

WELL WRITTEN

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By **Tim Larson**

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SYNOPSIS: In *Well Written* we are introduced to a psychologist. This doctor is no ordinary doctor, this doctor is responsible for helping all sorts of writers. He is known for helping authors deal with the peculiar sort of problems that accompany the profession, such as writer's block, neurosis, and crisis of self-esteem. As the play progresses, it becomes evident that not only is the doctor becoming more and more frustrated and discouraged with his job, but also that the writers he helps are ones who have already obtained a certain amount of literary status. Notable figures such as William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and Stephen King are dependent on this doctor. After a particularly frustrating session with Ernest Hemingway, the doctor decides to call it quits; however, one last patient bursts through the door, demanding the doctor's assistance. He reveals that he is "Anonymous," the author of an untold number of works. His problems are far worse than those that came before him, but through this profound ending, he, the doctor and all literary works throughout time are saved.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 MEN, 2 WOMEN, 1 EITHER)

DOCTOR..... Psychiatrist for wayward writers.
(341 lines)
MAN William Shakespeare. (33 lines)
HEMINGWAY Ernest Hemingway, the writer. (57 lines)
CHRISTINE..... Doctor's secretary. (67 lines)
ANONYMOUS..... Anonymous writer. (208 lines)
STEPHEN KING..... Stephen King, the writer. (11 lines)
JANE..... Jane Austen, the writer. (16 lines)

SET: It is a simple set with the action taking place inside a doctor's office. It has a large window and one main door to enter and exit from.

PROPERTIES

- Reams of paper
- Pens and pencils
- Manuscripts
- Ink Blots
- Large pillow
- Trash can
- Diplomas
- Folders

WORLD PREMIERE

VANGUARD UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

FEB 5 - 6, 2004

ORIGINAL CAST

Doctor	Rene Scheys
Anonymous.....	Edward Portillo
Christine.....	Heaven Peabody
Man.....	Adam Hurst
Hemingway.....	Ben Larson
Stephen King.....	Warren Doody



SETTING:

Afternoon. A small psychologist's office. In the office there is a desk with chair, sofa, coffee table, and an armchair. There are several filing cabinets. Behind the desk, the wall is covered with PhDs and diplomas as well as other certificates. There is a large view of the city which is surrounded by curtains.

AT RISE:

It is silent and there is a man lying on the couch and the doctor is sitting in the armchair. The room is very calm.

MAN: I've got nothing.

DOCTOR: Patience, you have to relax.

Man sits silently and tries to get comfortable on the couch.

MAN: I'm empty.

DOCTOR: You're not empty, you just need to focus.

MAN: I can't focus. It just drives me crazy. Why would people say that about me?

DOCTOR: Ok, just take it easy. Explain to me again what people are saying about you.

MAN: They are saying I had someone write for me. Can you believe that! Someone else write for me!

Pause.

DOCTOR: Well, did you?

MAN: Of course not! Don't be ridiculous! The idea that someone would write part of my work and that I would take credit for it . . . that's absurd!

DOCTOR: And what is it they say you didn't write?

MAN: The scene with the witches.

DOCTOR: Really? The scene with the witches?

MAN: Yes!! It's crazy! I put a lot of time and effort into the play. Where would people get an idea like that?

DOCTOR: There's no truth in it?

MAN: Doctor!

DOCTOR: It's a valid question.

MAN: Doctor, you think I would take someone else's writings?!
"Neither a borrower nor a lender be."

DOCTOR: As I recall you took that from a fortune cookie.

MAN: That was one time!

DOCTOR: Ok ok! Let's just move on, the play is already done and written so there is not much that you can do about what other people think. If you say you didn't steal it then I believe you.

MAN: Thank you.

DOCTOR: Ok, now let's get to the real problem. You didn't turn in your homework for today.

MAN: I turned in my paper!

DOCTOR: Will, you were supposed to have written ten pages for today. This is just a scribble of a stick figure with its arm on fire.

MAN: I couldn't think of anything. I tried but I'm just blank.

DOCTOR: Listen, you need to just open up your mind and write something new. Anything.

MAN: Yeah I know, I would but can't. I'm stuck.

DOCTOR: Relax. The key to breaking writers block is just relaxing, taking a step back from where you are, and seeing the whole picture. Clear your mind.

MAN: I can't clear my mind!

DOCTOR: Ok, it sounds like it's time for the *Five Step*. Do you have your pencil?

MAN: Yes.

DOCTOR: Hold it out and recite.

