

## **Befriending Bertha**

**By Kerry Muir**

*Befriending Bertha is a play about a very shy girls who is befriended by a rather unusual boy one day at school during lunch time. The following monologue is taken from the opening scene in the play, which depicts their first meeting. Bertha (a girl of eleven or twelve) is sitting alone on the playground. Charlie (a boy of eleven or twelve with a wild energy) approaches her.*

**Charlie:**

Sip of soda?

*(Bertha says nothing.)*

Pickle?

*(Again, Bertha says nothing.)*

I seem to have frightened you.

*(Bertha shakes her head "no.")*

No?

*(Again, Bertha shakes her head "no.")*

Oh. Okay. Silent type. Good, we'll be great friends. You can listen, and I'll do all the talking. You know, for a girl of I would say, 11, or 12 years old you are abnormally quiet. I mean unusually quiet....I haven't said anything wrong have I? I mean, nothing to offend you in any way, shape, form, or size?

*(Bertha shakes her head no.)*

Or color? Or texture? Or luminosity?

*(Bertha looks pleasantly interested.)*

Yes, luminosity. You know...(he gives her the Webster's Dictionary definition) Containing a certain quantity of light, illumination or iridescence...the quality of glowing...sparkling, or shimmering...radiant, shining, aflame, afire. It's a good word...a very good word. There's others, many others you might like as well...maybe you'd like to hear some more tomorrow at lunch...at lunch again...that is, if you're not previously engaged.

*(Bertha smiles and nod's yes.)*

Okay...good. Um...Bertha...I gotta go back to class in a little bit...um...if my Mom or Dad asks me if I made any new friends today, can I just say that I made one real nice one...and her name is Bertha? Just so they don't think I bombed out on my first day, or anything, and spent it all alone...Could you do me that one favor?