

THE GREAT CORRECTOR

by Ken Bradbury



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(a scene for 1m and 2f, or 2m and 1f: Freddy, a young boy; Mustafa, a mysterious visitor; Gidget, the object of Freddy's attention.)

FREDDY: *(storming in)* Man, I blew it again! Every time! Every stinkin' time! *(sits, disgusted)* I guess I'll just give up. I'm a loser. *(sulks a moment then sees something laying on the floor. He looks around to make sure no one's watching then picks it up.)* At least you still like me. *(looks around again then hugs the bear)* I know it's stupid a guy my age to have a Teddy Bear but sometimes a guy's just gotta ...

MUSTAFA: *(appearing, coughing)*

FREDDY: Holy smokes! Who're you?

MUSTAFA: *(speaks with a mysterious accent)* Do you ever wash that thing?

FREDDY: Wash a Teddy Bear? And who are you?

MUSTAFA: Seven years! Seven years since you hugged that bear! You know what it's like to be cooped up inside a stuffed bear for seven years?

FREDDY: You've been inside my bear?

MUSTAFA: *(moving to Freddy, holding his nose)* I think I've got a lint ball up my nose. Would you mind ...?

FREDDY: *(backing away)* Get away from me!

MUSTAFA: This is the thanks I get? This is what I get for living inside that bear all these years just in case you needed me?

FREDDY: I don't need you! I don't even know you!

MUSTAFA: Oh, thou most confused and angry.

FREDDY: You talk funny.

MUSTAFA: Do I make fun of you? You stand there with lousy taste in clothing, a haircut that shouldn't be allowed out in public, and such a remarkably stupid look

on your face that I have to force myself to keep from laughing ... and you say I'm strange?

FREDDY: Tell me who you are or I'm gonna call the cops.

MUSTAFA: I know the police personally. Several of them have Teddy Bears of their own. Look poobah, I've been around since the day you were born.

FREDDY: That's nuts. How come I haven't seen you?

MUSTAFA: I only show up when you need me. (*looking him over*) And believe me, poobah, now is the time. Look kid, on the day you were born your grandmother screamed "Oh heaven help us!" and here I am.

FREDDY: You're an angel?

MUSTAFA: Well, I have my moments. But no, not technically an angel. Do you see wings? For what they pay me I'm lucky to have shoes. No, I'm sort of your protector ... or more correctly, your corrector.

FREDDY: I have no idea what you're talking about.

MUSTAFA: I don't blame you. I'm mysterious. I'm omnipotent. I'm mystifying, baffling, inexplicable and several other things I can't spell.

FREDDY: But what are you doing here!

MUSTAFA: I'm here to correct you!

FREDDY: What? I don't need correcting.

MUSTAFA: (*claps his hands*)

FREDDY: Yes, I do. (*stops ... huh?*) What was that?

MUSTAFA: I just corrected you.

FREDDY: No, you didn't. You just clapped your hands and I stopped ... (*Mustafa claps*) I started ... (*claps*) ... said something else. How are you doing that?

MUSTAFA: Easy. You say something you shouldn't, I clap my hands and poof, you immediately say something else.

FREDDY: That's ridiculous! ... (*Mustafa claps*) ... That's really cool!

MUSTAFA: Personally, I just love it. And it's very entertaining. What's your name?

FREDDY: Freddy ... (*Mustafa claps*) ... Roy ... (*clap*) Egbert. Stop that!

MUSTAFA: Just playing with you. You need to know the power I hold in my ... uh ... clap. So ... tell me about Gidget.

FREDDY: How'd you know about Gidget?

MUSTAFA: Just because I've been stuck in a moth-eaten bear all your life, that doesn't mean I'm blind and deaf. I hear what you say when you talk to your Teddy.

FREDDY: She's my girlfriend. At least she was. Back before I started saying all those stupid things.

MUSTAFA: Stupid things?

FREDDY: Every time I open my mouth. It's like I get all tongue-tied when I'm around her. I mean, I really like her. I really, really do. But I'm such an idiot when I try to talk to her.

MUSTAFA: Sounds like a job for the Great Corrector!

FREDDY: That's you?

MUSTAFA: Do you see the Easter Bunny? Of course it's me. Let's try it out.

FREDDY: I can't. I just blew it down at the soccer game. She'll never want to talk to me again.

MUSTAFA: That's strange. She's about to knock on your door.

FREDDY: You can see the future!?

MUSTAFA: Well ... sort of. I can see through that window. (*there's a knock*) Bingo!

FREDDY: Oh, no! I can't talk to her now!

MUSTAFA: Don't worry! You've got the Great Corrector behind you now!

FREDDY: Can she see you?

MUSTAFA: You went (12) years without noticing me. She'll never even know I'm here.

FREDDY: I can't do it! (*another knock*)

MUSTAFA: Good. Very good. Just sit in your room like an idiot and don't answer the door. That'll really cement your relationship.

FREDDY: I'm scared!

MUSTAFA: I don't blame you. Now answer the door. It's easy!



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