MAN: Ok . . . (*Holds out pencil.*) - - I am more of a writer than I was at one - - I am more of a writer than I was at two - -

DOCTOR: Breathe.

MAN: - - I am more of a writer than I was at three - - I am more of a writer than I was at four - - I am more of a writer than I was at five -
- sigh.

DOCTOR: And - - write!

MAN begins writing and stops.

MAN: It's no use. All I can think or write about is a stupid dream I had last night. It's haunting me.

DOCTOR: A dream?

MAN: Yeah it's driving me nuts.

DOCTOR: Great. Ok . . . If that's what you feel is natural to write, then write it.

MAN: But it's different from the other things I've written. I mean, it wouldn't make any sense. It was a dream.

DOCTOR: Dreams can make sense. What was it about?

MAN: Well, I dreamt that I was in a forest and that I had dirt all over my face. I spotted a small pond to wash it off in. When I looked into the water I noticed that it was hair. Hair, all over my face, and I had long ears. I looked like a donkey.

DOCTOR: Really?

MAN: Yes, and if that wasn't enough, these little fairy nymph things started to come out of the trees. They were every where! Nymphs!!! Next thing I know I wake up and I'm in a cold sweat.

DOCTOR: And you've had this dream before?

MAN: Several times.

DOCTOR: Hmmm - - (*Slight pause.*) Write it.

MAN: What?

DOCTOR: Listen to me. Write. It.

MAN: But it doesn't even make any sense. What is the donkey supposed to mean? Other than the fact that I'm an - - ?

DOCTOR: (*Interrupts.*) It could mean hundreds of things. It could be your subconscious letting out emotions it's forced to hold back. It could be anger, hurt, or even guilt. Just write it. Write what you feel.

MAN: But what about the story?

DOCTOR: Worry about the story later. It will come in time. You never know, it could turn out to be about anything . . . about a king, or people putting on a play, or star crossed lovers. This is the key: be true to yourself.

MAN: Be true to myself?

DOCTOR: Be true to yourself. If your dream is what is in your head, write it.

MAN: Be true to myself. That's good. I like that. Can I use that?

DOCTOR: If you write.

MAN: Fine. (*Sigh.*) I'll see what happens.

DOCTOR: Well how's it coming . . . ?

MAN: Shhh . . . (*Writing.*) . . . This is good . . . really good . . .
(*Stops and begins looking on coffee table for more paper.*) I need
more paper! What time is it!? I need paper. (*Shouting.*) MY
KINGDOM FOR SOME PAPER!

DOCTOR: Will, please - -

MAN: I should go before I forget this. Glorious day!(*Stands.*)I'll show
them who writes their own plays. (*Breath.*) I am more of a writer
then I was at one. I am more of a writer then I was at two. Thank
you, Doctor. I don't know how you do it.

DOCTOR: Just remember what I told you; when you can't think of
anything to write, write!

MAN: Thanks, doctor.

MAN exits.

DOCTOR: Thank you, Mr. Shakespeare.

CHRISTINE enters.

CHRISTINE: Well, he seemed awfully excited. Oh by the way, your
two o'clock called said he would be a minute late today.

DOCTOR: It seems like they just keep coming, Christine.

CHRISTINE: The schedule is pretty full.

DOCTOR: It's always "pretty full."

CHRISTINE: Of course it is, you're a writer's greatest tool.

DOCTOR: I just wish some of them could figure things out on their
own. They're like a bunch of five year olds.

CHRISTINE: But they're making progress with you.

DOCTOR: I don't know. They don't think. It gets so straining. I'm
getting tired.

CHRISTINE: Oh Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'm serious. I don't know how much longer I can humor
some of these people. I'm hanging by a thread.

CHRISTINE: Well Doctor, don't worry tomorrow is another day.

DOCTOR: That's what I'm worried about.

CHRISTINE: Here are those files you asked for. Ibsen-writers block, Sophocles-inferiority complex, Victor Hugo- too short, Chekhov-unrealistic. That should be all of them.

DOCTOR: Thank you, Christine. (*CHRISTINE waits and stares at the DOCTOR.*) Yes?

CHRISTINE: Sir, he is here again. He's waiting in the lobby.

DOCTOR: Hemingway?

CHRISTINE: He said it was "very important."

DOCTOR: Ah, yes. Very well, send him in.

CHRISTINE: Yes, sir.

CHRISTINE exits. DOCTOR goes behind the desk and begins sorting his papers and items. He grabs files and places them into the filing cabinet and cleans up his desk. Enter HEMINGWAY.

DOCTOR: Hello, Ernest.

