

WISHES

By Albi Gorn

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390-4222 (Day)

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Running time: Ten minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

WISHGAL

ABE (Fifties or sixties)

ELLIE (Fifties or sixties)

(WISH SOUND)

WISHGAL: Your third wish?

(LIGHTS UP)

ABE: (*Groggily*) Whoa, what hit me.

WISHGAL: Your third wish.

ABE: I know this place.

WISHGAL: Excuse me, but —

ABE: I live here.

WISHGAL: Yes, you do. Look, I —

ABE: But you don't.

WISHGAL: No, I, I — right, I don't live —

ABE: What are you doing here, one might very well ask.

WISHGAL: Oh, well, I came to —

ABE: WhoaWhoa. I didn't ask yet. And before I do ask, I'm going to have to have at least some glimmer of hope that I'll be able to understand your answer. Right now I'm glimmerless.

WISHGAL: Oh. But I can't really stay that long. So, um, your third wish?

ABE: (*A long look of incomprehension*) You're not helping.

WISHGAL: Oh. That's disappointing. I did come here — that was my intention.

ABE: You came here with the intention of coming here?

WISHGAL: No. With the intention of helping you.

ABE: I see. In response to some call?

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WISHGAL: No. We discontinued that service a long time ago.

ABE: "A long time ago." Hmmm. I'm beginning to feel overcome by a feeling of nostalgia.

WISHGAL: Well, but in those days —

ABE: No, no. Nostalgia for my sanity. True it tended to leave you a bit defenseless, but nonetheless it was invaluable in certain situations.

WISHGAL: I wouldn't know. But for what it's worth, I don't think you've lost your sanity. Now, if we could just —

ABE: You're not like robbing the house, are you?

WISHGAL: No.

ABE: Are you going to rape me?

WISHGAL: Uh, no.

ABE: Did someone take out a contract on me?

WISHGAL: Not that I know —

ABE: Okay. There's no sense waiting any longer. What are you doing here?

WISHGAL: I'm here to grant you three wishes.

ABE: (*Beat*) No, no, I obviously asked too soon.

WISHGAL: It's not that difficult to —

ABE: You came here to — you did come here, right?

WISHGAL: Uh, yes.

ABE: You came here to grant me three wishes. Did I win the lottery?

WISHGAL: I wouldn't know that.

ABE: Three wishes, huh? Can I win it?

WISHGAL: Did you buy a ticket?

ABE: No.

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WISHGAL: Then I don't see how you could.

ABE: Well, you said I have three wishes.

WISHGAL: No, you only have one. And that's not on the wish list.

ABE: Only one?

WISHGAL: You used your first two. You just made your second one a minute ago.

ABE: How come I don't remember this. What was it?

WISHGAL: Your second wish?

ABE: Yeah. What did I wish for?

WISHGAL: Oh, you wished that everything would return to the way it was before you made your first wish.

ABE: I wished... *(Totally baffled)* Oh God, I wish I knew what was going on.

WISHGAL: *(Chuckles)* Huh, that's funny.

ABE: What?

WISHGAL: That was your first wish.

ELLIE: *(From off)* I'm home. *(Entering)* Hi.

ABE: Hi.

WISHGAL: Hi.

ELLIE: *(Seeing WISHGAL)* I thought we were going to the movies.

ABE: The movie may have come here, actually.

ELLIE: *(To WISHGAL)* You are...?

WISHGAL: Oh, I'm —

ABE: She's here to grant me three wishes.

ELLIE: *(Beat)* Look, Abe, if you don't want to go to the movies, just —

ABE: No, no, I wanna go. This won't take long. I only got one wish left. You go change, I'll make a wish, and then we'll go.

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ELLIE: Okay, Abe. As usual, your subtle sense of humor is eluding me. Who is she, really?

ABE: Yeah, who are you really?

WISHGAL: Well, I'm what I said I am. I'm here to grant you three wishes.

ABE: No, let's get past that. Who —

ELLIE: Wait a minute. You don't know who she is?

ABE: No.

ELLIE: How did she get in here?

ABE: Beats me.

WISHGAL: You might not remember because of your second wish. See —

ELLIE: Wait, what's that mean? You already used two wishes?

ABE: Yeah, I just told you that.

