

# Random Acts of Genius

(A Short Scene of Dubious Worth and Questionable Quality)

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### **Characters**

WRITER An erratic, yet talented, writer  
COMPANION A long-suffering, yet tolerant, companion/roommate/test-subject

### **Setting**

The shared common room of a two bedroom apartment, with an adjoining, bar-style kitchen visible. A dormant computer, (part of the COMPANION's territory), is unobtrusively positioned off to the side somewhere, while a more obvious, (and obviously recently used), pen and paper littered work area is prominently placed downstage. A comfy couch, or other such well-worn lounging nest, is present nearby.

### **Time**

Early to mid-morning. Any time of year.

### **Minimal Setting Options**

This piece could easily be performed black box, with nothing but a place to sit, a place to write, and a place to set the lurking computer. In such a case, the volume of the WRITER's rejected and/or unused papers can be increased to amusing levels.

Approximate Running Time: 5-6 minutes

*(As the scene begins, the WRITER, paper in hand, drifts pensively near the couch, caught lightly in the outer edges of his workspace's gravitational pull. The COMPANION, having been appropriated for the WRITER's audience, sits on the couch, digesting the WRITER's latest creative exploit, the presentation of which has apparently just finished. A peaceful, contemplative silence accompanies the 'lights up' or 'curtain rise.')*

COMPANION

That was beautiful.

WRITER

Yes.

COMPANION

What does it mean?

WRITER

Haven't the foggiest. But it struck me, like a comet from the blue.

COMPANION

It seems deep.

WRITER

I know. It does, doesn't it? No doubt the literary critics would hail it a stroke of genius.

COMPANION

Genius.

WRITER

Don't scoff. One of these days—One day—I'll be able to say, "I want to write about this," and I'll be able to sit down and spew out something like that on command. Then I'll be the master of my Genius. Not a slave to fickle Inspiration.

COMPANION

One day, maybe.

WRITER

'Til then, I'm condemned to spouting random acts of Genius, possessed of no practical purpose, which will one day, hundreds of years after my death, mind you, be enshrined by historians as the pinnacle of our times' literary ingenuity.

COMPANION

Pinnacle? Literary ingenuity? They're just random accidents—

WRITER

Random accidents of Genius. That's the important word. What?

COMPANION

Your arrogance astonishes me.

WRITER

I can't help it. You know, I can't. "Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye, and all my soul, and all my every part—"

COMPANION

Oh, for the love of—Don't start that.

WRITER

"And for this sin there is no remedy, it is so grounded inward in my heart—" Can't I get through it once? You're no fun.

COMPANION

It's not that I'm no fun. It's that you're tedious. You go quoting rubbish at the drop of a hat—

WRITER

Shakespeare isn't rubbish—

COMPANION

And you're so easily distracted, that by the time you've finished quoting you've forgotten why you started in the first place.

WRITER

That's not—that's true.

COMPANION

Yes, it is. And what are you planning to do with it, anyway?

WRITER

What? Oh... I hadn't thought that far yet.

COMPANION

Didn't think so. I suggest you get on with it, before it ends up in the recycling bin. Like last time.

WRITER

That last one was such a tragedy.

COMPANION

I know.

WRITER

Brilliant. Utter brilliance.

COMPANION

Yet not notable enough to be reproduced properly...

WRITER

Oh, don't remind me! My memory. So unreliable—

COMPANION

Reproduced properly...

WRITER

An utter sieve, incapable of retaining a single drop of intellectual water.

COMPANION

Proper reproduction.

WRITER

You're getting at something.

COMPANION

Preservation for posterity.

WRITER

That's unusually articulate for you.

COMPANION

Your neglected endeavor to preserve and propagate the lately birthed random progeny of your great, fickle inspired Genius.

WRITER

Beautiful... You're right! I must make copies. Here, have one.

COMPANION

That's your original.

WRITER

Right, write. Writing...

*(Copying 'random accident of genius' frenetically)*

Copies. We'll stick them everywhere. On the walls, on bulletin boards. On fences. On the trees, in shop fronts—

COMPANION

Why not just post it on the internet?

WRITER

Don't be silly. Nobody will ever see it on the internet.

COMPANION

Everybody can see it on the internet.

WRITER

Yes, everybody CAN see it. But nobody will.

COMPANION

And how do you figure that?

WRITER

Have you ever tried to find something on the internet?

COMPANION

All the time—

WRITER

Exactly.

*(Stops copying.)*

The internet is great for finding things you're already looking for. But if you don't know what you're looking for, it's useless. Who's going to spontaneously gain magical awareness of my Genius and know to search for it? No one. It'll sit there in some dark, digital corner, forgotten forever and eternity.

COMPANION

People find random stuff on the internet all the time.

WRITER

I can never find anything important on the internet. If it doesn't matter, I find it in a heart beat, but if it actually has substance—

COMPANION

Well, this doesn't matter, does it?

WRITER

What?

COMPANION

It doesn't matter. Not yet, anyway.

WRITER

Which means it's easy to find...

COMPANION

I can't believe I'm encouraging this logic, much less following it.

WRITER

I'll stick it on the internet, and people will run across it randomly, brightening their days and deepening their minds in direct, accidental opposition to their original purpose. Broadening their horizons, unbeknownst to, and in spite of, their original intents.

COMPANION

I'm not sure I'd go that far—

WRITER

An act of random serendipity.

COMPANION

I'm, uh, getting my coffee now.

WRITER

Beautiful symmetry! A perfect mirror to the unplanned impulse that first birthed it! Exquisite synergy! I like it!

COMPANION

I should've kept my mouth shut.

WRITER

I need a web page!

COMPANION

I really should've kept my mouth shut.

WRITER

Teach me how to make a web page!

COMPANION

Let me get my coffee first.

(Aside)

This is not going to end well.

*(Fade to Black)*

*FINIS*