HEMINGWAY: Thank you, Doctor, for seeing me again on such short notice.

DOCTOR: It's fine, we designated an extra half hour time slot for you every day now

HEMINGWAY: I really appreciate this.

DOCTOR: So, what seems to be the problem today?

HEMINGWAY: Oh, no problem, Doctor.

DOCTOR: (*Laughs.*) Now seriously Ernest.

HEMINGWAY: I am serious, Doctor. I just wanted to let you read some of my newest work.

DOCTOR: You're writing again?

HEMINGWAY: Sure am, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Since when?

HEMINGWAY: Since now. This is the masterpiece that finally gets those feminists off my back and me on top.

DOCTOR: Really?

HEMINGWAY: It's good.

DOCTOR: Oh, alright, let's hear it.

HEMINGWAY: Ready?

DOCTOR: Yes.

HEMINGWAY: (*Reads.*) She ran into his arms. The future was all that she could think about while in his arms. All that she could think about was how they would spend the rest of their lives together. It was safe in his arms while she was thinking about the future. They were in love. They would grow and sell flowers together in the future and be in love and hold each other in their arms. Her, her man, and the puppies. (*Pause.*) Well, what do you think?

DOCTOR: Eh.

HEMINGWAY: Well?

DOCTOR: It's - um - - well - -

HEMINGWAY: Yes?

DOCTOR: It's very - - insipid.

HEMINGWAY: Insipid?

DOCTOR: Yes.

HEMINGWAY: Meaning?

DOCTOR: Meaning - - it's sappy.

HEMINGWAY: Sappy? No, no, no. You just have to read between the lines, Doctor. Didn't you like the part where the girl breaks the man's heart because of her greed and lust for money? You can almost taste the betrayal.

DOCTOR: (*Very hesitantly.*) I suppose so.

HEMINGWAY: Why did you say it like that? You hate it, don't you? I knew it. It's all crap! I knew it! I knew it! I knew it! I knew it! What's wrong with me? I can't write anymore!

DOCTOR: Calm down, Mr. Hemingway. Now let's try to figure out what went wrong? Here. We are going to try a little exercise. It's called the Rorschach test. Maybe we can figure all this out. In this exercise I am going to hold up an inkblot and I want you to tell me the first thing that comes to mind when you see that picture.

HEMINGWAY: Ok.

DOCTOR (*Holds up picture.*) What do you see here?

HEMINGWAY: Old man fishing.

DOCTOR: (*Holding up another picture.*) Ok, here?

HEMINGWAY: A mountain, Kilimanjaro. It's snowing.

DOCTOR: (*Another picture.*) And here?

HEMINGWAY: A big bell. It's ringing for someone. I don't know who.

DOCTOR: (*Another.*) Ok, and here?

HEMINGWAY: A man that is drowning in a pool of books. Each and everyone one of these books is adding to a weight that is pushing down on him and crushing him slowly moment by moment. These critiques are written by hundreds of women from all over. They are filled with words of negativity and pessimism that the man cannot lift. These words are boulders too big for the man and the more he struggles to escape these female's ideas the more the demands build on him. The books are smothering him. More importantly these burdens that are created by females, these weights, these very weapons of destruction can be purchased at a local bookseller for the mere price of 9.95.

DOCTOR: I see. This feminist thing really bothers you doesn't it? Why?

Pause.

HEMINGWAY: Women.

DOCTOR: What?

HEMINGWAY: Women are an enigma.

DOCTOR: Why do you say that?

HEMINGWAY: Can't live with them, can't write about them. Are they ever happy?

DOCTOR: Are you asking me or . . .

HEMINGWAY: I can't figure out what they want.

DOCTOR: Slow down, slow down. What does this have to do with what you just wrote?

HEMINGWAY: I don't know. I just wanted to write for women so badly. So I started writing and this is what came out. Nothing but crap. I wanted to understand them. To get in their minds. It's not going to happen though.

DOCTOR: Ok, let's break this down a bit. Now, why is it such a big deal to you that you write for women?

HEMINGWAY: I don't know.

DOCTOR: You don't know?

HEMINGWAY: Well, it's not like women are a big deal to me.

DOCTOR shoots HEMINGWAY a look and recites file.

DOCTOR: Ernest Hemingway married four times, each marriage a failure, Mother was known to dress him in girls clothing as a child .

..

HEMINGWAY: That's not what I'm talking about. Ok, you want to know the truth? It's feminist literary criticism.

DOCTOR: Feminist literary criticism?

