

# Amusement

*(Scene: A typical teenager's bedroom, the afternoon. Matt sits at his desk, center stage, fretting over something on his computer)*

MATT: *(Typing)* And then... nah, that doesn't make any sense. How about... never mind, that's too sudden. Delete... Hey, how about this? *'Just then, a bear appeared out of nowhere!'* *(Sighs)* ...No. Man, this is hopeless! I have no idea how to write a play, even a five-minute one! God, what a way to ruin a weekend... *(He puts his head in hand in defeat)* *Augh, help!*

*Dextra enters, stage right.*

DEXTRA: So, what do you need?

MATT: *(Looks up in surprise)* Holy...! Who are you? How did you get in here?

DEXTRA: I'm Dextra, your muse! You asked for my help, so here I am!

MATT: You're... what? What's a muse?

DEXTRA: It's 'who,' not 'what'! We're the ones who inspire humans, obviously. You seriously don't know about muses? No wonder it's taken you this long to summon me.

MATT: Wow, uh... are you—

DEXTRA: Real? Mostly. You can think of me as a living idea, if you like.

MATT: Alright... so you're here to give me hand with writing?

DEXTRA: If you wish, or I can let you deal with it yourself. However, I'd feel better with your work placed in more... capable hands.

MATT: Hmm... Okay, sure.

DEXTRA: Wonderful! Before we start, though, I think we should focus on your life story.

MATT: My life story? Sorry, but I'm not doing an autobiography.

DEXTRA: No, not that kind of... here, look! *(She pulls a phone out of her back pocket, taps the screen, and displays it to Matt, who hesitantly gets out of his seat for a closer look)*

MATT: 'MattLife.doc'?

DEXTRA: It's one of my other responsibilities as a muse. It's far from finished, of course, but the way I see it, if you think life is *this* bad because you just don't know how to finish a five-minute play, then it's a good thing I'm here.

MATT: Well, I might have been a little dramatic earlier.

DEXTRA: Excellent, then! What better mood to be in if you're writing drama? Still, I think some perspective is in order. For artistic purposes, of course.

MATT: Oh no, what does that mean?

DEXTRA: Oh, nothing too extreme, just an extra snippet here and there. For example, let's say you're...  
(*She types out something on the phone*) ...An international pop singing sensation!

*Exciting cheering is heard from offstage.*

MATT: What the—

*A crowd of girls runs in from stage left and surrounds Matt, a pair of security guards in pursuit.*

GIRL #1: Omigod, it's him!

GIRL #2: He's *soo* cute!

GIRL #3: Could you sign my face?

GUARD #1: Ladies, please! Ladies!

GUARD #1: I'm sorry, Mr. M, we tried to stop them!

GIRL#1: I got his arm!

*Girl #1 and Guard #2 grab Matt at the same time and start dragging him off-stage, followed by the rest.*

MATT: Ahh, Dextra!

DEXTRA: Hold on... (*She types something again. As Matt reaches the edge of the stage, he is dropped, as the guards and girls disappear into stage left and Dextra puts away the phone.*)

DEXTRA: See what I mean? Some artists have it way worse off than you, if you think about it.

MATT: (*Brushing himself off*) I guess so. But what does this have to do with my play?

DEXTRA: Plenty! You see, the protagonist who gains new perspective on life via supernatural intervention is a common, yet infinitely successful pop-cultural trope! It can function on a level anywhere from that of *A Christmas Carol* and its derivatives—such as *It's a Wonderful Life*—to films like *Groundhog Day* and *Big*. People come for the premise but leave with the lesson!

MATT: Yeah... yeah, I guess you're right! But still, I don't really feel like spending a whole bunch of time on character development. Can't I just, like, write about a guy who drives a fire-breathing truck and fights demons instead?

*Dextra stands still, seemingly mortified.*

MATT: Dextra?

DEXTRA: (*She pulls out the phone again*) You know what? I think you should go with your first idea.  
(*She types out something, and a loud roar comes from offstage*)

MATT: What was tha—

*A large bear runs in from stage right.*

MATT: Ahh! (*He runs stage left, the bear in pursuit*) Bad idea! *Bad idea!*

DEXTRA: (*Shaking her head*) Some people have no appreciation for the arts.