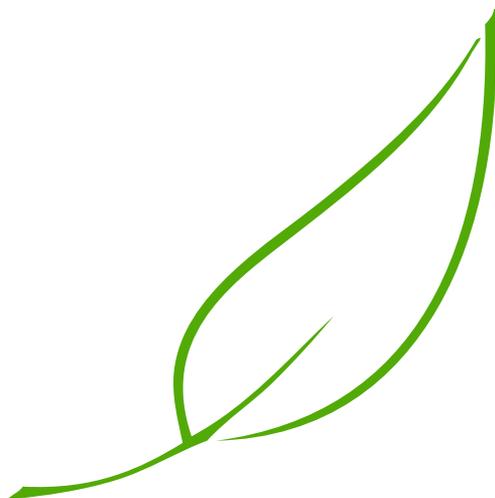


THE GRANNY BOX

by Ken Bradbury



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A scene for four girls: Lydia, Cleopatra, Eve and Annie Oakley

LYDIA: What a lousy week. I didn't make the dance team, my friends all hate me, I broke up with a guy, then my best friend ... my grandma moved to Florida. Life stinks. (*She sits.*) And now Mom says, "Clean up your room if you want to go to the movie tonight." Great. (*looking around*) I don't know where to start with this mess. (*sees something on the floor*) What's this? (*picks up an imaginary box*) "Dear Lydia, since I'm moving away ... and I love you very much ... I thought I'd leave you with this little present." (*smiles*) Oh Grandma ... only you. Face it, you're weird, but I love you. (*reading again*) "I know that life gets tough sometimes so I've left a few friends to help you along." (*again, smiling*) I have the only grandmother in the world who drives a Harley and has birthday parties for her cats. Heck, I'll clean the room later. Let's see what weird stuff Grandma left me. (*as she opens the packaging*) For my last birthday she gave me a harmonica ... said to play it in math class when I got stuck for an answer. The teacher didn't agree. (*The box is open. She stares into it.*) Nothing. My grandma gave me an empty box. You've out-weirded yourself this time, Granny.

CLEO: (*entering, waving away the smoke in the air, coughing*)

LYDIA: Wha ... ? Who are you? What are you doing here?

CLEO: I'm choking. Can't you see that? And what are you doing in my throne room?

LYDIA: Throne room?

CLEO: Bow down in the presence of the Queen!

LYDIA: What?

CLEO: I said, "Bow down!!" (*Lydia immediately drops to her knees.*) That's better.

- LYDIA:** (*still bowed*) What am I doing?
- CLEO:** You're bowing down to Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt!
- LYDIA:** (*raising her head up*) You're kidding.
- CLEO:** Queens don't kid. Down! Down! Bow down to the Queen!
- LYDIA:** (*bowing again*) Okay! Okay! But what are you doing in my bedroom?
- CLEO:** Bedroom? This is my throne room! And what are you doing here? Oh, get up for goodness sakes.
- LYDIA:** (*rising*) I was just opening this box from my grandma and ...
- CLEO:** Granny! You know Granny! Wonderful woman!
- LYDIA:** You know my grandma?
- CLEO:** Know her? We've been friends for years. She used to read about me when she was just a little girl. Have you seen my scepter?
- LYDIA:** Scepter?
- CLEO:** My rod ... my staff ... my Queen stick. I feel naked without it.
- EVE:** (*entering*) Someone call me?
- LYDIA:** Oh my gosh!
- CLEO:** Hello sweetheart. Lydia, this is my friend Eve. The first woman ever created.
- LYDIA:** Adam's wife?
- EVE:** We were never officially married but we had a good matchmaker. So who opened our box?
- LYDIA:** Uh ... I did. Look, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to ... I don't know ... wake you ladies up.
- EVE:** Don't worry. Hanging around in a magic box for a couple of thousand years gets cramped.
- LYDIA:** You're wearing ...
- EVE:** Fig leaves. I have fig leaves. These are winter leaves. It's not like I don't have a wardrobe. I have to be careful because the spring leaves are so tiny. Takes careful placement.
- CLEO:** So what's your problem, child?
- LYDIA:** Problem?

- CLEO:** Your granny kept us inside that box to help you out after she'd gone. She really likes you, you know that?
- LYDIA:** Help me?
- CLEO:** Oh please, you're among friends. We could hear you talking to yourself when we were in the box.
- LYDIA:** Okay ... this is weird, but here goes. My friends at school ... I just can't do anything to please them. They form these little ... I don't know ... cliques. For no reason they just don't talk to you.
- EVE:** And there's one girl who's sort of the boss, right? ... who decides who's in and who's out?
- LYDIA:** Wow! How did you know?
- EVE:** Sweetheart, that's been going on for thousands of years. Back in the Garden of Eden? The monkeys had the same problem. They were always bullying the groundhogs.
- LYDIA:** No kidding?
- CLEO:** And Egypt! You know who knocked the nose off the Sphinx?
- LYDIA:** A bully?
- CLEO:** Yep. Ramses the IV. Ramses the Stink-O, we called him.
- ANNIE:** (*entering in a bluster of coughs and choking*) Outta my way! Outta my way!
- LYDIA:** Who are you?
- ANNIE:** Annie Oakley! The roughest, toughest sharpshooter in the Wild West! Who do you want me to shoot?
- EVE:** Easy, Annie.
- ANNIE:** Let me at 'em! Let me at 'em! Somebody bothers you, little girl, they gotta answer to me! Anybody seen my horse?
- LYDIA:** You've got a horse in that box?
- ANNIE:** It's a lot bigger on the inside! You oughta see all the animals Eve's got tucked away inside and Cleopatra there brought the entire Egyptian Army!
- LYDIA:** (*reaching down to touch the box*) Wow! Right in this little box!



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