HEMINGWAY: Yeah. Women love them. Sometimes they read those critiques more then they read the person's work it's about.

DOCTOR: Ok?

HEMINGWAY: They tear apart every word an author writes in those books. Every detail ripped apart.

DOCTOR: So?

HEMINGWAY: So what happens if I get one of these feminists writing about mine? There is a good chance I may come out to look like a real jerk. Women will hate me.

DOCTOR: Women will hate you?

HEMINGWAY: Why wouldn't they?

DOCTOR: You really think they will hate you because of what some feminist writes?

HEMINGWAY: Sure.

DOCTOR: Is this why you stopped writing?

HEMINGWAY: Yeah, and then I thought about it for a while. I decided that I can't just quit writing because some women think that I'm too manly, or I don't know women, or that I'm sexist.

DOCTOR: Good for you.

HEMINGWAY: I know. So I decided that instead of letting them win by not writing, I would take all my stress and use it for my next book. You know, take those emotions and use them to create the perfect piece. The perfect story. Something those feminists couldn't hate.

DOCTOR: Used them in your book?

HEMINGWAY: I really worked on this. I put a lot of time into it. Well, this is what I got. Crap. Garbage. Literary excrement.

DOCTOR: Is that really it?

HEMINGWAY: Doctor, you're not taking this seriously. I don't want people to read what they say about me and hate me.

DOCTOR: And you think that if you write what they want they will like you more.

HEMINGWAY: I guess.

DOCTOR: Ernest, what do you normally do when you are having trouble writing?

HEMINGWAY: I go home, rest, take a walk by my house, and when I see something beautiful - - I shoot it.

DOCTOR: And this is what you did before with everything else you have written?

HEMINGWAY: Yeah.

DOCTOR: Ok, so go home and do it again.

HEMINGWAY: What? Why?

DOCTOR: Look, for some reason shooting beautiful things gets you in touch with what you know.

HEMINGWAY: Yeah, so?

DOCTOR: So boxing, alcohol, safaris, that is what you know. You need to write what you know. When you go shoot a gun that is where your genius comes from. When you drink too much and get in a bar fight, magic happens. When you hunt, greatness comes from it. Write those things. Write what you know. Everyone knows that.

HEMINGWAY: But when I write what I know the women get mad.

DOCTOR: Listen you can't please everyone. If you write what is true for you people will enjoy it.

HEMINGWAY: But women make up like, I dunno, half of the earth's human population.

DOCTOR: Yes half.

HEMINGWAY: So that's a lot of people to be mad. How do I make these women like me?

DOCTOR: How do you make women like you? You know what? *(Takes a deep breath, begins new tactic.)* Screw 'em! Who cares what they think. You said so yourself, they don't know what they want.

HEMINGWAY: But Doctor - -

DOCTOR: Look this is what you need to do. Go out with your buddies, get yourself some beers, and wait in the woods with the biggest guns you can find. The first animal that comes by, shoot it and fry it in a pan.

HEMINGWAY: Really?

DOCTOR: Go remind Mother Nature who's in charge. Grunt, wrestle, eat dirt!

HEMINGWAY: Yeah.

DOCTOR: Build a fire and burn stuff just to watch it in flames.

HEMINGWAY: Yeah! Oh - - But the feminists - -

DOCTOR: They're just jealous. They would probably just change their mind when you gave them what they wanted anyway. Let this masculine thing be your trademark. I mean, who are you going to listen to? Your instinct or women?

HEMINGWAY: Hmmm. You know that's what I thought. I knew that deep down inside. Someone needs to put these women in their place. If Adam would have stood his ground we wouldn't have been in this mess today.

DOCTOR: Sure.

HEMINGWAY: I don't know why I didn't just act on my gut feeling. I mean people liked the old stuff I wrote, right?

DOCTOR: Yeah.

HEMINGWAY: Why change it for some angry women, right? I mean, women, they just cry and have babies.

DOCTOR: (*Playing stupid.*) Ernest, you're right. I would have never thought of it that way. I mean the answer seemed so hard but you just figured it out.

HEMINGWAY: (*Confused.*) Of course I did. I don't know what you were so upset about, Doctor. It's all under control.

DOCTOR: You're right. I should not have made it into such a big deal. I apologize for taking up too much of your time.

HEMINGWAY: It's all right Doctor. Just relax next time.

DOCTOR: I don't know what I was thinking.

HEMINGWAY: I'm not gonna let some women boss me around. I better get on my way. I have to get back to my writing. I think I'll go for another one of my walks right now. Goodnight, Doctor.