ELLIE: You know we have a pre-nuptial which —

WISHGAL: NoNoNo, we can't go there. I'm really running late.

ELLIE: Well go.

ABE: Yeah, who's stopping you?

WISHGAL: No, I can't. See, this is what I do. I grant three wishes and then I move on. But you gotta use all three.

ABE: Why?

WISHGAL: Well, see, they've already been allotted to you, and if I leave and you make a wish freelance, you might have your wish granted and without my supervision that could have serious repercussions. Think: John McCain picking Sarah Palin as a running mate.

ELLIE: So if we make a wish, you leave?

WISHGAL: If he does, yes.

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ELLIE: Make the wish, Abe.

ABE: Look, this —

ELLIE: (*Out of the side of her mouth*) Just make the wish and get her out of here before she goes postal.

WISHGAL: I assure you, you have nothing to worry about.

ELLIE: Look, I don't know who you are, my husband doesn't know how you got in here, and you're clearly totally out of orbit; don't you think there's something there that might qualify as worry material.

WISHGAL: Well, I can see how that might look to you. But really, all I —

ELLIE: Okay, okay. It's not worth it. Make the wish, Abe.

ABE: It's my last one, I don't want to waste it.

ELLIE: Abe, now you're scaring me. Just wish for, I don't know, wish for world peace.

(*To WISHGAL*) We wish for world peace.

WISHGAL: It's got to come from him. And I couldn't grant that anyway.

ELLIE: Just our luck. A Tea Party Tinkerbell.

ABE: Why can't I wish for world peace?

WISHGAL: Look, what I'm here for is to grant you wishes that can help make you whole.

(*ABE and ELLIE just stare at her*)

WISHGAL: Life can take little pieces out of you. The whole point of the program is to give you back what you lost. To make you whole.

ABE: Tell you what. I'm going to give my wish to you. Because it's pretty clear that life has taken more than its share of little pieces out of you.

WISHGAL: You can't —

ABE: No, no. Please.

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WISHGAL: That's not the way it —

ELLIE: Yeah, and take the wish with you. Find a nice quiet wishing place —

ABE: Like a well.

ELLIE: Where's she gonna find a well?

ABE: There's gotta be a well somewhere. Didn't we see one when we were visiting Bernie out in Jersey? *(To WISHGAL)* You go to New Jersey, Passaic, I got the directions somewhere, it's just off the Garden State, you find the well, make your wish and Poof! you're whole. True, you're whole in Passaic, but at least you're whole.

ELLIE: And out of here.

WISHGAL: You still don't believe me, do you?

ABE: No, we don't.

ELLIE: And what seals it for me is that you expect that we would.

WISHGAL: Okay. Sorry to have to do this, but...*(Takes out a wand, and then quietly but emphatically)* I wish that you believed me.

(WISH SOUND)

(Beat)

ABE: *(To ELLIE)* Hmm, how about I wish for the money I lost when the housing bubble burst? That would make me whole.

ELLIE: Oh, please. Don't get me started on your investments. And is it even remotely possible that you could think outside the box for once.

ABE: Which means what, exactly?

ELLIE: Which means that money's not gonna make you whole. In the first place you'd just go and lose it again. And in the second place... there is no second place. How about this, how about you wish for Ronnie and David to visit us a little more often.

ABE: Please, I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy, I should wish it on my sons?

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ELLIE: What's that supposed to mean?

ABE: "Nu, Ronnie, where's my grandson?" "David, when are you gonna find a nice girl? Everybody thinks you're a faygeleh."

WISHGAL: Well, actually...*(ABE and ELLIE both turn to her)*...nothing, sorry. I shouldn't've interrupted.

ELLIE: I never say those things.

ABE: Ho ho! Just this Tuesday at —

ELLIE: To you! I said it to you. I never say anything like that to them.

ABE: They hear it all the same.

ELLIE: Ridiculous. Although as long as you bring it up, wishing for a grandchild's not a bad idea. That would make us— wait, what are we doing here?

ABE: What do you mean?

ELLIE: We're really making a wish here? Is that what's happening?

ABE: Yeah. I guess she —

ELLIE: You did this.

WISHGAL: Well, yes. See, I wished you would believe me, and now you do. Which proves that I can grant wishes, I might add.

