

A FINE LINE

by Ken Bradbury



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(two girls, Rene and Jean, are riding in the back seat of a van)

RENE: I'm bored.

JEAN: You think you're bored? You should try ridin' to Colorado with you.

RENE: Some vacation.

JEAN: Would ja please get over on your own side of the car?

RENE: *(looking down)* I don't see any line.

JEAN: I just drew it.

RENE: When?

JEAN: Just now ... When you weren't lookin'.

RENE: That's ridiculous. We can't take a vacation all the way to Colorado with a stupid line down the middle of the back seat!

JEAN: Why not?

RENE: What if I fall asleep and fall over it?

JEAN: Then you lose the game.

RENE: What game?

JEAN: The game that says you gotta walk the rest of the way on foot!

RENE: I'm gonna tell dad.

JEAN: You can't. He said we couldn't talk to him 'til we got to Kansas.

RENE: That's two days away!

JEAN: You got it, Toto.

RENE: You mean I've got to sit in the back seat of this van all the way to Colorado, not talkin' to dad or mom and balancin' on one side of some stupid, imaginary line?

JEAN: *(singing)* "Somewhere ... over the rainbow ..."

RENE: Oh, I give up. Out of all the families in all the world, they had to give me you for a sister.

JEAN: Wanna play a game?

RENE: “Choke your sister?”

JEAN: No. I mean one of those stupid car games that parents make up to pass the time so their children won’t end up in jail.

RENE: You play the game. I’ll take prison.

JEAN: Come on, Rene! Let’s try it!

RENE: Okay. What’s your stupid game?

JEAN: Great. Now, the object is to see something that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Whoever sees it first gets to add an inch to the line down the middle of the back seat.

RENE: I may bust with fun.

JEAN: (*looking out the window then shouting*) **Apple!** (*draws her imaginary line with her finger over a bit toward Rene*)

RENE: Where?!

JEAN: Way off in that field on a tree behind the house. I’m surprised you didn’t see it.

RENE: You didn’t see any stinking ...

JEAN: (*again, out the window with a shout*) **Bulldog!** (*and again she moves the line over as Rene begins to get crunched*)

RENE: Wait a minute!

JEAN: (*again*) **Car!** (*again the new line*)

RENE: Jean, you’re just making this up!

JEAN: (*pointing to behind Rene*) **Dirt!** (*and again a new line is quickly drawn*)

RENE: (*complete frustration*) Oh!

JEAN: (*seeing something, then*) **Earth!** (*and a new line*)

RENE: (*pointing to herself*) **Frustration!** (*and she draws her own line as the following is a hectic series of supposed spottings and new lines drawn as Jean points out the window and Rene begins to point at Jean on each word she says ... this is all done very quickly*)

JEAN: Grass!

RENE: Hate!

JEAN: Interstate!

RENE: Jerk!

JEAN: Kangaroo!

RENE: Liar!

JEAN: Mountain!

RENE: No Way!

JEAN: Ostrich!

RENE: Preposterous!

JEAN: Kuala Bear!

RENE: (*sticking her finger in Jean's face*) Q!

JEAN: Quit it!

RENE: Rat!

JEAN: So?

RENE: This is ridiculous!

JEAN: Uh ...

RENE: Very good!

JEAN: What?

RENE: X-cellant!

JEAN: Z?

RENE: Come on, you got the last one? Z?

JEAN: Uh ...

RENE: Uhhh ... That's a U ... (*runs finger across the seat*) My line is coming to get you!

JEAN: uh ... uh ... uh ...uh ...

RENE: Here it comes! Rene owns the whole back seat!

JEAN: Zebra!

RENE: Where?

JEAN: It went right by the window when you weren't looking! Really. On roller blades.

RENE: Jean !

JEAN: Wearing a mini-skirt. Really. Would I lie to you?

RENE: Yes.

JEAN: You're right. Wanna play another game?

RENE: Let's just sleep.

JEAN: No way. I don't want to listen to you snore all the way to Colorado.

RENE: I do not snore.

JEAN: Hah! You're a buzz saw, sister! I mean the earth shook in the motel last night! At least a seven on the Richter scale!



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