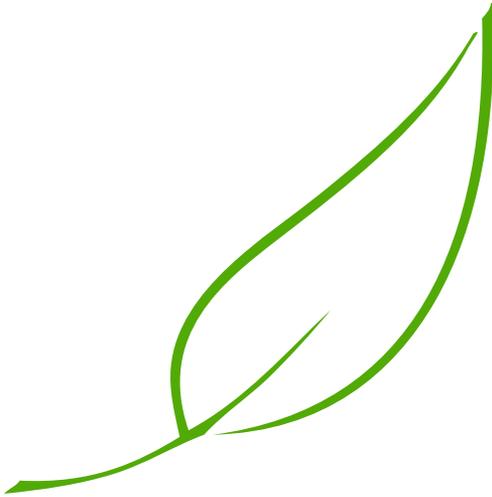


# VAGUELY FAMILIAR

by Ken Bradbury



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Two characters of either sex: Nevin and Park.

*(The economy class of a jumbo jet. Two chairs, side by side, facing the audience. Park sits in one of the chairs, reading.)*

**NEVIN:** *(entering, reading the overhead seat numbers as he moves down the aisle)* 27 ... 29 ... 31 ... 33A. I guess this is me. *(Park nods, smiles a bit, and makes room.)* *(putting away his bag in the overhead)* Long flight, I guess. Seems like I just got here. *(sitting)* They haven't made the seats any bigger, have they?

**PARK:** No.

**NEVIN:** I just took this flight yesterday.

**PARK:** Really?

**NEVIN:** Yeah ... L.A. to Australia. I think the seats are even smaller. Maybe that happens when you cross the International Date Line. Your seat shrinks. Am I talking too much? Just let me know if I'm talking too much. I do that when I get tired.

**PARK:** *(smiles)* No, no you're fine.

**NEVIN:** You got enough room?

**PARK:** Does anyone?

**NEVIN:** *(laughs)* No. Hey, you're okay. I'm glad that for such a long flight I've got somebody to sit with who has a sense of humor. You wouldn't believe some of the whackos I've gotten stuck with.

**PARK:** I'm not a whacko.

**NEVIN:** No, no ... sorry. Didn't mean to imply.

**PARK:** And you're going back today?

**NEVIN:** Weird, isn't it? Business. They needed somebody to hand deliver some important papers in Sydney so they fly me out here one day and back the next. That's a lot of hours in the air.

**PARK:** I can't imagine.

**NEVIN:** Oh, you get used to it. Well, I mean you've got that little layover in the Marshall Islands ... enough to get out and stretch your legs. You been to the Marshall Islands?

**PARK:** Yeah. Nice. Great restaurant there in the airport.

**NEVIN:** Hey! I stopped there, too! Those hamburgers with the pineapple? Not bad. Well ... hang on ... looks like we're taking off.

**PARK:** On time. Nice.

**NEVIN:** You know, this is a great job, but these long flights ... they take their toll.

**PARK:** I'll bet they do.

**NEVIN:** My mom ... she still worries about me. "You go up that much, some day you're gonna come down." I say, "Mom, I gotta come down. That's how planes work.

**PARK:** (*smiling*) Yeah.

**NEVIN:** She calls me right before we takeoff and right after we land. She says she can't sleep as long as I'm up in the air.

**PARK:** She's a nice lady.

**NEVIN:** She's getting older. Lives alone. Nothing to do but worry.

**PARK:** Too bad.

**NEVIN:** Oh, she's okay. I kid with her.

**PARK:** How long's she been divorced?

**NEVIN:** Oh, about ... How'd you know she'd divorced?

**PARK:** Did I say divorced? Sorry. Don't mean to pry. I ... uh ... guessed. Is she?

**NEVIN:** Yeah. Yeah. Divorced ... almost twelve years now. Look, if you want me to shut up, just say so. I know what a pain it is to want to just sleep when somebody's gabbing your head off.

**PARK:** No ... no, I don't mind. Helps pass the time.

**NEVIN:** (*grabs his leg*) Oh man ... that leg.

**PARK:** Still got the cramp?

**NEVIN:** Yeah, I ... How'd you know my legs cramp?

**PARK:** You just grabbed it.

**NEVIN:** But how'd you know it was a cramp?

**PARK:** Uh ... a guess? Is it ...?

**NEVIN:** Yeah ... it's ... uh ... it's a cramp. Can't stand up, though. Seatbelt light's still on. I hope they bring us something to drink. I'm parched. I think I've got an Australian beach in my throat. (*laughs*)

**PARK:** You like Australia?

**NEVIN:** Yeah ... not like I saw much of it. Nice place. Great hotel.

**PARK:** Yeah, the Starwood's nice.

**NEVIN:** I loved it ... they warm your towels ... I'm not kidding ... there's a towel warmer in every bathroom ...

**PARK:** But that didn't make up for the sink dripping all night.

**NEVIN:** Yeah ... nearly drove me nuts.

**PARK:** Good thing you brought your earplugs from New Jersey.

**NEVIN:** Yeah, I go no where without my ear plugs. No way I could sleep in some of those places without them. (*a long pause*) Wait a minute. Wait just a dog-gonned minute. How'd you know I stayed at the Starwood? And the dripping sink and the earplugs ... and New Jersey.

**PARK:** I guessed.

**NEVIN:** No way! What're you, some kind of psychic? Some sort of psychic freak?

**PARK:** Uh ...

**NEVIN:** I've gotta change seats. No ... maybe it's my medication. Yeah ... my medication.

**PARK:** Probably not. You quit taking it a week ago.

**NEVIN:** Oh yeah. I forgot ... Hey! Wait a minute!

**PARK:** Please ... don't shout. They don't like for people to shout on planes. It makes people nervous.

**NEVIN:** Nervous? You think they're nervous? What about me? I get on a plane and sit down beside a complete stranger who starts telling me my whole life story.

**PARK:** Look, I'm harmless. I promise. I have two kids, a mortgage and I vote Republican.

**NEVIN:** No ... no ... this is too weird. This is just too weird, buddy. You know that my mother's divorced, I get cramps in my legs, and now you have me staying at the Starwood Hotel. What's goin' on here? Do I know you?



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*by Ken Bradbury.*

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