

DON'T NEEDLE ME

By Steven Verrier

Copyright © 2003 by Steven Verrier, All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-932404-21-X

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 Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. 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 Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

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 play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. 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 play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

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 Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

DON'T NEEDLE ME

by
Steven Verrier

NAT, a student (male or female) standing in line, notices a fellow student, BREN (male or female), far back in line.

NAT: Bren! Up here! Bren!

BREN: (**approaching**) What's up, Nat?

NAT: Won't you join me?

BREN: (**nervously, as nearly throughout**) No, thanks. I don't want to butt in.

NAT: We're not lined up for concert tickets. Nobody will mind if you come up here.

BREN: That's all right. I'll just go back where I was.

NAT: What for? (**addressing invisible others**) Does anybody mind if Bren butts in here? (**to BREN**) See? Nobody does. Come on. (**After some hesitation, BREN joins NAT in line.**) Since when are you so opposed to cutting in line? If we were at the cinema, I know for a fact you'd find a way up near the front in a hurry.

BREN: I just think we ought to act like adults today. This is serious business, after all.

NAT: *Serious?* Lining up in the school gym and ... (**looking ahead in line**) There goes Hilda McNair. She thinks she's so good her blood will come out blue. (**grabbing BREN**) Where are you going?

BREN: Just back to my place in line. I really don't want to butt in. (**beat**) Let go!

NAT: Only if you promise not to go back to where you were.

BREN: All right. I promise. (**tries to escape**)

NAT: (**grabbing BREN**) You promised.

BREN: I'm not going back where I was.

NAT: Where *are* you going?

BREN: To the end of the line.

NAT: Are you crazy? Look how long the line is already.

BREN: That's all right.

NAT: If you go back there, you'll be here all afternoon. It'll be an hour after school gets out, easy, before you get anywhere near

where we are now. Remember last time the Red Cross came to the school?

BREN: Not exactly.

NAT: Well, / do. I got stuck back in line like you, and it was nearly five-thirty before they finally let me go. That's why I made sure to get here early this time. We don't have to set foot in another classroom today as long as we're here, and if they get through with us early we're free to go home. Go back to the end of the line now, though, and you'll be stuck here nearly till supper.

(After BREN rejoins NAT in line, NAT pretends to jab a needle into his/her arm, then makes a loud sucking noise followed by an attempt at looking woozy.)

BREN: Stop it! **(beat)** Why do they take everybody behind that curtain? Why not do everything out in the open?

NAT: Because they wouldn't get any new donors that way. The first-timers would run away if they could see behind that curtain.

BREN: Why? What would they see?

NAT: Oh, *that's* it! You wanted to go to the end of the line because you've never given blood! Well, well, well. They'll be thrilled you came along. This tree's never been tapped. Eight pints of virgin blood just waiting to be –

BREN: Don't talk like that.

NAT: Oh, there's nothing to it. All they do is jab a spigot into your arm, fill up a bag, keep you lying down a bit, give you some juice and a cookie, then out you stagger like a drunk.

(They take a step or two forward.)

BREN: What's a spigot?

NAT: I don't know. It's like a chisel, I guess.

BREN: A *chisel*?

NAT: Just kidding. They use a drill.

BREN: No, they don't. It's just a needle. **(beat)** How *long* a needle?

NAT: **(indicating with fingers stretched to the limit)** Like this. You see, it's got to be long enough to go right through your arm so the blood can drip out on the other side.

BREN: Stop it. It drips into a tube.

NAT: How many times have you given blood?

BREN: Once.

NAT: I thought –

BREN: Counting this time.

NAT: Well, then, you'd better listen to me. Got a bullet to bite on?

BREN: No.

NAT: A cyanide capsule?

BREN: No. **(beat)** How does it feel?

NAT: Ever been stung by a bee?

BREN: Yes.

NAT: And you've eaten turkey, right?

BREN: Why?

NAT: Imagine being stung by a bee the size of a turkey.

BREN: Oh, come on.

NAT: Do you clot well?

BREN: What?

NAT: How's your clotting?

BREN: Okay, I guess.

NAT: You'd better not guess. If you don't clot, you'll rot.

BREN: Stop it. If you're tough enough to give blood, so am I.

NAT: It's not just a matter of being tough.

BREN: What?

(They take a step or two forward.)

NAT: Even notice all the green on this floor?

BREN: So?

NAT: You've seen *The Green Mile*, right?

BREN: What were you saying about not being tough?

NAT: Oh, you've got to be tough.

BREN: But you said –

NAT: I said being tough wasn't *enough*.

BREN: Well, what *is* enough?

NAT: I've been here enough times I can tell the nurse exactly where to put the needle. **(indicating)** This is the spot. I won't even feel it if the needle goes here.

BREN: **(pointing at his/her own arm)** Here?

NAT: I don't know about *your* arm. Tense it up. **(BREN complies.)** Tighter. Make a fist and squeeze. **(examining)**

Hard to tell. You can't even see the veins. In your case, it'll be a matter of trial and error.

BREN: *Error?*

NAT: You know, hitting a bunch of wrong spots before they get to the right one. That's what happened to me the first few times I gave blood. If you're lucky, once they hit the right spot you'll get a scar there and it'll be easy for them to find that place next time. (**beat**) Of course, if they keep hitting the wrong place first, you'll be full of scars and that won't really help you much.

BREN: How many times did they –

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from DON'T NEEDLE ME by Steven Verrier. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC
P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406
Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011
www.brookpub.com**