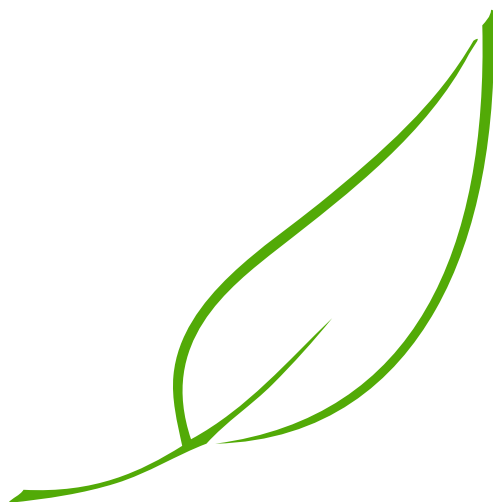


THE FOUR-IN-ONE

by Ken Bradbury



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Characters: Lucy, Ethyl, Rhoda, Karol.

ETHYL: Four shows? Are you crazy?

LUCY: Okay, I got confused.

RHODA: Four shows! Where are we gonna get shows?

LUCY: Look, they said they wanted a program for little kids. I thought they wanted some little play and hey, we're actors. We've done plays.

MARY: Four?

LUCY: I misunderstood the lady. I thought she was asking for a four-minute play.

KAROL: Lucy, we've only got one show. One. Count 'em. The kids are out front waiting for four.

ETHYL: (*beginning to exit*) Then I'm out the back door in one.

LUCY: (*catching her as she exits*) Hold it! Hold it! We can do this, girls! We'll just ...

KAROL: Yeah?

LUCY: We'll just ... you know ...

RHODA: What?

LUCY: I know! We'll just change it a little!

ETHYL: The curtain's opening. Lucy, the curtain's opening! Whatta we do?

LUCY: Our show! Do it like we planned. The short version. (*suddenly seeing the audience as the curtain opens*) Hello, boys and girls! (*looks to the others who are frozen*) Places! Quick! (*they move*) We're so happy to bring your our little play for your Happy Ho-Ho Fun Day! The title of today's first show ...

ETHYL: "Only" show...

LUCY: (*to Ethyl*) Quiet, Ethyl! (*to the audience*) is ... The Three Little Pigs! Action!

KAROL: (*as she, Ethyl, and Karol huddle*) Oh, gee! The wolf has blown down my house of straw!

RHODA: And he blew up my stick condo!

ETHYL: It's a good thing we've got my house of bricks! Come! Let us hurry inside!

THE THREE: (*as they hurry in small steps*) Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry.

LUCY: (*as the wolf*) I think I smell pigs inside that brick house! I think I shall huff and I shall puff and I shall blow their house down! (*takes a huge breath and blows as the pigs squeal in fear ... then another ... then another*) My, my! These brick homes are well built! I know! I shall climb down their chimney!

KAROL: (*as Ethyl and Rhoda mime building a fire and Lucy begins to "climb" to the top of the house*) So, the three little pigs quickly built a fire in the fireplace.

ETHYL: Could use some help here!

KAROL: I'm narrating! And when the big, bad wolf came tumbling down the chimney he fell right into their boiling pot!

LUCY: Yeowee!

KAROL: And they ate him!

LUCY: (*as Ethyl bites on her arm*)

ALL: (*hitting a dramatic pose*) Ta-Da!

ETHYL: (*as the four girls continue to smile broadly and hold their pose*) Okay, Wolfie, now what?

LUCY: Uh ... same story ... Just different.

RHODA: What the heck does that mean?

LUCY: Just follow me. (*to the audience*) And now boys and girls! The Three Little Pigs ... uh ...

ETHYL: ... yeah?

LUCY: ... in Texas!

RHODA: What?!

LUCY: Ride, piggy! Ride! (*And the three pigs hop on their imaginary ponies and begin riding*)

RHODA: (*chewing and spitting with the other two as they ride their ponies*) You know partner, it was a shame what old Billy-the-Wolf did to your little sagebrush hacienda.

KAROL: Yeah, and when that no-good side-windin' pork-stabbin' sucker blew the puddin' out of your adobe hut I was mighty perturbed.

RHODA: Mighty perturbed.

ETHYL: Mighty perturbed.

ALL THREE: Yep. (*they all spit in unison*)

ETHYL: Let's mosey on over to my granite shack! Hi-ho, pork chops! Away! (*the three "ride" into Ethyl's granite shack*)

THE THREE: (*in unison*) Gallop, gallop, gallop.

LUCY: (*as bad-dude Wolf, turning to face audience, bow-legged, wiping nose with forearm, and with but one squinty eye*) Dern! I declare I smell sausage! (*sniffs*) And I think it's comin' from that-there rock house. I b'leive I'll jist give 'er a good blow and gobble me up some breakfast sausage. (*Lucy blows, the pigs huddle in fright ... again ... then again*) Dern! That is one hard rock café! I guess I'll just scramble on up to the rooftop and see what's cookin'!

KAROL: (*Lucy climbs and the pigs build a fire*) So that mangy good-for-nothin' snake-in-the-grass wolf climbed himself up to the roof and commenced down the chimney when ...

ETHYL: Wanna lend a hand, you shiftless pig!

KAROL: Shut your snout, Piggy Sue ... I'm-a spinnin' a yarn. (*to the audience*) That mangy wolf fell right into the pigs' cookpot and they commenced to chowin' down.

THE THREE: Barbecue!

LUCY: (*as the two pigs gnaw on her*) Yeeowwy!

ALL THREE: (*striking an ending pose*) Ta-Da!

ETHYL: (*still in her frozen finale pose, smiling broadly like the other three*) Okay ... let's get outa here while they're smiling.

LUCY: That's only two. We promised four.

RHODA: You gotta be kiddin'.

LUCY: Thank you, boys and girls! Thank you! And now for a very special story: The Three Little Pigs ... uh ...

ETHYL: What? What?

LUCY: America's Hottest New Game Show! The Three Little Pigs in "Betcha Can't Blow My House Down!" (*to Rhoda*) Go!

RHODA: Huh?

LUCY: Here's your host ... Pig Martindale!

RHODA: (*fast talking, always-smiling game show host*) That's right, Biff! And here are our two lucky contestants! From



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FOUR IN ONE

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