Enter CHRISTINE. HEMINGWAY passes CHRISTINE.

HEMINGWAY: Hello.

CHRISTINE: Hi.

Pause.

HEMINGWAY: Stop controlling me!!!

HEMINGWAY exits.

DOCTOR: Sorry.

CHRISTINE: That's the fifth time he's had to see you in the last three days. He's driving me crazy in the lobby. Isn't he fixed yet? What's his deal?

DOCTOR: I wish I knew.

CHRISTINE puts files in cabinet.

CHRISTINE: I don't know how you do it. I could never have the patience you have for these guys. They never listen. They come back every day with the same problems. I wouldn't be able to take it. You're a good man, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: Here's your schedule for next week. Now, tomorrow your day is as scheduled. The only problem is that Faulkner called and rescheduled his meeting for 4:00. Prior to that, everything is the same. 9:00-Thoreau-He was wondering if you can come to the pond to do this; 11:00-Dickinson-apparently she won't leave her house again; Lunch with Dr. Suess-don't eat the green eggs; John Grisham had to cancel his 2:30 - he has jury duty; and now 4:00 Faulkner.

DOCTOR: Christine, I won't be coming in tomorrow.

CHRISTINE: Oh, ok, if you're going on vacation, I'll reschedule them.

DOCTOR: It's not vacation. I'm just tired.

CHRISTINE: Oh, you're sick?

DOCTOR: No. This is permanent.

CHRISTINE: Permanent?

DOCTOR: I'm retiring.

CHRISTINE: What?

DOCTOR: After today I will no longer be working in this office. It's too much for me. I can't do this anymore.

CHRISTINE: *(Laughs.)* - - wait you're serious. *(Pause.)* Are you ok?

DOCTOR: Yes, just fine. I just had a moment of clarity.

CHRISTINE: But Doctor, what about all the authors? What will they do?

DOCTOR: They don't listen. I'm not making a difference. I say things I don't even mean just to get them to react. Did you see Hemingway? He comes here twenty times a week and every time it's the same thing.

CHRISTINE: That's why they come to you, because they have problems they can't solve on their own.

DOCTOR: What's the point if my words go in one ear and out the other? They don't listen to me. Writers!

CHRISTINE: That is not true. You help every writer that comes through here.

DOCTOR: If that's so then why do I not see any improvement?

CHRISTINE: Just because you don't see the changes does not mean that you aren't making a difference.

DOCTOR: Look, I'm sorry I know that this is sudden but I just can't do this anymore. Someone else will be here tomorrow to take over for me. These people are stuck in their ways and need new young fresh ideas. I can't give them that.

CHRISTINE: How can you say that! Tolkien was about to do Choose-Your-Own-Adventure books when you came along. I mean, you've helped so many.

DOCTOR: "Helped" I believe that's past tense.

CHRISTINE: Well, what am I supposed to do without you - - to work for?

DOCTOR: Look, I would have told you sooner but it just came up. Now if you'll excuse me.

CHRISTINE exits. DOCTOR begins emptying his desk. He puts items in a small box. As he is doing this, he is singing to himself "Crazy" by Patsy Cline. He takes down all but one of his Ph.D.'s and places them in the box. KNOCK at door.

DOCTOR: Look Christine, we'll talk about this more later but now is not the - -

JANE: I'm sorry is this a bad time?

DOCTOR: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were someone else. Do you have an appointment?

JANE: I'm actually inquiring for the position that is available?

DOCTOR: Position?

JANE: Yes for that of the Doctor's.

DOCTOR: Doctor's? Wait, how did you hear about the position?

JANE: I suppose perhaps by telegram?

DOCTOR: What do you mean "perhaps"? Who are you? How did you know there was an opening?

JANE: The name is Madam Austen, and to be quiet honest, I felt it in my heart to enter here.

DOCTOR: Ok, you just felt that this would be a good place to go?

JANE: Not just a place, but thee place.

DOCTOR: The place for a job?

JANE: Thee place of a purpose, and I suppose an occupation is as good as a purpose. I just feel like there is something greater I could be doing with myself. I feel like I need a goal.

DOCTOR: So you just knew there was a job opening up?

JANE: Yes, I believe so, I'm not sure. Is there a problem?

DOCTOR: No no no, I mean, I don't think so - um - well we might as well see if you can handle the trade. You're here after all. Now, Miss Austen, what previous psychological experience or medical training do you have.

JANE: I'm afraid none whatsoever. I confess to feeling rather foolish to find myself in the company of such a skilled medical practitioner as yourself, Doctor.

