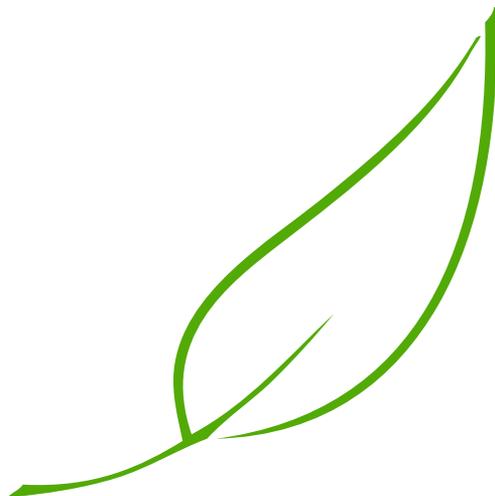


THE GREAT AWAKENING

by Ken Bradbury



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Characters: Oscar and Mom

MOM: *(facing the audience)* Oscar! Oscar, are you awake? Oscar! Oscar, the bus is going to be here in twenty minutes! Are you hearing me, Oscar?

OSCAR: *(turning to face the audience)* It's like this every morning.

MOM: Oscar, get up!

OSCAR: Every ... single ... morning.

MOM: Oscar!

OSCAR: That ... and then ...

MOM: You'll never amount to anything if you don't change your ways!

OSCAR: And ...

MOM: Am I gonna have to come up there?

OSCAR: "No, Ma. I'll get up." Every morning. Every morning the same old thing. Who'd want to get up just to hear someone yelling at them? Why can't mothers be more pleasant? Once ... just once I'd like to start the day with something like ...

MOM: *(and the two now face each other in real time)* Sweetheart? Darling? Oh wonder child of the universe?

OSCAR: *(to the audience)* I like that one.

MOM: Honey, I know you were sleeping soundly and I know that you need your sleep, but sweetheart, I only want the best for you and I've fixed your favorite breakfast and I have your clothing all laid out neatly as soon as you're ready.

OSCAR: *(to the audience)* Now what would be wrong with that? Instead, I get ...

MOM: You want to lie in bed all day? Then start paying rent, you bum! Now get out of there!

- OSCAR:** See what I mean? Surely not all mothers have been like this. I mean, the famous people in history? Surely they didn't have to put up with this.
- MOM:** George? Oh, Georgie?
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mama?
- MOM:** It's time to rise and shine, sweetheart.
- OSCAR:** But I'm tired, Mama.
- MOM:** Oh, I know you're tired. Poor darling. But what will the other children think when little Georgie Washington doesn't show up to play this morning? Honey, if you're going to grow up to be the father of your country then you really should get out of bed. It's so much easier being President standing up.
- OSCAR:** Is it cold out this morning, Mama?
- MOM:** Yes, and you've got to make that long trip across the Delaware so you need to get an early start. Now come on down to the kitchen where Mama's got some hot porridge waiting for you.
- OSCAR:** Thank you, Mama.
- MOM:** I'll go get some firewood out of the yard. Someone cut down the cherry tree last night.
- OSCAR:** Instead, I get ...
- MOM:** You want me to get the water? I swear I'll drown you with a glass of cold water if you don't get out of that bed!
- OSCAR:** And so it goes. I guess I'll never be President. Got the wrong mother.
- MOM:** Oscar!
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mom! ... If she could just be a little more ... I don't know ... gentle. Poetic.
- MOM:** (*ala Shakespeare*) Hark! What light through yonder window breaks! It is the sun, my son!
- OSCAR:** Mother ... dearest.
- MOM:** Yes, oh gentle son of mine?
- OSCAR:** Mother, must I rise so soon? Seems 'twas only a moment ago when first I laid my tender head upon yon downy pillow.

- MOM:** Oh, how times does fly, my young hero, when dreams are sweet.
- OSCAR:** To sleep or not to sleep ... that is the question. Now is the morning of my discontent.
- MOM:** Ah, we are such stuff as dreams are made of, but it is time to rise!
- OSCAR:** Doth I smell pancakes?
- MOM:** Ah, a pancake by any other name would smell as sweet. Arise, my son!
- OSCAR:** A robe! A robe! My kingdom for a robe!
- MOM:** 'Til we meet below, dear son! Adieu! Again, I say adieu!
- OSCAR:** Adieu, dearest Mother!
- MOM:** (*ala Mom again*) And again I say I'm going to come up there and dump that bed on top of you if you don't get your tail out of that bed!
- OSCAR:** Alas. Bummer. Same old thing. I mean, if I at least had something exciting to wake up to. Just day after day the same routine. If I just had some ... I don't know ... mystery!
- MOM:** (*dramatically*) Son!
- OSCAR:** Mother!
- MOM:** Son! Son!
- OSCAR:** Mother! Mother!
- MOM:** It was a dark and stormy night last night!
- OSCAR:** I know! I lay awake in fear all evening! (*aside to the audience as Mom freezes her pose*) She had that look in her eyes. I could tell something big ... something really big was coming. (*She unfreezes.*) What's happening, Ma?
- MOM:** (*aside to the audience as Oscar freezes his pose*) How could I tell him? His father was lost in a blizzard, the first floor of our house had been blown away in a tornado, and our family dog was starting to act very peculiar. (*Oscar comes out of his freeze.*) Oh, nothing.
- OSCAR:** Ma, is there something you're hiding from me?



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