *(cutting him off)* Getting kicked to the curb after you die.

(Pause.)

KICKEN: I'll be in the basement, Mrs. Crowling.

(Kicken exits to the basement.)

MRS. CROWLING: You don't believe in magic, do you?

RAMSEY: Excuse me?

MRS. CROWLING: It's a simple question.

RAMSEY: It's retarded, too.

MRS. CROWLING: Do you think magic is real, yes or no?

RAMSEY: No. Do you?

MRS. CROWLING: Yes.

RAMSEY: Why?

MRS. CROWLING: Because I'd rather live in a world where it exists.

RAMSEY: I don't think you get to choose.

MRS. CROWLING: I'm going to go and look at your son's castle.

(She exits down to the basement. Ramsey sits.)

RAMSEY: Crazy broad.

(Charcane enters from the kitchen, eating some kind of food.)

CHARCANE: I couldn't agree with you more.

RAMSEY: Who the hell are you?

CHARCANE: Charcana Charcane, High Witch of the Barag, Ruler of Olodrin and Tierenarn and High Empress of the Temn-Rojs. Who the hell are you?

RAMSEY: What?

CHARCANE: What?

RAMSEY: I have a gun!

CHARCANE: I have a magic staff! Somewhere. I'm just not the same since they took my powers.

RAMSEY: Please explain this.

CHARCANE: Read the books. Brother.

(A cell phone rings.)

RAMSEY: It's not mine.

(It continues to ring.)

RAMSEY: Maybe it's yours!

CHARCANE: I communicate using stone birds.

RAMSEY: Damn it...

(He takes out a cell phone and answers it.)

RAMSEY: What? Oh...yes. I'm sorry. Yes, I know. I know. I'm doing it, I'll have it by...no, don't do that. Please don't do that...

CHARCANE: Please, oh no, not that!

RAMSEY: Shut the hell up, witch! *(back to phone)* Sorry. Yes, I know. Understood. Bye...

(He hangs up.)

CHARCANE: Well what was that about?

RAMSEY: You seem to already know.

CHARCANE: You're on thin plagoon, brother.

(Segue directly into the next scene.)

SCENE 7: THE PETCHIO LIVING ROOM (continuous)

(Mrs. Crowling and Kicken enter from the basement. Charcane exits.)

MRS. CROWLING: Have you seen this little genius' castle of mystery? It even bests the one I see in my dreams!

KICKEN: It's nothing, really. The zenith broke off and I lost it, so it's not as great as it could be.

RAMSEY: Go get ready for bed, Kicken.

KICKEN: It's eight thirty!

MRS. CROWLING: Oh, I just love beds.

KICKEN: Mrs. Crowling was just going to tell me about book 7!

(Kicken starts to cough.)

RAMSEY: Work through it...you okay?

KICKEN: I'm fine, it's nothing.

RAMSEY: I think you should just go right to bed. What are you trying to do to the kid?

MRS. CROWLING: Well, I want him to feel like the suspense is rising slowly.

RAMSEY: Kicken, go get in your pajamas.

(Kicken exits up to his bedroom.)

MRS. CROWLING: Tell me about him.

RAMSEY: About who?

MRS. CROWLING: About your son. Highly intelligent, but what else?

RAMSEY: Well, he's dying.

MRS. CROWLING: Yes, I know that. Is he kind?

RAMSEY: Sure he is.

MRS. CROWLING: How long has he been reading my books?

RAMSEY: I don't know, his mother got him into it.

MRS. CROWLING: What was his mother's name?

RAMSEY: Missy. If you must know.

MRS. CROWLING: What happened?

RAMSEY: I don't like talking about her.

MRS. CROWLING: Why?

RAMSEY: Because she's dead, idiot!

MRS. CROWLING: That doesn't mean she's gone. When wizards perish their spirits remain in the Teer, the magical seeing room. Honest spirits never die, they guide and protect the ones that love them until they are joined again in the afterworld!

