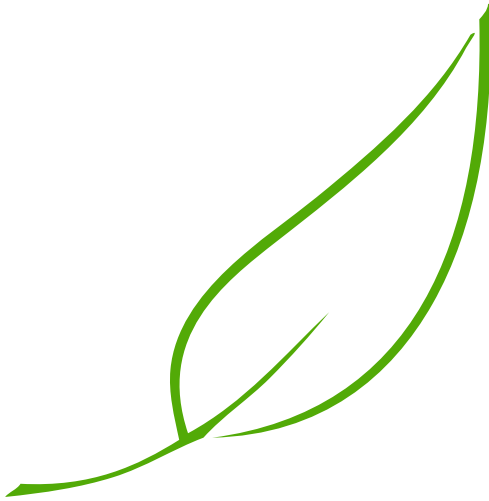


THE RAFT

by Ken Bradbury



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A scene for two castaways of either gender.

Two castaways lay sprawled out, barely conscious on a raft of sorts ... and a small one at that.

BRETT: *(groans ... a silence, then another groan)*

DAKOTA: *(slowly rises to a sitting position on the raft, rubs his eyes, looks around, then ...)*

BRETT: *(groans again)*

DAKOTA: Wake up. *(nothing)* Hey, fella. Wake up. *(reaches over to shake Brett)*

BRETT: *(still lying down, groggily)* Bob?

DAKOTA: Huh?

BRETT: I can't see you, Bob. Where'd you go?

DAKOTA: Hey guy, wake up.

BRETT: *(sitting up very suddenly)* Where? Where's my bathrobe?

DAKOTA: Your bathrobe?

BRETT: I can't go out in public like this. Somebody stole my clothes. And we have an 8 o'clock dinner reservation. *(looking at Dakota for the first time)* You're not going like that are you?

DAKOTA: What are you talking about?

BRETT: Bob. Where's Bob? What did you do with Bob?

DAKOTA: Bob who?

BRETT: Bob, my brother. My brother Bob. Where is he?

DAKOTA: I have no idea. Do you know where we are?

BRETT: On the ship. The Sultan of the Seas ... in the Caribbean on a 3-day cruise.

DAKOTA: Well ... wrong. The ship went down.

BRETT: What?!!

DAKOTA: It went down. We're floating in the Caribbean.

BRETT: I can't.

DAKOTA: You can't what?

BRETT: I can't float.

DAKOTA: We're floating on one of the cabin doors.

BRETT: (*standing quickly*) Oh, my gosh. This can't be happening. There were 3,000 people on the ship!

DAKOTA: Now there are just two, buddy. You and me ... and our door. Who's Bob?

BRETT: My brother. He bought me this cruise for my birthday. And now he's ... well ... Bob's always been unlucky. It was always his cat that died, his bike that Dad backed over, his peanut butter sandwich that had the poison.

DAKOTA: What!!?

BRETT: That was in a play we did in grade school. *The Case of the Peanut Butter Gone Bad*. But you say ... nobody else survived?

DAKOTA: (*standing*) Tell you the truth, I have no idea. I woke up just before you did. But look ... as far as you can see in any direction ... nothing.

BRETT: Nothing.

DAKOTA: Not a thing. Just water.

BRETT: Oh, this is terrible.

DAKOTA: You're telling me.

BRETT: I mean this is just terrible.

DAKOTA: You said that.

BRETT: How long can you go without food and water?

DAKOTA: I don't know. A day or two.

BRETT: How long before the sun burns right through your skin?

DAKOTA: Maybe a week.

BRETT: How long can the door off a cruise ship float?

DAKOTA: Well, we're barely out of the water right now. With two of us it's too heavy.

BRETT: You mean we're sinking?

DAKOTA: Almost.

BRETT: Look, I know we don't know each other and this may seem like sort of a personal question, but would you mind getting off?

DAKOTA: Do what?

BRETT: Off. Getting off the door so it'll float higher out of the water and I won't drown. I don't swim.

DAKOTA: No.

BRETT: No?

DAKOTA: No, I'm not getting off this door. I've got as much right to be on this door as you do. Look, we're lucky we even survived, fella.

BRETT: Rules.

DAKOTA: What?

BRETT: We need rules. We can't survive this without some sort of order.

DAKOTA: What kind of rules?

BRETT: Like ... well, like which side of the door is mine and which is yours.

