

# FAR AWAY

by Ken Bradbury



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*Characters: Burt, a harried clerk. Jeremy, a young man.*

*Scene: A lobby, far away.*

**BURT:** *(on the phone)* “Far Away.” Yeh. No, we’re still there. Haven’t moved. How far? Long ways. No, I’m not kidding. *(slams down the phone)* Why do people always think I’m kidding?

**JEREMY:** *(running in, breathless, collapses onto the floor)* Oh man. Man, that was a long way. *(looks up, sees Burt for the first time)* Oh. Sorry. Am I ... I mean, is this your place?

**BURT:** I work here. Do something for you, kid?

**JEREMY:** Yeh. No. I mean, I don’t think so. I’m just sort of ... you know ... passing through.

**BURT:** To where?

**JEREMY:** I don’t know. Somewhere.

**BURT:** Great place. Been there before?

**JEREMY:** I was ... you kidding me?

**BURT:** No. You kidding me?

**JEREMY:** I ... Look, how do I get out of here?

**BURT:** Depends. Where you going?

**JEREMY:** I already answered that.

**BURT:** Not very well. You said you were going “Somewhere” then you didn’t want to go to “Somewhere.” I got no patience, kid. Just move along ... and pick up your candy bar. *(Jeremy picks up an imaginary candy bar and stuffs it into his pocket.)* I run a clean place.

**JEREMY:** *(begins to leave, then stops)* Where ... I mean, where exactly am I?

**BURT:** You came here. Don’t you know?

**JEREMY:** No. I just wanted to get far away.

**BURT:** Then, you got there.

**JEREMY:** What?

**BURT:** That’s where you are. “Far Away.”

**JEREMY:** You nuts?

**BURT:** Yeh. For talkin' to you. Now unless you got business here ...

**JEREMY:** (*begins to exit again*) I'm goin'... (*stops*) What'd you just say?

**BURT:** I said unless you got business here ...

**JEREMY:** Before that. Where am I?

**BURT:** "Far Away."

**JEREMY:** That's crazy.

**BURT:** There you go again. Look, I don't have to take this. I got a job to do.

**JEREMY:** What? What's your job?

**BURT:** I work the check-in desk.

**JEREMY:** Check-in? This is a hotel?

**BURT:** Does it look like a hotel?

**JEREMY:** Where is it?

**BURT:** "Far Away. "

**JEREMY:** I know that. But where?

**BURT:** "Far Away."

**JEREMY:** Far away from where?

**BURT:** Everywhere?

**JEREMY:** That's crazy.

**BURT:** There you go again.

**JEREMY:** I mean, far away isn't a place! It's ... you know ... it's far away.

**BURT:** Yep. Welcome.

**JEREMY:** I'm gettin' out of here. What's that place way over there?

**BURT:** (*looks*) Oh. That's "Far-far Away."

**JEREMY:** Huh?

**BURT:** It's farther away.

**JEREMY:** Than Far Away?

**BURT:** Yeh. (*points another direction*) See that place over there?

**JEREMY:** (*looking*) Yeh.

**BURT:** That's "Not Quite So Far Away."

**JEREMY:** You are really cr----- ...

**BURT:** Don't start. I really don't have to listen to some kid calling me crazy. At least I know where am.

**JEREMY:** Okay. You're so smart, where'd I come from?

**BURT:** (*moves around him, looking him over*) I'd guess ...  
"Near By. "

**JEREMY:** Huh?

**BURT:** Actually, that was a trick answer. Everybody comes from "Nearby." Unless they come from "Real Close By." Of course, there's a few that come from "Practically There. "

**JEREMY:** You're confusing me.

**BURT:** Good. So why'd you come here?

**JEREMY:** None of your business.

**BURT:** I know. So humor me.

**JEREMY:** Okay, I got mad at my folks and I ran away.

**BURT:** And where'd you tell 'em you were going?

**JEREMY:** Far away. (*he stops, looks at Burt*) Now wait a minute!

**BURT:** You're here! "Far Away!"

**JEREMY:** That's ridiculous!

**BURT:** I agree. You probably had good folks. You made a stupid mistake.

**JEREMY:** Look fella, that's none of your business! I had a little argument and I ran away and now I run into some nut who tells me that the place is called "Far Away" because it isn't as far as "Far-far Away" which is a long way from "Near By" and "Close By" and "Practically There!" I'm getting' out of here!  
(*begins to run off*)

**BURT:** Don't!

**JEREMY:** (*stops*) Huh?

**BURT:** Don't go over there.

**JEREMY:** Why not?

**BURT:** That's "Away."

**JEREMY:** It's what?

**BURT:** "Away." If you go that direction you'll be going "Away."

**JEREMY:** (*suddenly sits down and pouts a bit*) I give up. First I run away from home and now I'm going completely nuts. Like you.

**BURT:** (*sitting down beside him*) Can I give you a piece of advice?



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