DOCTOR: None? Well that's okay. You see, it really comes down to people skills. Being able to listen and handle other people's problems. For instance, just this morning I met with two different patients of mine. The first had very high esteem for himself, you might say that he had a real overwhelming sense of

JANE: Pride?

DOCTOR: Yes, pride. And the second patient is really an excellent writer but has a lot of problems with writing for the opposite sex. A real - - uh - - (*Gropes for word.*) - -

JANE: Prejudice?

DOCTOR: Exactly. Pride and prejudice. Do you think you could handle that? Keep in mind that those are just the tip of the iceberg. You would meet with several patients a day many of which do not listen. It can be quite overwhelming at times.

JANE: I must say Doctor, it sounds as though one must grow a real unconditional love for your patients.

DOCTOR: I'm sure its something a person learns over time.

JANE: Yes but you have a real sense and one might say sensibility for it. I'm unsure I feel comfortable taking over this role. I'm not positive that this occupation is my calling, or purpose.

DOCTOR: Well, I don't want to push you into anything you don't want to do. I wouldn't want anyone to do that to me.

JANE: Persuasion is not quite what I am known for.

DOCTOR: Well, I understand. Good luck in your search.

JANE: Yes well, perhaps I need a break.

DOCTOR: Sure why not. Go to the park. You might get inspired.

JANE: Thank you again for your time. (*JANE exits.*)

DOCTOR: Strange.

The DOCTOR shakes it off and goes to his desk and continues to clean. We hear the sound of a beep and CHRISTINE who is paging the DOCTOR.

CHRISTINE VOICE: Doctor, there's a man out here to see you.

DOCTOR: If he doesn't have an appointment then he can't come in. Oh and Christine, next time remember to get my approval before you place an ad for more help around the office.

CHRISTINE VOICE: I didn't place an ad Doctor.

DOCTOR sits in his chair and looks confused. He is paged again.

CHRISTINE VOICE: Sir, he insists it's urgent.

DOCTOR: Tell him I'm sorry and that there is no time for me to see him today.

CHRISTINE VOICE: It's too late, sir.

DOCTOR: He left?

CHRISTINE VOICE: No, sir, he's on his way in.

The door bursts open and ANONYMOUS comes charging in followed by CHRISTINE, startling DOCTOR.

ANONYMOUS: Doctor, I'm sorry to barge in on you like this but I have an emergency. I really need your help.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, sir, but I'm preparing to leave for the day. You can feel free to make an appointment for another time if you like, but I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

ANONYMOUS: Oh please, Doctor it's very important. I promise I will try not to take up too much of your time.

DOCTOR: Sir, you have to leave.

ANONYMOUS: Doctor, please just hear me out for a second.

DOCTOR: Sir, I'm sorry but there's nothing I can do. I'm very busy at the moment.

ANONYMOUS looks around the room.

ANONYMOUS: Busy?! With what?

DOCTOR: Sir, that's none of your business. Now would you please exit? Like I said, if you wish to make an appointment - -

ANONYMOUS: I don't want to make an appointment for another time! There may not be another time! That's what an emergency means! It's important! Please, Doctor, I don't know what else to do, I'm at the end of my rope!

CHRISTINE: Should I call security?

DOCTOR: That's all right, Christine. I can handle this. (*CHRISTINE exits.*) Sir this is a doctor's office. We handle things very professionally here. Just because you come running in here and say that you have an important problem does not mean that I should drop everything. Half of my patients run in here and do that over a little writer's block.

ANONYMOUS: This is different from just "a little writer's block"! I'm really lost here!

DOCTOR: Listen Mr. - - I didn't get your name.

ANONYMOUS: I know you didn't. I didn't give it to you. I wish I could.

DOCTOR: You wish you could what?

ANONYMOUS: Give you my name.

DOCTOR: You can't?

ANONYMOUS: No, that is part of my big problem. I don't know my name.

DOCTOR: You don't know your name?

ANONYMOUS: That's right.

DOCTOR: Did you forget it, or what?

ANONYMOUS: For as long as I can think back I haven't had one.

DOCTOR: I'm confused.

ANONYMOUS: You're confused!

DOCTOR: Ok, well, what have you written?

ANONYMOUS: Ah ha! *Education of a Maiden, Alice, Take it Off and Keep it Off, Pearl, The Bridge Over the River, Everyman, Through Our Enemies Eyes, Heart Problem, I Cry, Air Rage, The Altar of Venus.* The list goes on.

DOCTOR: Very good, but I've never heard of any of those.