ELLIE: You wished that I would believe you and now I do. God, I feel so violated.

ABE: Yeah, it's bad enough you're in my house without so much as a by your leave, now you're mucking around in my head without permission. I'm beginning not to like you.

WISHGAL: Yeah, I get that a lot. But what we really need to focus on here is the third wish.

ABE: God, I just wish this was —

ELLIE: Abe, Abe! Don't —

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WISHGAL: No, you don't have to worry. I can tell the difference.

ELLIE: Oh? Like the first two wishes? What were they anyway?

ABE: Who remembers.

ELLIE: You just had two wishes granted and you don't remember what they were.

Typical.

ABE: Hey, at my age I'm lucky I remember... uh, whatever it is old people don't remember.

ELLIE: (*To WISHGAL*) What did he wish for?

ABE: Ellie, please, what difference does it make?

ELLIE: I'd like to know, that's all.

WISHGAL: Well, at first —

ELLIE: Actually, on second thought, don't tell me. It would just aggravate me more.

Wish for whatever you want, Abe. There's no wish that's going to satisfy both of us. We don't want the same things anymore.

ABE: Oh, Ellie, I —

ELLIE: Am I right?

ABE: Is that really what you think?

ELLIE: Well, face it, Abe. We don't.

(*ABE thinks it over*)

ABE: I got it. Ready?

WISHGAL: Shoot.

ABE: I wish my wife and I loved each other again.

WISHGAL: (*Smiling, and then waving wand*)

(WISH SOUND)

WISHGAL: Granted.

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ELLIE: (*After a beat of looking at ABE*) That's what you wish for?

ABE: Yeah. Something wrong with that?

ELLIE: You can get that without wasting a wish, if only you're willing to work at it. I've been telling you that for years.

ABE: You know, it takes two to tango.

ELLIE: Don't get me started on the last time you took me dancing. And what do you mean "they hear it all the same?" Have you been telling Ronnie and David what I tell you?

ABE: They don't need to hear it from me. They can read between the lines, you know.

ELLIE: Answer me, Abe.

WISHGAL: (*Who looks troubled and starts examining her wand, banging it a couple of times on her palm*) I charged this before I left.

ELLIE: You've been telling them.

WISHGAL: It was calibrated just last week.

ABE: Ellie, you know I haven't.

ELLIE: So why don't they visit more often?

ABE: You tell me.

WISHGAL: The first two wishes worked, I think.

ELLIE: Believe me, Abe, I wish I knew. (*To WISHGAL*) Hey, Rumpelstiltskin, how come he got wishes and I didn't?

WISHGAL: Let me try again. (*WISHGAL raises her wand*)

ABE: Whoa, whoa, what are you doing?

WISHGAL: I never granted a wish that didn't take, so I thought I'd —

ABE: What do you mean "didn't take?" I wished we would love each other again.

ELLIE: Yeah. What do you think we're doing here?

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WISHGAL: But you're —

ELLIE: You've been watching too many Disney movies, Sabrina.

WISHGAL: O—kay...

ELLIE: The wish took.

ABE: Yeah, feels good, doesn't it?

ELLIE: Never mind about that, I better not find out that either of those other wishes had anything to do with that redhead with the pierced belly button in 6F.

WISHGAL: (*WISHGAL starts to leave*) I guess I'll —

ABE: Jeez, Ellie, what do you think I am. She's younger than David.

ELLIE: Still, I wouldn't put it — Oh my god! You wouldn't dare. (*ELLIE whips out her cell phone*)

ABE: What?

WISHGAL: I'll just be —

ELLIE: If I find out you — (*Into phone*) Ma? Ma, are you all right?

ABE: Oh, Ellie, for God's sake. (*Laughing*) You're something else.

ELLIE: (*Into phone*) Yeah, ma. Nothing funny happened to you, right? The house is okay, the dog? No, it's just Abe met this —

ABE: (*Reaching for the phone*) Waitwaitwait, I wanna tell her.

ELLIE: No way. (*Into phone*) Ma, I wish there was some way I could make you believe this, but — no, Abe's nudging me. I said I *wish* — hold on. (*to WISHGAL*) Hey, Dumbledore, I need a favor.

(*WISHGAL gives ELLIE the wand and exits*)

— end of play —