

THANK YOU FOR TEXTING

By Camila Vasquez

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THANK YOU FOR TEXTING

A Ten Minute Comedy Monologue

By Camila Vasquez

SYNOPSIS: Texting while people are giving speeches is rude, that's a given. But what's going on inside the performer's head when they see someone texting? This speaker shares their insight, and finds a silver lining in the process.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 either; gender flexible)

SPEAKER (m/f)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Throughout the entirety of this piece, there should be a barely contained frustration that the character releases in one of the last paragraphs. There is a toggle between an innocent and angry individual. Do not be afraid to play with the fourth wall. Choose an area to act as the "texter" and focus on that area in the beginning and when thanking the 'texter' in the end, speak directly to that area. It will be more effective.

SPEAKER: Last year, I did speech. It's a great experience. Great people, speeches, judges, it's great. *There will be a switch between past, present and back to past tense now.* And today, you guys are great too! Wonderful. Perfect. Don't change anything. And when I would give my speech, everything was still great. Everyone was having a grand old time, enjoying themselves, laughing, it was fantastic.

Beat.

But there's always that one exception. The outlier who throws all the statistics off. The one who would sit here. *(Stand right in front of chair or desk.)* Every single time, they would sit right here. Never there, or there, or even over there. No, right here. With their hood up, slouched down in their seat, and those thumbs. Those...thumbs, always moving in the exact same way. It was maddening. It was texting. And I figured it was my fault, that they were texting because I wasn't good enough. I was too loud, too quiet, too energetic, who knows. All I knew is that it wasn't them, it was me.

Beat.

It became my goal to engage this texter. To have them sitting on the edge of their seats, yearning to be a part of the adventure I was taking part in. To join me, as I would confront my fear of public speaking in a room filled with well dressed young adults. But Noo! The texter had no interest in cheering me on when I, an unknown boxer *(Start shadow boxing.)* in Philadelphia am chosen by champion Apollo Creed to fight him for the chance to become known, and having them console me when I lose... or something. I wanted them to help me, and--and they wouldn't.

Still unwilling to admit the true root cause of the problem, I came to the next reasonable conclusion: it was the speech's fault. The speech needed to be better. The speech needed to grab your attention like nothing else. Forget the booming dubstep, flashing lights and screaming individuals. No, I would grab your attention more than a Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans. *Lifting shirt motion.* I would grab your attention more than the first fifty pages of *Fifty Shades of Grey*. *Whipping sound and motion.* And that became my standard for speech-writing. Would I be able to grab your attention like nothing else? Would you want to text your best friend?

Very short pause, the length of a short breath.

Or would you want to know what sounds will come tumbling out of my mouth in an endless sea of words, allowing them to wash over you like a typhoon and make you jump onto the back of a truck and hitchhike across the Atlantic Ocean after walking across the continental United States. In five days. Make you get down on your knees in the middle of the street and sing "Kumbaya", all the while encouraging others to join you in a circle and hold hands and sing with you, at the same time shouting to the skies, "sing with me brothers, sing!"

Pause.

Make you second-guess anything you have ever believed in. Like how your dog Fido went to live on a farm with a very nice family.

Beat.

And that's what I wanted my speech to do. And if someone felt like they could text during that, it obviously wasn't engaging enough. So back to square one I would go.

And as I was writing and rewriting and writing some more, I started thinking about why someone would start texting in the first place. And more importantly, what made somebody start texting when they were listening to *me*? I mean, come on! I dress up all nice, I write my piece, I memorize it, I block it, I practice it for hours on end.

Frustration visibly builds.

I practiced my speech while biking to and from school. I appeared to be talking to myself! People looked at me like I was insane, like I had just escaped from the adolescent psychiatric ward. Granted, the straight jacket didn't help much... which just goes to show, that you don't practice your speech and magic at the same time.

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