RAMSEY: Kicken can talk about her if he wants. You cannot.

MRS. CROWLING: Okay. I won't.

RAMSEY: I don't like you.

MRS. CROWLING: I am not taken aback.

RAMSEY: Try telling your kid that stone birds don't exist. Try telling your kid that there is no mystical mountain at the center of the world, or whatever. Try telling him that magic isn't real! See how far you get. Are you on drugs? When it was his mother, I didn't

mind. I even found it charming. Heartwarming. I almost enjoyed it myself. But she's dead. She is absolutely, most definitely, cold and lying in the goddamn ground. She's been swallowed by the earth, soon Kicken will lie with her, and I will be left with truth. It's like being left with a dead rat. Or five dead rats. The five dead rats of truth.

MRS. CROWLING: I do not think that you provide healthy environment for Kicken.

RAMSEY: I am going to have a very large scotch.

(Ramsey goes to exit.)

RAMSEY: *(continued)* It's funny how your accent comes and goes.

(Ramsey exits. Mrs. Crowling drops her "fantastical" character and becomes more like a regular, boring person. She sneezes blood.)

MRS. CROWLING: Fuckin shit.

(Ahe wipes her nose and looks to see if Ramsey is coming back. He is not. She glances up the stairs to see if Kicken is coming back. He is not. She goes to her bag and takes out a small snuffbox. She takes several sniff hits from it. She proceeds to slap herself in the face about three or four times. She is obviously in pain, but goes forth with it anyway. After a moment or two of this, she looks calm and wide eyed again. She gradually resumes her grand character.)

(Kicken runs down the stairs suddenly. He is in his pajamas. He starts to lose his breath and he coughs. Mrs. Crowling tosses the snuffbox.)

KICKEN: I'm... *(cough)* ignore that, I'm all ready! I don't think I should have run down the stairs.

MRS. CROWLING: Oh, my dear boy! Oh what wonderful joys!

(She picks up a random house object and throws it against the wall.)

MRS. CROWLING: Everywhere! MAGIC IS TRULY EVERYWHERE!

KICKEN: Are you okay?

MRS. CROWLING: Just excited beyond belief to share with you the magic I have been keeping in for so very long! Va defeated the Groglock back in the birthing of Olodrin...but now they are returning. Can't you just feel the overflowing excitement that hugs the tablecloth of the soul?

KICKEN: You really haven't told anyone else what happens?

MRS. CROWLING: I have not.

KICKEN: What about your son? Does he know?

MRS. CROWLING:

KICKEN: Mrs. Crowling?

MRS. CROWLING: Yes, child?

KICKEN: Have you told your son?

MRS. CROWLING: What son?

KICKEN: You have a son, don't you? I thought it was pretty common knowledge. A few of my more favorite articles about you--

MRS. CROWLING: (*cutting him off*) I have no son.

KICKEN: But I thought...

MRS. CROWLING: I HAVE NO SON! I'm also not a LESBIAN, I'm not a TRUCK driver on the weekends, and I do not make CHOCOLATE in my bathTUB. All of those rumors are silly, silly little hazards to sense! ARHGHGHGHGHGH!!!!!!!

(She proceeds to FLIP OVER A DESK, TEAR A BOOK IN HALF, KNOCK DOWN A BOOKSHELF, AND PUT HER FOOT THROUGH A COFFEE TABLE, COMPLETELY BREAKING IT IN TWO. She continues to throw things around the room just as Ramsey enters with a big drink of Scotch and some papers.)

RAMSEY: Will you please stop breaking things?

MRS. CROWLING: Absolutely anything can happen at absolutely any time! Remember that.

RAMSEY: How about brushing your teeth, Kicken? Is that something that happens?

KICKEN: Oh, come on! I was just up there!

RAMSEY: Go to it, or it's off to bed with no magical secrets!

KICKEN: I hate teeth.

(He exits upstairs.)

RAMSEY: Twenty pages addressed to you just jammed my fax machine.