ANONYMOUS: You should have. I'm famous.

DOCTOR: Famous? I've never seen you before.

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, so, I've never seen you before.

DOCTOR: Look, just tell me your name. What does it say on the books?

ANONYMOUS: What does it say about me?

DOCTOR: No, what does it say your name is?

ANONYMOUS: Oh.

DOCTOR: Well?

ANONYMOUS: Well - they call me Anonymous.

Pause.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry you must have me confused with another doctor.

This isn't really my kind of thing.

ANONYMOUS: This is where I was told to come. They said I should see you. They said that you'd be able to help.

DOCTOR: Look, if you've hit your head or something then I think you want someone else. I'm not a physical doctor. I can't help with amnesia, memory loss, concussions, or anything like that. I'm a doctor for writers, that's what I do. I help writers with psychological stuff, writers block, and ideas.

ANONYMOUS: No, you don't understand. I didn't forget who I was. I just don't know who I am. I'm Anonymous.

DOCTOR: So you don't want to tell me your name?

ANONYMOUS: No, Anonymous is my name.

DOCTOR: You're Anonymous?

ANONYMOUS: Look. *(Takes out Wallet and shows ID.)*

DOCTOR: Anonymous. This says your name is Anonymous.

ANONYMOUS: Yep.

DOCTOR: As in the writer? The one that has been around for years?

The unknown writer of all those literary works? That Anonymous?

ANONYMOUS: Correct. Now can you help me?

DOCTOR: You want me to help you find out who you are?

ANONYMOUS: No, I know who I am. I'm Anonymous. Part of the problem is that I write all this stuff and people don't even know who I am. I just listed off a fraction of the books that I have written and you didn't even recognize one of them.

DOCTOR: Just wait a second, I know who you are.

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, after I told you.

DOCTOR: I've read your stuff hundreds of times before. I just didn't recognize any of the ones you said.

ANONYMOUS: No, and why would you?

DOCTOR: Well, because you've written hundreds of amazing things.

ANONYMOUS: Ok, name one.

DOCTOR: Well -- *(Thinking.)* -- there's --

Pause.

ANONYMOUS: My point exactly. You can't even remember one thing that I've written. I put my life into this work and this is what I get out of it.

DOCTOR: I don't follow.

ANONYMOUS: Listen, I sit down to write a book, play, poem, whatever. I take this idea that's floating around and I put it on paper. With my own blood, sweat, and tears I put it on paper. And each word, each sentence, each moment has a piece of me in it.

DOCTOR: Of course it does, you wrote it.

ANONYMOUS: I finish what I write and take that paper and bind it into a book so that some Joe off the street can read it and enjoy, right?

DOCTOR: Right.

ANONYMOUS: But before I do that last part I have to do one more thing.

DOCTOR: What?

ANONYMOUS: I take those words and I write my name on them.

DOCTOR: Ok, so?

ANONYMOUS: So, I muster every piece of strength I have to write my name on them so I might get credit for my work. All that ever comes out is Anonymous!

DOCTOR: You need a name for your books, is that it?

ANONYMOUS: My name is on the books.

DOCTOR: What's your point?

ANONYMOUS: My name doesn't make sense. It's confusing.

DOCTOR: So just put down a different name.

ANONYMOUS: I can't do that.

DOCTOR: Sure you can. You just put down, I don't know, Roger. There you've got a name.

ANONYMOUS: I can't.

DOCTOR: Why? A lot of authors have fake names.

ANONYMOUS: I can't. I've tried. This is who I am. I can't just change who I am.

DOCTOR: You're not changing who you are, you're just getting a new name.

ANONYMOUS: Without my name I'm not me.

DOCTOR: I don't understand what your problem is.

ANONYMOUS: I told you! It's my name!

DOCTOR: So just get a new - -

ANONYMOUS: I can't!

DOCTOR: Look, I shouldn't have even let you in here. This is a waste of time. I don't have time to help everyone that comes running in here that has a problem today. I'm sorry but - -

DOCTOR opens door and KING is standing there at the door desperate for help scaring him. Enter STEPHEN KING.

STEPHEN KING: Hi

DOCTOR: Geez!!!

STEPHEN KING: I'm sorry Doctor, I'm sorry to do this but I need your help. They need another scary story from me.

DOCTOR: Stephen! You can't always creep up on me like that.

STEPHEN KING: I'm sorry but I'm dry. The publisher needs, wants another book and I can't think of anything.

DOCTOR: Stephen, I'm busy!

STEPHEN KING: It will only take a second, I'm sorry. You gotta help me.

