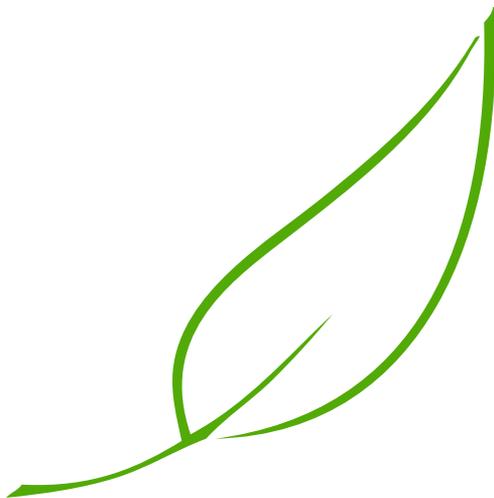


THE WIZARD

by Robert L. Crowe



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(Although the pronoun “he” is used throughout the script, either gender can be cast.)

(At open, WANTER, stands directly in front of BARKER. WANTER is first in line of the people waiting to see the Wizard. BARKER is a cross between an overly-dramatic game show host and a carnival barker. WANTER is like a new puppy dog, active and animated)

BARKER: *(steps around WANTER and yells at those in line)* All right. Let's get this line straightened out. You towards the back! Stand up straight and get directly behind the person in front of you. We like straight lines and discipline. You want to get in to see the Wizard? Then, follow the rules. It's for your own good so no one gets trampled. OK. Who's next?

WANTER: *(overly excited and hyper)* Me! Me! I'm next. Right here. I've been waiting a long time and I'm ready to go in. Is that the door I use? I'm ready! Here I go.

BARKER: Hold it! You think you just walk in to see the Wizard?

WANTER: Don't you? I mean, I saw other people walking in and coming out with all kinds of stuff.

BARKER: Now, think about it for a moment. Is that how you'd run this organization, buster? Would you let everyone who wants something just walk in with their hand out?

WANTER: I don't know. Never thought about it. But I'm ready. It's my turn ... Isn't it?

BARKER: Well ... you're next in line. But you have to go through the screening process.

WANTER: What's the screening process?

BARKER: Me.

WANTER: Oh.

BARKER: Here's how it works, kid. I control the door. You explain to me what you want. If I approve, then you get to go through that door.

WANTER: And then I get to see the Wizard? Inside is the Wizard?

BARKER: Inside is a committee.

WANTER: A committee? But, what's that noise I hear when the door opens? It sounds like the committee is snoring.

BARKER: It's chain saws. Workers are cutting down trees to make the paper to make the application for you to fill out.

WANTER: Oh, there's an application?

BARKER: Yep. Proposals are limited to one tree per person. You then take your application to the committee. If they approve, you get to see the Wizard. If the Wizard approves, you get your wish.

WANTER: Sounds complicated. But I'm ready. I've been practicing for weeks. Ready, Teddy, that's me.

BARKER: Your name is Teddy?

WANTER: No, my name is ...

BARKER: Never mind. Just remember it so you can put it on the application.

WANTER: Right. So after I do the application, how long does it take before I get my wish?

BARKER: That depends upon the project. Could take up to a year.

WANTER: A year! I have something that I need right now. I don't think I can wait. I mean, I've gotten a lot older just since I started in this line. A year? What takes so long?

BARKER: Let's say, for example, Amelia, that you want to start a new airline. If the Wizard approves, then we have to create all the rules and regulations ... limit of one tree. Then there's an oversight committee to implement and inspect. An audit committee to ...

WANTER: Excuse me. I don't want to start an airline. I have a simple request.

BARKER: OK. What is it?

WANTER: I want power.

BARKER: Power? You mean like a jet-ski or a Caterpillar road grader?

WANTER: No, personal power. (*excited and emotional*) I want to be in control. For all my life I have been a follower. If I make the team at all I'm last chosen. Nobody asks my opinion about anything. Sometimes when I exert myself and give an opinion, people laugh at me. Do you have any idea how it is to go through life never getting to make the final decision? I'm not in charge of my life. Someone else is! Other people have (*looking for right word*) ... sculptured what I am and who I am. I don't care what I'll be, I just want to have the personal power to make decisions and make pronouncements that other people will respect. Is that too much to ask?

BARKER: (*pauses and considers*) Yes.

WANTER: Yes?

BARKER: Yes! No one can give you power, not even the Wizard. Power comes through leadership and strength, chum. That request will never get you in the front door.

WANTER: OK. How about fame?

BARKER: The Wizard does not distribute fame. Fame comes from accomplishment, good or bad. You need to think more practical, pal.

WANTER: OK. What about success?

BARKER: Too nebulous. Success can be achieved by the very rich and the very poor; the very powerful and the meek. No one can define it, so no one can give it away. You really should have researched this a bit before you came to request something. Sorry. The Wizard can't help you. (*down the line*)
NEXT!

WANTER: Wait! Wait! Let me try again.

BARKER: Quickly, then.

WANTER: What about wealth? What if I wanted wealth?

BARKER: That would be different.

WANTER: It would?

BARKER: Yes, the Wizard hands out money. It depends on what you want it for.

WANTER: Myself.



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