

Only One Can Live

Here is... the official trailer for the most anticipated movie of the summer. While there will be other blockbuster films this summer (*Thor* and *Green Lantern* are also on my list so far) none of been as long awaited as the final chapter in the Harry Potter series. The closing of the first part of The Deathly Hallows only increased my excitement. The Blu-Ray disc features an opening scene of the finale. The trailer premiered last night on television and previewed some of my favorite scenes from the books and they look amazing.

My Stage Debut, Sort of...

Well, ok, so last Sunday wasn't really my stage *debut*; I acted in about 4 stage plays when I was a kid, and three quarters of those roles were in The Wizard of Oz ☐

But somewhere along the line, I developed a severe stage fright, and I haven't come close to the front of a stage since I auditioned (and wasn't chosen) for the part of Thor in The Nerd in 1990. I've worked in many various capacities behind the scenes and on the members' boards for a few of our local community theater groups in recent years, and if ever someone was brave enough to inquire, I would always reject and adamantly refuse the offers of roles to be portrayed onstage in front of an audience – just way too nervous, and I've actually had many a nightmare about having to get onstage!

But a few weeks ago, my husband and I became involved in our church's semi-annual Kidstuff, which is a small collection of skits and musical numbers aimed at instilling a virtue in its audience, this time being 'compassion'. So my husband was rehearsing for Kidstuff, and I was tagging along to rehearsals as I usually do when he is in a play. I was asked by the director (who is also the school nurse in my two oldest daughters' school district) if I would "just stand there and hand out prizes" during one of the skits. Always being willing to help providing it doesn't get in the way of my family life, I obliged, and next thing I know I am a character complete with a name, Fran Hootenhiener! So I guess you could say it was my stage debut as an adult! The director was right though, I really just had to stand there during one of the skits and hand out cookies, but I even had an introduction by the extremely handsome game show host (my real-life husband) where I had to smile and even give a little wave to the

audience while I showed off my cookie prizes. I was incredibly nervous beforehand, but I got through it without fainting or doing anything really embarrassing like throwing the cookies at someone or dropping my tray. I think it helped that 90% of the audience was kids and also that our little show had a more divine purpose than simple entertainment. It was quite a different experience to work with a cast and crew who were coming together to teach kids a virtue versus a community theater production where the goal is to entertain paying adults. Not that one is better; it's just a matter of personal preference, I think, and it helped me to be less nervous.

And I think this experience helped me for what was to come last night... because of the weather, the two other small group leaders for the 7th grade girls at youth group were unable to make it, so I was in charge of ALL the 7th grade girls last night! It went better than I thought, even though I really don't like to be the one in charge of a group. But, such is life, and I'm just happy I didn't know about it until we arrived last night otherwise I would have been a nervous wreck all day. And the youth pastor's face when he told me I was the only teacher who could make it was just priceless, haha!

I'm not saying I will ever get on stage again, but for this one time, I actually had some fun!

Knowing One's Place

In all honesty, I have to say that the current production I am part of is the most difficult time I have ever had and I do not have to memorize one line of dialog. There are several roles both on stage and off in any show. It just so happens

that my presence for [The Nerd](#) is strictly off stage. Not that it has not been and continues to be a thoroughly enjoyable experience. I get to sit back night after night and watch the thespians on stage create their roles. All eight of them are doing a fabulous job developing realistic personas not only through the written word but through movement and (to me) most importantly facial expression. Not only are the lines significant, what goes on along with those words may be even more so.

The character playing Rick is just bewildering. Even when he is not speaking, he is doing something that is just soooo hard not to focus your attention on, making the other characters on stage that much more uncomfortable. His mouth open, staring at a character one minute, wandering around paying no attention to someone yelling at him the next. The eyeglasses add an even greater effect. Once he gets his script away, I know that he will be able to take it to an even higher level. I cannot wait to see the costumes. And that voice?! ☐ Plus, I am so excited to be watching HIM on stage.

I have also been impressed by the gentleman playing Tocky (... or is it Ticky?). He has some of the best lines in the show and is very strong characterwise. Audiences will howl when he gets angry at his young son or becomes flabbergasted by the nerd's constant nerdiness. Thor (Ticky's son) is a very close relative of mine and he can be as bothersome as the character on stage.

Everyone else is doing great; I will make it a point to focus on others in future posts as soon as I can find intriguing things to mention about them. I stilll have a bit of time.

The Mighty Thor

(Sorry If I disappoint fans of the Marvel Comics' character). Tonight was another fun evening of auditions at the community theatre. [The Nerd](#) came under my radar my sophomore year at BGSU. I performed a scene as Rick Steadman in an acting class. After reading my copy of the scene, I immediately searched out a copy of the full script (and not from the college library). After reading the play, I was immediately enamored with the over-the-top character and said if ever I found a chance to audition for it, I would soooo be there. I nailed the scene in school and was told in my comments from the instructor that if he ever needed a white [Steve Urkel](#), he would look me up. I guess that was a compliment.

At the audition, I saw some returning thespians and one or two newcomers (always nice to see). On the audition form, I listed that I would like to try for Rick and Thor (an 8-13 year old brat). I did get to read the part of the brat while kneeling. I was told that if I could shrink about 3 feet, shave, and grow some hair on my head I would be considered.

When the time came to read for the title role, I attempted to fit in a few snorts where applicable, roll the eyes a bit, change my voice slightly so it had a bit of a "adenoidal" sound (which the stage directions call for) to it. The first scene was the scene in which the cast is introduced to the nerd. Hilarious.

The second bit was a solo part in which Rick makes himself comfortable in his 'Nam buddy's apartment. He unpacks a music stand, book, and tambourine (of which none were provided) and proceeds to butcher "The Star Spangled Banner." I made like I was banging the instrument at opportune moments on the sofa, my head, leg, etc. while doing my best to ruin our National Anthem. A friend mentioned that I could be arrested for such a travesty. I thought being booed ala

Roseanne would be enough. I hope that I was "over-the-top" enough to please the director.

Although some would balk at the opportunity to play a nerd, I relish the chance to bring Rick Steadman to life once again, this time for a paying audience. Hopefully, a great friend (who I was actually surprised to see since he and his wife are expecting some day soon) will be cast with me. Usually, he has been directing or directing and acting; but I really would like to be cast in a show where he does not wear so many hats. But even if neither of us get a part, there is always the next show. More auditions tomorrow night. Then what a nice birthday present it would be if I get any part (similar to last year after I found out that I was cast as the standout character in a previous show... although some do say I stand out in whatever part I am given... dunno) ☐ .