DOCTOR: Now?

STEPHEN KING: Please!

DOCTOR: I'm talking to someone here.

STEPHEN KING: I know I know I'm sorry. What's scary?

DOCTOR: Now is not the best time.

STEPHEN KING: What's scary?

DOCTOR: Ok, ok, just breathe. We will think of something.

STEPHEN KING: Come on what scares you? I mean what really freaks you out.

Pause.

DOCTOR: I don't know - - uh - a - a car.

STEPHEN KING: A car?

ANONYMOUS: A car?

DOCTOR: (*Thinking.*) Yeah, an evil car. That kills.

Pause.

STEPHEN KING: An evil car that kills. Hmmm - - that's good. Real good.

CHRISTINE pages the Doctor

CHRISTINE: Is everything all right in there Doctor?

DOCTOR: Everything's fine, Christine

STEPHEN KING: Christine. That's a good name. Sorry to interrupt like this. I really appreciate everything. Thanks Doctor.

STEPHEN KING exits

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, what was I saying?

ANONYMOUS: You were saying something about not helping people that just come running in here.

DOCTOR: Right.

ANONYMOUS: Please?

DOCTOR:(*Beat.*) Have a seat Mr. - uh - sir.

ANONYMOUS: Call me Anonymous.

DOCTOR: Ok. Have a seat Mr. Anonymous. (*ANONYMOUS and DOCTOR both sit.*) So?

ANONYMOUS: So? Aren't you going to ask me any questions?

DOCTOR: No, why should I? We already know what your problem is. You're upset about your name. This can easily be fixed. (*DOCTOR goes to his desk and pulls out a pillow.*) This is the parent pillow. I want you to take this and sit next to you on the couch.

ANONYMOUS: Um.

DOCTOR: Listen, the pillow is used to represent your parents. I want you to tell the pillow, or your parents how you feel that your name is Anonymous.

ANONYMOUS: This is stupid; this isn't even the problem - -

DOCTOR: Do you want me to help you?

ANONYMOUS: Yes but . . .

DOCTOR: Tell it how mad you are.

Pause.

ANONYMOUS: I'm mad at you pillow - -

DOCTOR: Parents.

ANONYMOUS: - - parents. Look this is ridiculous. My name isn't even the problem.

DOCTOR: What do you mean?

ANONYMOUS: You really didn't listen to a word I said before, did you?

DOCTOR: Sure I did.

ANONYMOUS: It's not about me not knowing my name. I know who I am. It's about everyone else not knowing my name. I'm fine with my name but it affects the way people see my writings.

DOCTOR: Ok. Go on.

ANONYMOUS: Remember how I said that I put my blood, sweat, and tears into what I write? Well, it's true. But I have no idea if there is even a point to doing it anymore. I feel like I'm wasting my time.

DOCTOR: Are you not enjoying it?

ANONYMOUS: Of course I am. Every time I write I release all these thoughts and emotions and ideas I have. I enjoy it as much as I did when I started. The real problem is that I don't think it's making an impact like it should because of my name.

DOCTOR: And why is that?

ANONYMOUS: How can it? The people have no idea where it's coming from. It just gets lost on them. It goes in one ear and out the other.

DOCTOR: How do you know?

ANONYMOUS: It must be. My works are out there collecting dust with these people. They have become decorations for their homes. Things to fill up an empty place on the shelf.

DOCTOR: And how does this make you feel?

ANONYMOUS: I don't know. How does anything I do have worth when it is covered with a layer of dust?

DOCTOR: So you think they aren't enjoying it?

ANONYMOUS: They might be, but then the enjoyment leaves after a moment or two.

DOCTOR: So they are enjoying it.

ANONYMOUS: I don't know whether they are or not. What I'm getting at is this. When they put down one of my books, regardless of how much bearing it has, they forget all about what they have read.

DOCTOR: Why do you think that?

ANONYMOUS: Because they think that there is no real author.

DOCTOR: Which there is. But because they see Anonymous written on the cover, you think that the readers aren't impacted by what's in the book.

ANONYMOUS: Right, they forget what they read because they can't form a connection with me the author. I'm not making an impact on anyone.

DOCTOR: You really believe this?

ANONYMOUS: Of course I do. I'm not making an impact. You couldn't even name one thing I've written yet you've read my work hundreds of times.

DOCTOR: I'm only one person.

ANONYMOUS: One person that studies what people write for a living.

DOCTOR: Even so.

ANONYMOUS: You couldn't name one.

DOCTOR: Ok, so what are you going to do about it?

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