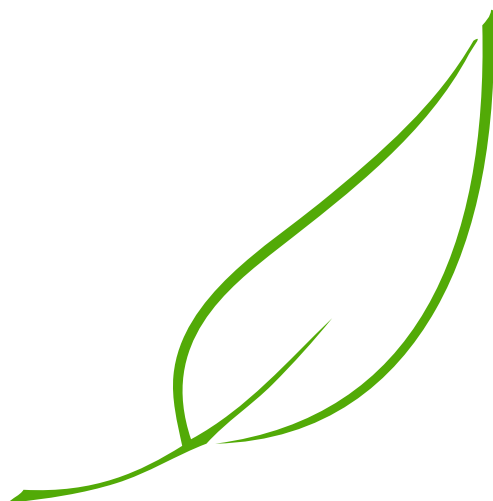


A SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT

by Ken Bradbury



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A SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT**by Ken Bradbury*****Cast: Sidney, Riley, Quinn***

Scene: A table serves as a counter with two chairs at the side. Quinn is busying himself at the counter.

SIDNEY: (*entering*) Oh ... hello.

QUINN: Good morning! Could I help you?

SIDNEY: I'm just waiting ... you know ... while they work on my car.

QUINN: Ah! Steering? Tires?

SIDNEY: Yeah. Pretty much all that. Everything needs adjusting.

QUINN: Ah! It does. It truly does ... everything needs adjusting.

SIDNEY: I've, uh ... I've never seen this department before. I've been to the brake adjustment place and the wheel adjustment. Is this new?

QUINN: Yes, yes. And already it's our most popular adjustment department.

SIDNEY: No kidding. What do you do here?

QUINN: Attitude.

SIDNEY: Excuse me?

QUINN: Attitude adjustment. We adjust your attitude.

SIDNEY: You're kidding.

QUINN: That's a strange attitude. You want an adjustment?

SIDNEY: I mean ... I mean you adjust people's ... you know ... attitudes?

QUINN: Some folks say it's changed their lives. We even have regular A-A meetings.

SIDNEY: A-A?

QUINN: Attitude Adjustment. Want to sign up?

SIDNEY: Well ... I don't know ... I've always thought I had a pretty good attitude.

QUINN: Sure. You say that now.

RILEY: (*entering ... a rather slovenly mechanic, prone to a great deal of scratching and slouching*) You Sidney?

SIDNEY: Yes. Is my car done?

RILEY: Got a problem.

SIDNEY: I hate those words.

RILEY: Your brakes. Pretty bad. Need major adjustment.

SIDNEY: What's it gonna cost? (*Riley shows him a piece of paper*) What? That much! Good grief! That's terrible! I had no idea that ...

QUINN: Sit down.

SIDNEY: What?

QUINN: Just sit down. Calm down a minute and listen to me.

SIDNEY: (*sitting*) But did you see what it's going to cost to adjust my brakes?

QUINN: Work with me, okay? (*sits beside Sidney*) You have kids?

SIDNEY: Two. Oscar and Mabel.

QUINN: Ah ... great names. I'll bet they're pretty special to you.

SIDNEY: You kidding? They're my whole life!

QUINN: Let's say you're approaching a train crossing ...

SIDNEY: What's this got to do with ...

QUINN: Work with me. Work with me, Sidney. As you approach the crossing with little Oscar and Margaret ...

SIDNEY: Mabel.

QUINN: Mabel ... with little Oscar and Mabel riding along with you, singing songs ... on the way to the park, the sun shining ... then suddenly you see the gates come down on the train crossing.

SIDNEY: There's a train coming!
(*Quinn nudges Riley*)

RILEY: Whooo! Whooo!

QUINN: Sharp boy! There's a train coming. What do you do?

SIDNEY: I ... well, I stop and let the train go by ...

QUINN: But your brakes ... your brakes need adjusting ... you can't stop. Riley!

RILEY: Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding!

SIDNEY: No!

QUINN: Maybe.

SIDNEY: I've got to get those brakes fixed!

QUINN: Fix the brakes, Riley. *(Riley scratches and exits)*

Well done, my friend! Your family is safe! You're their hero!

SIDNEY: Wow! That's great! Thank you!

QUINN: All you needed was a bit of attitude adjustment.

SIDNEY: What a great service!

QUINN: We've found it to be quite helpful. Life is more than gears and transmissions.

SIDNEY: It certainly is.

RILEY: *(entering)* Got a problem.

SIDNEY: Now what?

RILEY: Gears and transmission. You're leakin' oil pretty bad.

SIDNEY: But it's practically a new car! *(Riley shrugs)* How much will it cost to ... *(Riley shows him/her a paper)* Oh, my gosh! That much? That's awful!

QUINN: You like vacations, Sidney?

SIDNEY: Yeah, we take one every summer, but what does that ...

QUINN: The mountains? Colorado? The Grand Canyon?

SIDNEY: That's our favorite. We're going again this summer.

QUINN: Ah! Excellent! Excellent! You are truly a wonderful father. Lots of steep roads in the Rockies.

SIDNEY: Oh, yeah. Up and down and ... it's gorgeous.

QUINN: And dangerous. Right, Riley?

RILEY: Yep. Dangerous.

QUINN: I can just imagine the fun you'll have. "Oh look, Daddy! A mountain!" *(Quinn nudges Riley)*

RILEY: *(with very little enthusiasm)* "This is really fun. Whee."

SIDNEY: I love the mountains!

RILEY: Me too.

QUINN: You're just heading down Pike's Peak after a wonderful day of playing in the snow, drinking hot chocolate,



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