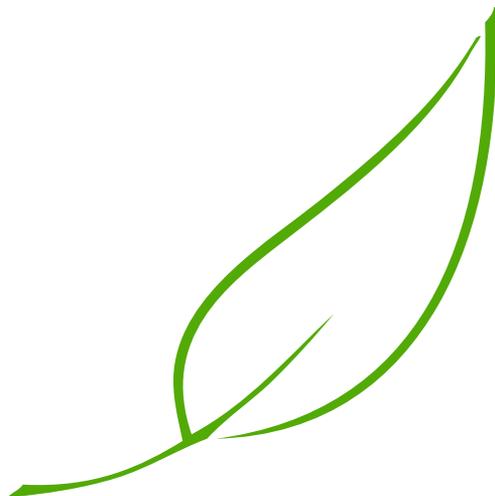


DO NOT DELETE!

by Ken Bradbury



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Cast: London, Sir Richard, Peggy

LONDON: *(a writer, sitting at a desk, center, typing on his/her computer) (as he types, he says aloud)* Act I, scene one. Well, that's a start. Now what? *(typing)* Sir Richard Taylor enters his study. *(Sir Richard enters)* He is a tall man *(Sir Richard stretches to his toes)*. He looks worried. *(Sir Richard knits his brows)* The weight of the world seems to be upon his stooped shoulders. *(Sir Richard nearly collapses from the imaginary weight.)* He says, "Whatever shall I do?"

SIR RICHARD: Whatever shall I do?

LONDON: My life is over.

SIR RICHARD: "My life is over..."

LONDON: He goes on ...

SIR RICHARD: My entire fortune lost in at the casino in Monte Carlo! My children have abandoned me! My wife hardly speaks!

LONDON: Lady Peggy Taylor enters. *(Lady Peggy enters on the opposite side of the playing area)*

SIR RICHARD: My dear!

LONDON: He cries ... but she hardly speaks.

PEGGY: I'm hardly speaking to you.

SIR RICHARD: But my beloved wife!

PEGGY: How dare you!

LONDON: She glares at him. *(she glares)*

PEGGY: How dare you lose our fortune! Destroy our lives!

SIR RICHARD: But my dear ...

PEGGY: Be quiet! I'm hardly speaking!

LONDON: *(groans)* Depressing. *(as he presses a button)* Delete! *(the two characters disappear, London thinks a moment then begins again)* Sir Richard enters his study *(Sir Richard enters)* He is elated.

SIR RICHARD: Oh, joyous day! Oh, heavenly rapture! Oh, bliss!

LONDON: Lady Peggy enters ...

PEGGY: *(happily)* Richard!

SIR RICHARD: Peggy! My pet!

PEGGY: You won!

SIR RICHARD: Millions of dollars and cars and furs and all with a single roll of the dice!

PEGGY: Oh joy!

SIR RICHARD: Oh, fabulous day! Calloo! Callay!

LONDON: Oh awful. (*pushing the key*) Delete. (*the two disappear. London thinks a moment, taps his fingers, scratches his head, then begins again*) “The study was strangely dark and foreboding as Sir Richard enters with trepidation ...”

SIR RICHARD: (*entering*) My, my. Seems especially dark and foreboding tonight. And I feel a bit of trepidation in the air.

LONDON: There is a foot step outside his study.

SIR RICHARD: Who’s there?

LONDON: But he does not hear it.

SIR RICHARD: Oh. Sorry.

LONDON: Another step ... he hears it. Richard approaches the door. (*Richard approaches the door*) His hand reaches for the knob ... (*it does*) ... He opens the door to find ...

PEGGY: (*entering, screaming and hysterical*) Richard!

SIR RICHARD: Peggy! What’s happened to you! Your ... your throat has been cut! (*Peggy dips her head to one side*) Your left arm is missing! (*Peggy hides her arm*) You’ve ... you’ve ...

LONDON: His throat chokes with horror...

SIR RICHARD: You’ve been having a really bad day!

PEGGY: (*screaming*) Richard!

LONDON: He gasps.

SIR RICHARD: Gasp!

PEGGY: Richard!

LONDON: She reaches her one arm to him!

PEGGY: Come to me!

SIR RICHARD: But you’re so ... well, you’re so bloody ... bloody!

PEGGY: The money!

LONDON: She screams!

PEGGY: (*screaming*) What have you done with the money?!!

SIR RICHARD: But your hand!

PEGGY: The money was in my hand! What did you do with it?!!!!

LONDON: Sir Richard looked down at the bloody knife in his own hand.

SIR RICHARD: Oh, dear.

LONDON: An enormous explosion is heard in the parlor! And ... and ... uh ... well ...

SIR RICHARD: (*to London*) What? What was it?

LONDON: I ... I don't know ... it just seemed like a good idea.

PEGGY: That's ridiculous.

LONDON: I know. Delete again.

SIR RICHARD: But ...!

PEGGY: Oh, let it go, Richard.

LONDON: (*pushing the button*) Delete! (*the two characters disappear*) (*again, the tapping, the thinking*) It's the location. Wrong location. (*typing*) "The setting is the Beach at Monte Carlo." (*typing*) "The sun is beginning to set on the ... uh ... west horizon. Sir Richard enters walks onto the soft sand in his white tuxedo."

SIR RICHARD: (*entering, sniffing deeply*) Ah! The smell of sea air! The satisfaction of a life well-lived! Darling! You must come out and see this glorious sunset.

LONDON: "Lady Peggy, dressed in a flowing white evening gown appears beside him."

PEGGY: Heavenly.

SIR RICHARD: Smell it?

PEGGY: (*touching her gown*) Yes, all silky and ...

SIR RICHARD: I mean the ocean.

PEGGY: I do. The sea. The sea beckons me back, Richard.

SIR RICHARD: We've never been here.

PEGGY: I was alone.

SIR RICHARD: That gown. It's quite lovely.

PEGGY: Yes. Goes well with the new arm, don't you think?

SIR RICHARD: Quite.

LONDON: This is so dull.

PEGGY: (*looking at London, stammering a bit then*) But Richard! Look! That waiter is carrying a live shark and he's heading right ...

SIR RICHARD: Shark? I don't even see the waiter.

PEGGY: (*aside to Richard*) Get excited, you fool! He's about to delete us again!

SIR RICHARD: Oh, my word! A shark! And he's ... he's ... uh

...

PEGGY: Smoking a cigar! A cigar-smoking shark headed right toward my new arm!

LONDON: Stop that.

SIR RICHARD: With his large tentacles reaching for my neck!

LONDON: Sharks don't have tentacles.

SIR RICHARD: A very RARE tentacled shark! ... with spots!

PEGGY: Spots?



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