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THE NEVERENDING STORY Act II

BASTIAN for the first time stands and looks down onto the acting area.)

BASTIAN. Everyone has wings, Atreyu. Everyone has wings.

GMORK. There is no escape.

BASTIAN. Atreyu! Everyone has wings!

GMORK. The fantasy is finished!

ATREYU. Everyone has wings.

GMORK. You think you're going to sprout wings? You think you're that lucky?

ATREYU. I don't think I'm lucky. I know I'm lucky. *(He flies up. GMORK desperately tries to stop him.)*

GMORK. No! No! Noooooooo! *(GMORK is consumed by the NOTHING. ATREYU flies above it.)*

ATREYU. To the Ivory Tower. Fly!

SCENE FOURTEEN: The Childlike Empress

(Drumming.)

ATREYU lands in the Magnolia Pavilion.

The CHILDLIKE EMPRESS is waiting.)

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Welcome Atreyu, my brave hunter. *(ATREYU lays the Auryn at her feet.)* How much you have suffered. Take heart. Soon, all will be as it was or better.

ATREYU. But the Nothing has covered everything. We are the only ones left.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. That is true.

Act II

(Atreyu and the Great Quest)

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ATREYU. I have failed.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. That is not true. You have done everything perfectly.

ATREYU. How can you say that?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Because you have brought a human child.

ATREYU. No, I didn't.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. You did. He's right here. *(She looks up to BASTIAN who looks directly at her and then instantly looks back to the book.)*

BASTIAN. No!

ATREYU *(looking around).* I don't see anyone.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. You will. His world is very close to ours right now and soon he will give me the name only he can give me.

ATREYU. You knew you needed a new name?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Of course.

ATREYU. You knew what Morla told me in the Swamps of Sadness and what Uyulala told me in the Southern Oracle?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. I knew it all.

ATREYU. Then why did you send me?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. To do exactly what you did.

ATREYU. But there was no need. No need for a Great Quest. No need for me to face Gmork. No need to lose Artax and Falkor.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Atreyu...

ATREYU. It was a joke. A wicked, wicked joke.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. It was not a joke. I am well aware of what you have sacrificed. I sent you on the Great Quest to bring a hero. I needed a story full of adventures and perils and yours was that story. He took

part in everything you did. He saw himself through your eyes. Right now, he can hear every word we're saying.

BASTIAN. No!

(The lights begin to dim. The NOTHING begins to creep across the stage toward the CHILDLIKE EMPRESS and ATREYU.)

ATREYU. Then why isn't he here?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Yes, Bastian, why aren't you here?

BASTIAN. Because I'm in the attic of my school.

ATREYU. What if he doesn't know the right name to give you?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. He's already chosen it.

BASTIAN. This isn't happening...

ATREYU. What if he wants to come but he doesn't know how?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. All he has to do is to call my name.

BASTIAN. It can't be me. No one chooses me.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. I am choosing you, Bastian. Give me a name.

ATREYU. He's not coming.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. He must. He's our only hope.

ATREYU. He doesn't care.

BASTIAN. No! Don't say that!

ATREYU. Doesn't care about you, doesn't care about stories, doesn't care about Fantastical

BASTIAN. I do care. I care so much. Moonchild! Moonchild! I'm coming!

(An anthem of voices.

BASTIAN steps off his riser/attic into thin air.

Blackout.

The anthem reaches crescendo and then descends under the following.)

BASTIAN. Hello?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Don't be afraid, Bastian.

BASTIAN. It's dark.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. It always is at the beginning.

(A light appears from the CHILDLIKE EMPRESS' hands. BASTIAN approaches.)

BASTIAN. Everything is gone.

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. Yes. But soon everything will be born again from your wishes.

BASTIAN. My wishes?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. I am the Golden-Eyed Commander of Wishes. Make a wish and I will command it.

BASTIAN. How many wishes do I get?

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS *(delighted)*. As many as you want.

BASTIAN. I can't think of anything.

(The anthem of voices falls apart in a discordant note and then stops.)

CHILDLIKE EMPRESS. That is bad.

BASTIAN. Why?