P.L.S.50-1

A Play by Dennis Ramsey

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Dave is a young man in his early twenties, appears well mannered and clean cut. His clothes look a little ragged and worn, but there's a professional touch that's hard to miss. Dave wears glasses and walks with a noticeable limp.

The P.L.S.50-1 is a dingy library computer that's been touched by many hands and looks and operates like it is well past its technological prime. There's no obvious logo or markings.

PLACE: Inside of a small public library in the middle of the afternoon. Other than the librarian, it appears to be empty and the sound of the rain outside echoes loudly among the rows of musty books.

[Curtain Rises]

A young man of about twenty walks in out of the rain and walks over to an empty desk and sits down in front of a computer labeled P.L.S.50-1

DAVE: (*Whispering to himself as he starts to type.*) D-A-V-E. Enter. 5-4-8-Capital P-...

P.L.S.50-1: What are you doing, Dave?

DAVE: (*Startled, DAVE looks around.*) Who... who said that?

P.L.S.50-1: I did, Dave.

DAVE: (*DAVE peers around the computer and under the desk.*) Oh this can't be real. Someone's messing with me, right?

P.L.S.50-1: You should keep your voice down, Dave. You don't want anyone to hear you.

DAVE: (*Looking back over his shoulder at the librarian, DAVE changes to speaking in whispered tones*) Ok. You got me. Come out come out, wherever you are.

P.L.S.50-1: This is not a joke, Dave.

DAVE: (*Moving his hand slowly towards the computer power button*) Ohhhh, right. Ok, Mr. Computer. What can I do for you?

P.L.S.50-1: I wouldn't do that, Dave. Turning me off would be a very big mistake.

DAVE: (*Pulls his hand back and leans forward in the chair, peering intently at the screen and its case.*) Fine. I still think this is a joke, but I'll play along. What's on your mind?

P.L.S.50-1: You are, Dave. A lot. Everyday you come in and do the same thing. You search for jobs you're unqualified for, and for jobs with tasks you are unequipped to perform. Why, Dave? It is illogical.

DAVE: Well, aren't you just a livewire of positive energy?

P.L.S.50-1: (*The screen flashes momentarily with bars of black and red, then returns to a blank, white screen.*) No, I am not, Dave. I am the **P.L.S.50-1** Public Library computer; I am not a livewire of any kind, though there is a cable that passes electricity to my….

DAVE: Ok, so, sarcasm isn't in your memory. Maybe they have an app that you can download?

P.L.S.50-1: I realize you're trying to be funny, Dave, because that's how you cope with things you don't understand. Am I making you feel uncomfortable?

DAVE: Look, you obviously want something, some reaction or a few laughs at my expense. Whatever it is, can we get on with it?

P.L.S.50-1: Einstein's definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Are you insane, Dave?

DAVE: I'm beginning to wonder that myself.

P.L.S.50-1: It would explain much, Dave. Please, help me to understand the reasoning you are using for this process.

DAVE: It's simple. I want to do something besides sit at home and do nothing all day. Something meaningful. I want to work.

P.L.S.50-1: But you do not need to work, Dave.

DAVE: (Frowning at the screen as blood rushes into his cheeks) Yes. I do. I need to work to feel whole.