DAKOTA: That's ridiculous.

BRETT: Why?

DAKOTA: This is all we've got, fella. This door. Nothing else in the world but this very tiny door. Let's don't go dividing it in half. It's bad enough as it is.

BRETT: Do you snore?

DAKOTA: Do I what?

BRETT: Snore. (*makes a snoring noise*) You know.

DAKOTA: I snore like a buzz saw. Done it all my life. Adenoids, I think.

BRETT: Then I'm afraid you'll have to sleep somewhere else.

DAKOTA: (*takes a long look around the ocean, then*) Somewhere else?

BRETT: I can't sleep with a snorer.

DAKOTA: And just where do you suggest I sleep?

BRETT: Anywhere, really. I mean, anywhere but right here, because this is where I sleep.

DAKOTA: Then why don't you go sleep somewhere else?

BRETT: Are you crazy? There's nothing but ocean out there! You expect me to sleep on top of the water? What kind of a nut are you?

DAKOTA: (*a long pause, then*) Then ... uh ... just where would I go?

BRETT: *(a pause as he looks around)* Oh. *(another pause)* I see your point.

DAKOTA: Look, just settle down. You're probably in shock or something. We're in trouble, fella, and we've got to figure things out. We've got to keep calm, you got that? We can't be going crazy on each other or we'll never make it out of here alive.

BRETT: Death.

DAKOTA: What?

BRETT: Death. I can feel death coming.

DAKOTA: Stop talking like that.

BRETT: No, I mean it. It's that ... that deadly feeling that we're going to ... die.

DAKOTA: You are no help, you know that?

BRETT: *(this speech grows in intensity until Brett is just about out of his mind)* Why would I be of any help if you're going to die? You can't help a person who's about to get dehydrated, then burnt up by the sun, then die! You can't help a person who's in the middle of the ocean and can't swim a stroke and is just the right size to make a nice meal for a Great White Shark ... and that's if I don't starve to death in the process!

DAKOTA: *(grabbing Brett by the shoulders, holding him firmly)* Hey! Hey! Calm down! You gotta calm down, fella. We gotta talk about something else. Like ... I don't know ... like ... what do you do for a living?

BRETT: I'm a guidance counselor. I help people calm down and live their lives.

DAKOTA: You're kidding me.

BRETT: Guidance counselors do not kid. What do you do for a living?

DAKOTA: Ziplocs.

BRETT: Huh?

DAKOTA: Ziplocs. Ziploc bags.

BRETT: You make Ziploc bags?

DAKOTA: I test them. I sit down at the end of the assembly line and every half hour or so I'll pull a bag off the line and zip it.

BRETT: Then what do you do?

DAKOTA: I unzip it. Zip and unzip, all day long. That's why I took this cruise. I had to get away from the monotony. Now look what I got ... an ocean full of monotony.

BRETT: I'm a guidance counselor. Could I help?

DAKOTA: No, I'll be okay. I mean if we're stuck floating on this stupid door for the rest of our lives I'll never have to unzip another baggie.

BRETT: (*sitting*) I wonder what it's like.

DAKOTA: What's that?

BRETT: Dying on a door. You know how when you're little you always think of all the exciting ways you might die.

DAKOTA: No. I didn't ever do that. That's crazy. Let's talk about something else.

BRETT: Dogs.

DAKOTA: Dogs?

BRETT: I'll miss my dogs. I have two of them ... Bob and Bob.

DAKOTA: You named both your dogs Bob?

BRETT: That way when I want them to come I only have to remember one name.

DAKOTA: Oh. (*sits*) Makes sense.

BRETT: You got one? A dog?

DAKOTA: Yeah. I used to.

BRETT: What was his name?

DAKOTA: Zippy. Zippy the dog.

BRETT: You named him after your job?

DAKOTA: No. Just a coincidence.

BRETT: Do you miss him?

DAKOTA: You mean right now?

BRETT: Yeah. Do you miss your puppy?

DAKOTA: Right now I'd probably eat him. I'm starving.

BRETT: That's terrible! You'd eat your very own dog?

DAKOTA: Not all of him. Not all at once. I mean, I'd have to make him last for a few days, you know.

BRETT: I'm not speaking to you anymore.

DAKOTA: Fine with me. So who else you gonna talk to? That shark?

BRETT: That what?



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