

Textual Abuse

A Fifteen-Minute Play

by

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Two human beings hook up, and the following day, one of them shoots off a tirade of over-the-top texts, totally ambushing the other one.

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Textual Abuse

Cast of Characters

IMA TOO TIRED TO TEXT (IMA2T2T): A Human

IMA TOTALLY NEUROTIC TEXTAHOLIC (IMATNT): A Human

VOICE OF iPHONE's SIRI: Non-Human Voice Assistant

Scene

The play takes place in two separate locations simultaneously. This play would work well on a video conferencing platform or on a live stage. If performed on a live stage, there should be some kind of wall or barrier separating the two people.

Place

Anywhere on this crazy, cyberspace planet we call Earth

Time

The present, late afternoon on a hot, hellish, summer day

Textual Abuse

SETTING: Two people each in a room
in their respective homes.

AT RISE: IMA2T2T is asleep in a desk
chair. Laptop is on the desk.

IMATNT shoots off a text.

Playwright's Notes: All the text messages are in quotes and bolded to distinguish them from the other dialogue, and **all text messages are read aloud, unless otherwise specified.** Throughout the play, whenever our two characters write or read a text with an exclamation point or question mark, they say exclamation point or question mark.

This play could conceivably be performed two or more times right in a row, using different casts, which feature all kinds of odd and not so odd couplings.

IMATNT

(Texting)

"I guess u r 2 busy 2 respond."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Hot as hell 2 day."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Great day for the devil! Hope ur staying cool wherever the hell u r???"

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Honestly, never mind!"

(Scrolling through phone,
then rapid-fire texting)

"OMG! I see u had time 2 like ur ex's stupid kayaking pictures on Facebook, but u couldn't find a nanosecond to text me."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Radio silence ... Guess last nte was just a bootie call??? A one-night stand? Thought it was so much more ... my bad."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

IMATNT (Cont.)

"I guess Ima in ur rearview mirror????"

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"K. Whatever."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"I really h8 when peeps ghost me!"

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Why RNT u responding 2 me???? If ur not into me anymore, then just say it."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"I knew u were 2g2bt."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"Thought u were different."

(Staring at phone, still no response, practically hyperventilating while texting)

"Guess u r just like all the other online louses, losers, lowlifes, and liars out there!"

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"R u pulling the blindsides breakup? Know the drill. They love bomb u. U Drop ur guard and ur drawers. They go MIA."

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

OK, A-hole, I'm going to retweet one of your thousands of #lame Twitter tweets. Let's see if that gets a rise out of you.

(We hear a Twitter notification tweet go off on IMA2T2T laptop. IMA2T2T abruptly wakes up, checks computer and responds.)

IMATNT

(Gets a Twitter notification tweet)

You twit! You retweeted my retweet. Guess you're not dead in a ditch, douchebag.

(IMA2T2T appears to dose off again.)

(IMATNT again with the texts)

I'll just text a "?" ... That usually pisses people off big time.

(Impatiently waiting for a response.)

Really? Yesterday you were "mosting" me. Now today, you're "ghosting" me! OK, let's see what happens if I like one of your idiotic posts on Instagram.

(We hear an Instagram notification ping go off on IMA2T2T's laptop. IMA2T2T startles, checks computer and responds.)

IMATNT

(IMATNT gets an Instagram notification.)

Oh, Happy Days! I get a smiley face emoji for liking that dumb-ass selfie of you posing in front of that tacky Big Duck in flea-bitten Flanders, but you can't instant message me. Let's see if you like my latest Instagram post.

(IMATNT poses for a selfie, and then posts it.)

Caption: "Having the best day ever!"

(IMA2T2T is still at the computer, smiles and responds to IMATNT Instagram post. IMA2T2T starts frantically looking for something and abruptly EXITS.)

IMATNT

(IMATNT gets an Instagram notification and looks like a rabid dog, foaming at the mouth, while texting a response.)

"First u ghost me. Then u retweet my retweet, emoji my liking ur idiotic IG post, and now u Double Tap my IG selfie. Ur totally orbiting me. I H8 that!"

(IMA2T2T ENTERS with cell phone, looking distraught.)

Maybe if I start sexting I'll get a response. **"U have no idea how much I want u right now ... and what I want to do to u ... Get back ASAP! Ima butt naked watching porn."**

(Waits, no reply, then texts)

"We're so done."

(Throws phone, sits sulking)

IMA2T2T

(Plays with cell phone. This time it turns on. We hear annoying ping after ping after ping.)

Someone's been blowing up my phone.

(IMA2T2T has no idea what the texting abbreviations mean and reads them exactly as written, for instance: g 8, instead of great.)

"Good morning! Had a g8 time last night."

"Guess ur busy."

"w8ing to hear from u."

"Hi!"

"Guess ur still busy???"

IMA2T2T (Cont.)

"J2lyk, I have a lunch break at noon." Siri, when texting what's J2lyk mean?

SIRI

J2lyk is a common texting abbreviation, which means: Just to let you know.

