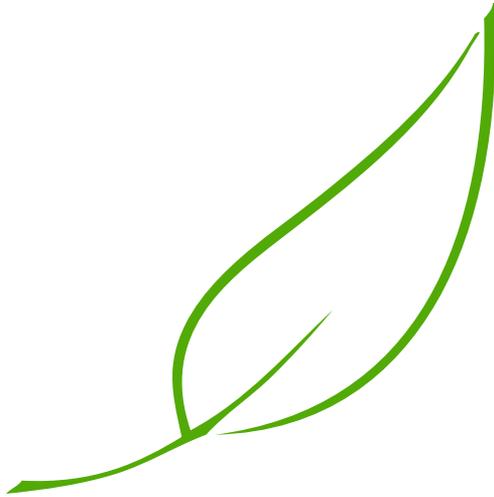


A GHOST OF A CHANCE

by Ken Bradbury



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KYLE: (*entering, stealthily...looks around then in a whisper*) Come on!

PETE: (*offstage*) No!

KYLE: Come on, Pete! You said you'd do it!

PETE: Changed my mind!

KYLE: You can't change your mind! I dared you and you promised!

PETE: So? I lied.

KYLE: (*grabs Pete into the scene. Pete ends up sprawled upon the floor*) Get in here!

PETE: Ouch! What'd you that for?

KYLE: We're in this together.

PETE: It was a stupid dare. I didn't mean it. I wanna go home.

KYLE: No way. You said right in front of the guys that you didn't believe in ghosts and haunted houses and I dared you to spend the night in one.

PETE: I don't believe in haunted houses!

KYLE: Then what's the big deal?

PETE: I didn't mean the Potter house! This place is haunted!

KYLE: You're an idiot.

PETE: I'm worse'n that. I'm chicken. (*a sudden start*) What's that noise?

KYLE: (*joining him on the floor*) I heard it, too!

PETE: It's a ghost, Kyle! It's a big, dead, mean ghost! We're gonna die, Kyle! We're gonna die!

KYLE: Calm down, Pete!

PETE: I am calm! You oughta see me when I'm scared!

KYLE: (*standing*) Heck, I ain't afraid. All that talk about old man Porter, it's just a bunch of stories.

PETE: You really think so?

KYLE: How he lived here all alone all those years and how he'd trick kids into comin' into his house then the next morning they'd find nothin' but the kids' shoes outside the door?

PETE: Kyle! Stop it!

KYLE: And those screams people would hear at night ... screams like little kids being boiled in oil and skinned alive ...

PETE: (*covering his ears*) I don't wanna hear it!

KYLE: (*grabbing Pete's hands and uncovering his ears*) How even after he died you could hear the kids screamin' at night!

PETE: I'm getting' outta here! (*he runs for an imaginary door*) It's stuck. Kyle, the door's stuck! It won't open!

KYLE: Yeh. That was a part of the story, too. He fixed the doors so they only opened one way. The way ... of the ... living ... dead!

PETE: I think I'm having a heart attack.

KYLE: You're too young to have a heart attack.

PETE: (*holding his chest*) It's my heart and I know when it's attacking! Look! My chest is moving!

KYLE: Your whole body's moving, Pete. That's because you're shaking so hard.

PETE: (*a start*) What was that?

KYLE: (*crossing to near Pete*) Sounded like ...

PETE: Yeh?

KYLE: Sounded sorta like ...

PETE: What? What?

KYLE: Like some little kid screaming for help.

PETE: Kyle!

KYLE: I want loud music.

PETE: Huh?

KYLE: For my funeral. What kinda music you want, Pete?

PETE: Stop talking about funerals!

KYLE: Real loud. 'Cause I know that everybody's gonna miss me a whole lot. They'll need loud music to cover up the noise of all the cryin'. What kinda music you want, Pete?

PETE: I don't want any music! I don't want no funeral! I just wanna get out of here!

KYLE: Well, we can't get out of here, Pete! The door's stuck and we didn't tell anybody we were sneakin' out tonight. Face it, buddy. We're gonna die here. You want lots of flowers?

PETE: Kyle!

KYLE: I do. Lots of ‘em. Like a big wedding, maybe. And I don’t want to wear a suit and tie. Don’t let ‘em put a suit and tie on me, Pete.

PETE: I’ll be dead, too!

KYLE: Oh, yeh. You’re no help. Way to go. Walk out on me just when I need you most.

PETE: I ain’t walkin’ out! I’m dead! (*a start*) What’s that?

KYLE: Probably old man Potter gettin’ up. They say he doesn’t wake up ‘til midnight ... then he goes to work.

PETE: Goes to work?

KYLE: Diggin’ up the dead bodies of the kids. They say he likes to look at ‘em when the moon’s full.

PETE: Is the moon full tonight?

KYLE: Like a big old wheel!

PETE: (*hysterical*) Kyle! I don’t wanna die! I don’t wanna die! You gotta get us outta here, Kyle! You just gotta!

KYLE: Well ... there might be a way.

PETE: What? What way? What’re you talkin’ about?

KYLE: I could climb on up the stairs, break a window, jump down to the ground and let you out.

PETE: Ain’t you scared?

KYLE: ‘Course I’m scared, but you’re my buddy, Pete. I guess I’d do about anything for you.

PETE: That’s awesome! You’d really do that, Kyle? I mean, you’d have to go right through the bedroom where old man Porter died!

KYLE: I know. It could be pretty scary ... but I’ll do it for you, Pete. I don’t wanna be responsible if your heart attacks you again.

PETE: (*falling to his knees at Kyle’s feet*) Oh, thanks, buddy! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

KYLE: (*silence as Kyle simply grins at him, then the grin breaks out into a full-blown belly-laugh*)

PETE: What’re you laughin’ at?

KYLE: You! Okay! It’s over! It’s a trick, Pete!

PETE: What’s a trick?



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