A new synthesis of heterocycles from *o*-subsituted aryl benzyl ethers

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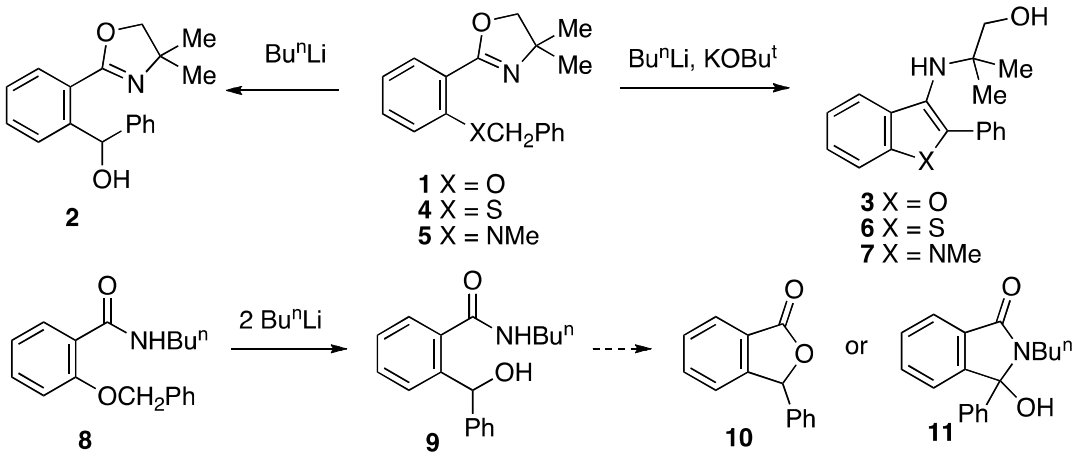
The [1,2]-Wittig rearrangement has not been widely exploited synthetically. Treatment of the oxazoline-containing benzyl ether **1** with Bu^nLi does give the rearrangement product **2** in low yield. However simply adding $KOBu^t$ to the reaction mixture changes the outcome completely and gives a high yield of 3-aminobenzofuran **3**. This method has been extended to the benzyl sulfide **4** and amine **5** which give respectively the 3-aminobenzothiophene **6** and indole **7**.



By moving to the secondary amide **8**, [1,2]-Wittig rearrangement is achieved in high yield with Bu^nLi, and the initial product **9** is readily converted into either the phthalide **10** or the hydroxyisoindolone**11**.