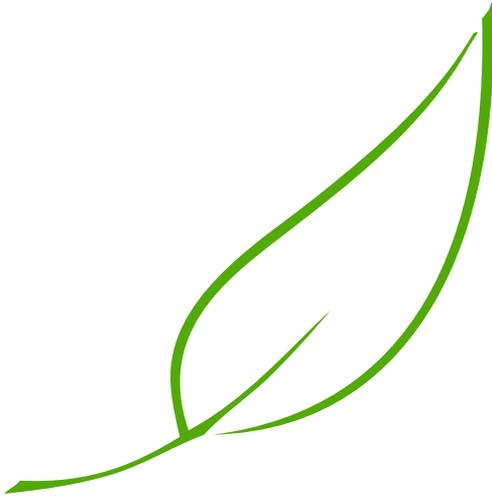


FIRE ME UP,

MAMA

by Ken Bradbury



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HONEY: (*entering*) I can't find it, Mama.

MAMA: (*offstage*) It's got to be there somewhere, Honey. Look under the fire batons.

HONEY: The fire batons are in the trunk, Mama. I think we left it at home.

MAMA: (*entering*) That's impossible. I never forget your tiara when we're going to a beauty pageant.

HONEY: Mama, do we have to keep doing this? I never win one of these things.

MAMA: Never win a beauty pageant? Have you forgotten 3rd runner-up in Miss Soy Bean of Iowa City?

HONEY: There were only four contestants, Mama.

MAMA: And what about Miss Congeniality at the Porky Days celebration? You won, darlin'! You are a winner if I ever saw one.

HONEY: It's the talent competition that always gets me, Mama. Why don't we skip the fire batons this time?

MAMA: The fire batons are your biggest asset, Honey! No other girl in the competition will be twirling fire batons lit with two gallons of Zippo lighter fluid! What on earth do you have against your fire batons?

HONEY: I keep setting things on fire, Mama.

MAMA: Oh that little incident in Peoria? Honey, those were cheap drapes and it wasn't your fault they weren't fire proofed. It was a real show stopper!

HONEY: It didn't just stop the show, Mama, it cancelled the show. They had to close down the Holiday Inn for three days. It was embarrassing.

MAMA: Honey, everybody's got to be known for something and you, Miss Fire Baton. When you start twirling those flames the judges' eyes just light up! I tell you, they absolutely light up! That lady judge in Kansas City said she'd never seen anything like it in her life.

HONEY: Are you sure that's what she said?

MAMA: It was a little hard to understand her behind all those bandages, but she surely appreciated us visiting her in the hospital.

HONEY: I heard her talking but I don't think that's what she said.

MAMA: What'd she say then?

HONEY: I'm not allowed to use that kind of language.

MAMA: (*searching the room*) Honey, that tiara has got to be here somewhere. I know I packed it.

HONEY: Mama, we've been on the road for almost seven months now. Can we go home if I don't win this one?

MAMA: Honey! Do I detect a bit of doubt comin' out of your mouth? Could it be that my darling daughter thinks she's a loser?

HONEY: No, I just want to go home sometime. I miss my friends.

MAMA: It's got to be here somewhere. (*seeing what she's looking for*) Aha! I found it!

HONEY: (*looking at the tiara*) Mama, do I have to wear that?

MAMA: You always wear a jeweled tiara in these contests. (*putting it on her head*) Gorgeous! Honey, you are just gorgeous!

HONEY: It's too heavy, Mama.

MAMA: You've worn that in every contest.

HONEY: But not since you added the sparklers.

MAMA: Oh, but it'll be worth it, Honey! As soon as you light your fire batons, I'll set fire to those Fourth of July

sparklers and you'll look like the Statue of Liberty coming out onstage!

HONEY: The Statue of Liberty doesn't have her head on fire, Mama. Remember what happened at the Indiana State Fair?

MAMA: I no longer use that brand of hair spray on you, dear. Besides, I put the fire out as soon as you went up in flames ... and it fit the music perfectly.

HONEY: I know. As soon as we got to " ... bombs bursting in air" my head exploded.

MAMA: You didn't get a scratch!

HONEY: It blew me against the back wall, right on top of Miss Fort Wayne!

MAMA: She was nice about it.

HONEY: I crushed her dancing poodle, Mama. The dog had to perform, "Way Back Home in Indiana" with a limp!

MAMA: That dog was a trouper. I'll give him that.

HONEY: Oh Mama, I'm just getting too old for this. I'm tired of queen contests.

MAMA: You're tired ... you're just a bit worn out, Honey. Just take a little nap and you'll come to your senses.

HONEY: Nap? The contest starts in ten minutes.

MAMA: A short nap, then.

HONEY: One more. Just this one more then we'll call it quits, okay?

MAMA: Honey! I have beauty pageants lined up for you for the next two years!

HONEY: I can't!

MAMA: What?

HONEY: I can't smile that long, Mama! It makes my face hurt!

MAMA: Nonsense! Are you wearing your Vaseline?



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