IMA2T2T

"Hope Ima not b-ing a pita, but I'd luv 2 hear back from u." Siri, when texting what does pita mean?

SIRI

Pita is a common texting acronym, which means: Pain-in-the-ass.

IMA2T2T

"Good Afternoon, Stranger!"

"I guess u r 2 busy 2 respond."

"Hot as hell 2 day."

"Great day for the devil! Hope ur staying cool wherever the hell u r???"

"Honestly, never mind!"

"OMG! I see u had time 2 like ur ex's stupid kayaking pictures on Facebook, but u couldn't find a nanosecond to text me."

"Radio silence ... Guess last nte was just a bootie call??? A one-night stand? Thought it was so much more ... my bad."

"I guess Ima in ur rearview mirror????"

"K. Whatever."

"I really h8 when peeps ghost me!"

"Why RNT u responding 2 me???? If ur not into me, then just say it."

"I knew u were 2g2bt." Siri, when texting what does 2g2bt mean?

SIRI

2g2bt is a common texting abbreviation, which means: Too good to be true.

IMA2T2T

"Thought u were different."

"Guess u r just like all the other online louses, losers, lowlifes, and liars out there!" Are you kidding me!

"R u pulling the blindsides breakup. Know the drill. They love bomb u. U Drop ur guard and ur drawers. They go MIA."

IMA2T2T (Cont.)

"?"

"First u ghost me. Then u retweet my retweet, emoji my liking ur idiotic IG post, and now u Double Tap my IG selfie. Ur totally orbiting me. I H8 that!"

"U have no idea how much I want u right now ... and what I want to do to you ... Get back ASAP! I'm butt naked watching porn."

"We're so done."

(IMA2T2T texts a response.)

(IMATNT's cell phone pings.
IMATNT retrieves phone and
reads IMA2T2T's text.)

IMATNT

"Sorry. Got home after 3 from your place. Shot you a text this morning. OMG! Was never delivered! My cell service sucks sometimes."

(IMATNT texts.)

IMA2T2T

(IMA2T2T cell phone pings.)

"What did ur alleged lost-in-cyberspace imessage say?"

(IMA2T2T texts.)

"It said, 'Had a great time with you last night. Maybe we can hang tonight?'"

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings, silently reads
IMA2T2T last text, then screams
response while texting.)

4COL! Go hang urself!

IMA2T2T

(IMA2T2T cell phone pings, silently reads text.)

Know what go hang urself means ... Siri, when texting, what the hell does 4COL mean?

SIRI

4COL is a common texting abbreviation, which means: For crying out loud.

(IMA2T2T thinks for a moment,
then texts a response.)

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings,
sarcastically reading text)

"Don't be mad ... Had to get up by 7 to take my black lab to the vet. Got home, checked emails, fell asleep. Just woke up."

(Instantly texts response)

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings,
reading IMATNT's text)

"Like u weren't on FB, Twitter, and IG this afternoon???"
(Texts response)

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings. Reads IMA2T2T's text)

"When laptop pinged, woke up, responded, dosed off again."
(Texting back)

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings,
reading IMATNT's text)

"And u never once checked ur damn cell phone?"
(Starts texting)

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings, reading text)

"Left cell phone in SUV. Got baked. Black screen, with message, 'Temperature ... iPhone needs to cool down before you can use it.' Miraculously, it just arose from the dead! Sorry."

(Texting response)

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings,
reading IMATNT's text)

"Sorry, my ass."
(Texting response)
"Sounds like you hate me?"

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings, reads IMA2T2T's text)

"Sounds like you hate me?"
(Texting response)
"Sounds about right."

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings, silently reads
IMATNT's text, then texts back.)

"On a scale of 1-10, how much do you hate me?"

IMATNT

(Cell phone pings, silently reads text, texts back)

**"It's WW II. Ima in a room with Hitler, Mussolini, & u & I
have a gun with 2 bullets. Who do I shoot? U ... twice!
BTDT! ADBB!"**

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings, IMA2T2T in shock,
reads IMATNT's latest text.)

**"It's WW II. Ima in a room with Hitler, Mussolini, & u & I
have a gun with 2 bullets. Who do I shoot? U ... twice!
BTDT! ADBB!"** Siri, 4COL, when texting what does BTDT mean?

SIRI

BTDT is a common texting abbreviation, which means: Been
there, done that.

IMA2T2T

Been there, done what? Hung with Mussolini? Or, shot
somebody twice? Siri, when texting what does ADBB mean?

SIRI

ADBB is a common texting abbreviation, which means: All
done, bye bye.

IMATNT

(Texts)

"FU"

IMA2T2T

(Cell phone pings)

"FU." Nope! Don't need to consult Siri on that one.

IMATNT

(Texting)

"Ima blocking u!"

(IMA2T2T cell phone pings, silently
reads text. IMA2T2T puts the cell phone
down, then addresses the audience.)

IMA2T2T

Ima thinking I just dodged a bullet....

CURTAIN