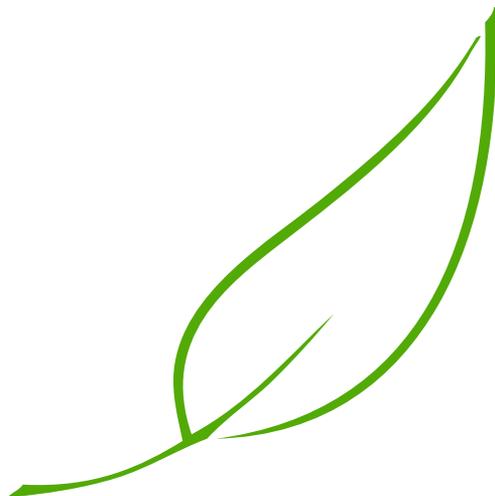


THE HAND OF A FRIEND

by Ken Bradbury



GREEN ROOM PRESS

greenroompress.com

Copyright Notice

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Green Room Press. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Green Room Press. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Green Room Press. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Green Room Press.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: *Produced by special arrangement with Green Room Press.*

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Green Room Press.

THE HAND OF A FRIEND
by Ken Bradbury

THE HAND OF A FRIEND**by Ken Bradbury**

(2f) A scene for two girls, Brittany and Liz.

LIZ: *(enters, hesitant ... looks around, unsure ... then finally)*
Hello? *(a pause)* Anybody here? Brittany? *(moves to inspect these unfamiliar surroundings)* Hello? *(checks an imaginary address on a piece of paper)* It's the right address. Hey Brit?

BRITTANY: *(entering)* Liz! What're you doing here?

LIZ: This your house?

BRITTANY: Yeah, but ... How did ... I mean, what are you ...?

LIZ: I've never been here before.

BRITTANY: I know.

LIZ: You been sick?

BRITTANY: No.

LIZ: Four days out of school ... what's the matter?

BRITTANY: *(a long, embarrassed pause)* Look, I'll probably be there tomorrow. Why did you ... what are you doing here?

LIZ: You've been gone for almost a week, Brit. I thought maybe something was wrong. Besides ... I've never been to your place. Look, you're my friend, okay? I was worried about you.

BRITTANY: I'm okay. Really. You didn't have to come over.
Why don't we go outside?

LIZ: What's the matter, Brit? You're acting funny. *(looking around)* So this is your house. You know, real friends invite each other over more often. You've been to my house lots of times.

BRITTANY: *(gently moving Liz toward the door)* Hey, thanks for coming over, Liz. I mean that. That was really nice of you.

LIZ: What're you doing? I just got here. *(A long pause. Brittany does not know what to say.)* There is something wrong, isn't there? *(walking past her, back into the room)* You home alone? *(Brittany doesn't answer.)* This must be the ... what?

Living room? (*sees something*) Bed rolls. You sleep here ... in the living room?

BRITTANY: Three of us ... my two little sisters and me.

LIZ: Where's your bedroom?

BRITTANY: It's a small apartment.

LIZ: Then where do your folks ...?

BRITTANY: Mom's in the back room.

LIZ: What about your dad? (*Brittany shrugs.*) Your dad doesn't live here? (*Brittany shakes her head "no."*) I'm sorry. I'm not trying to be nosey, Brit. But we're good friends, you know ... and I don't know anything about your family.

BRITTANY: There's not much to know. Mom and us three girls. Can we go outside, Liz?

LIZ: You're embarrassed? (*Brittany nods.*) Hey, I don't care about any of this, girl. I mean, I care about you, but just because you sort of live ... you know ...

BRITTANY: I wish I could have friends over. I really do. Mom leaves for work before we're even up and I've got to get the two girls ready for school ... and sometimes ... sometimes I don't get to sleep at all. Mom has ... friends ... you know ... that come by and sometimes they keep me up all night.

LIZ: Hey, I'm sorry, kid.

BRITTANY: Some days I just can't come to school. I'm too tired ... and the girls' laundry and fixing their meals.

LIZ: You told anybody about this?

BRITTANY: You. And I wouldn't have told you if you hadn't just walked in here like this.

LIZ: I'm sorry.

BRITTANY: Maybe if I'd wanted you to know I'd have told you.

LIZ: Sorry.

BRITTANY: I'm not like you, Liz. At the volleyball game ... your Mom and your Dad and grandparents.

LIZ: I sit on the bench.

BRITTANY: And they cheer for you anyway.

LIZ: You're a starter, Brit.

BRITTANY: It doesn't do any good to be a starter if there's no one there to cheer for you. Look Liz, thanks for coming by, but I don't really want to talk about this.

LIZ: Too bad.

BRITTANY: Huh?

LIZ: We're gonna talk about it. I invited myself over so you're stuck with me, okay? Besides, you missed my birthday party. How come?

BRITTANY: Because everybody was bringing a gift.

LIZ: So? (*and it hits her*) Oh. I'm sorry. (*a pause, then*) That's terrible, Brit. You didn't have to bring anything.

BRITTANY: Yeah. That would have been great. (*a long pause between the two, then*) But thanks for asking me. Keep asking me. Maybe some day I can come. I want to ... I really do. That's what I'm afraid of ... that kids will quit asking me places because I don't have the money to go. It's not your fault, Liz. It's just the way things are. Maybe some day I'll get out of here ... my sisters will be old enough and I can live a different kind of life, but for right now ... well ... This is the way it's got to be.

LIZ: What can I ...?

BRITTANY: Nothing. There are some things you can't fix, Liz.

LIZ: But surely I can ...

BRITTANY: Nothing. Don't worry about it. It's my problem.

(*picks up a doll*) Brooke's doll. Brooke doesn't know ... she's the youngest. Poppy knows that something's wrong. She knows that the kids sometimes laugh at her because she's wearing my old jeans and tops. I try to explain to her but ... well ... it's worse when you're young. But Brooke ... you see, I try to buy her things so she won't feel different. I take my lunch money and buy her a necklace or bracelet or something. And sometimes I try to find enough to take the girls out to eat just so their friends will see them there. (*a pause, then*) I never want Brooke to know she's different.

LIZ: Brit, she's not. You're not.

BRITTANY: So what'd your shoes cost?

LIZ: Huh?



GREEN ROOM PRESS

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:

HAND OF A FRIEND

by Ken Bradbury.

*For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script,
please contact us at:*

GREEN ROOM PRESS, INC.
customerservice@greenroompress.com
www.greenroompress.com