

# YOU DON'T LISTEN TO ME

by Joseph Sorrentino

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**YOU DON'T LISTEN TO ME***A Comedic Duet***by Joseph Sorrentino**

**SYNOPSIS:** Marie is increasingly frustrated as she tries to have a conversation with Frank, her fiancé. She's competing with his two cell phones and two computers that constantly ring or buzz. If that's not enough chaos, there's that little secret Marie wants to tell Frank.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS***(1 female, 1 male)*

FRANK (m) ..... A well-dressed and well-spoken actor who's obsessed with his electronics. *(71 lines)*

MARIE (f)..... Frank's fiancé. Also plays POLICEWOMAN. For POLICEWOMAN she needs to disguise her voice. *(65 lines)*

**COSTUMING:** Wears normal street clothes.

**SET:** A desk with a chair and a second chair next to it.

**PROPS**

- Three Cell Phones
- Laptop Computer
- Desktop Computer
- Checkbook
- Sheet of Paper
- Money

**SOUND EFFECTS**

- Phone Buzzing
- Phone Rings
- Phone Text Alert

**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

When Frank is answering Marie with a “Hmm” or “Uh-huh” he isn’t paying attention. Actually, he’s not paying attention to her most of the time.

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**AT RISE:** *FRANK is sitting at his desk, MARIE is in a chair next to him. Two phones, a laptop and a desktop computer are on the desk. FRANK is staring first at one of his phones, then the second phone, then checks his laptop and desktop computer. Each time he's finished checking a different device, there's a slight pause as FRANK looks up, gazing into space. MARIE starts to say something but before she can, FRANK'S attention goes to another device. He finally concentrates on one phone, scrolling through a list of messages. MARIE waits for a few moments. Impatiently.*

**MARIE:** Frank?

**FRANK:** Hmm?

**MARIE:** *(Pause; in a sing-song voice.)* Fraa-nnk.

**FRANK:** *(Mimicking.)* Hmm-mmm?

**MARIE:** *(Strongly.)* Frank!

**FRANK:** What? Why are you shouting? I'm right here.

**MARIE:** I'm not shouting.

**FRANK:** OK. Fine. Talking... in a loud voice. Better?

**MARIE:** It's the only way I can get your attention.

**FRANK:** Well, you have my attention now, so...

*SFX: Phone #1 buzzes, indicating FRANK has an email.*

**FRANK:** *(To himself.)* ...Ooh... I have an email... *(His attention goes to his desktop computer.)*

**MARIE:** Frank?

**FRANK:** Hmm?

**MARIE:** Frank!

**FRANK:** You're shouting again.

**MARIE:** And you're not paying attention again.

**FRANK:** Well, I had an audition yesterday and I'm waiting for the casting director to contact me. I don't know if he'll call or text. Maybe he'll email. He did seem a tad old-fashioned. Isn't it marvelous to have so many ways to communicate these days? And I simply must check all of my devices. If he contacts me and I don't answer pronto, well, I can just kiss my acting career good-bye. I'm up for a part in a new musical based on the Hindenburg disaster. A very exciting piece of theater, let me tell you. I read for Passenger #2. I really

wanted Passenger #1... he actually has a two lines. Passenger #2 only has one. Want to hear it?

**MARIE:** Why not?

**FRANK:** It's, "Help!"

**MARIE:** Impressive. Very impressive

**FRANK:** Thank you. Now what were you saying?

*SFX: Phone # 2 buzzes, indicating FRANK has an email.*

**FRANK:** Ooh. *Pardon moi.* I have another email. *(Checks his laptop.)*

**MARIE:** Frank?

**FRANK:** Hmmm?

**MARIE:** Why are you checking your laptop for email? Why not...?

**FRANK:** I have two emails and I keep one open on my computer *(Points.)* and the other on my laptop. *(Points.)* That's so I don't get confused.

**MARIE:** Why not just read them on your phone?

**FRANK:** Oh, the text on those things is so tiny... makes communicating seem... unimportant when it's really so very important.

**MARIE:** And why do you have two emails?

**FRANK:** I have a professional email and a personal email.

**MARIE:** And you have two phones.

**FRANK:** Correct-o.

**MARIE:** Why on earth do you have two phones?

**FRANK:** Again, sweetie, one is for professional calls and the other is for personal calls. I've always believed it's best to separate the professional and personal. I have to check my professional calls and texts... emails, too... *tout suite* because, believe you me, no one in this business—especially casting directors—likes to wait for an answer.

**MARIE:** So if you keep personal and professional separate, why are you constantly checking everything? Can you please tell me that? Why not just check your professional email or phone? That would at least cut down a little on you being so distracted. Maybe you'd even give me a little attention.

**FRANK:** Oh, but I do give you attention, lovey, I do. This is just a busy time. See, the thing is, you know how scatterbrained I am. Sometimes I get confused and give out the personal number to professional contacts and the professional number to friends, so I simply must check anytime I get a call or text. Or email. Just to be safe.

**MARIE:** Well I think it's absurd, especially having two email addresses.

**FRANK:** Dearest, my personal email address is Lil'Snoogums at gmail.com. Hardly the email of a professional actor now, is it?

**MARIE:** You've been in exactly one production and had exactly two lines... which you flubbed, by the way...

**FRANK:** It seems a tad cruel to bring that up.

**MARIE:** ...and that qualifies as "professional" these days?

**FRANK:** We all have to start somewhere, pumpkin.

*SFX: Phone #1 rings. It grabs FRANK'S attention.*

**FRANK:** I don't recognize the number...

**MARIE:** Then don't answer.

**FRANK:** It could be the casting director.

**MARIE:** It's probably a scam.

**FRANK:** Just let me answer and if it's not him, I'll hang up. (*Answers. Speaks in a pompous voice.*) Hello, Frank here... Who is this? What's happened? ...Oh my! That's terrible!

**MARIE:** What? Who is it?

**FRANK:** (*Into phone.*) Of course I'll help but could you please just hold on for a moment? (*Holding hand over the phone.*) A Nigerian prince has been kidnapped in Italy and he needs me to send money and if I do, I'll get a reward and...

**MARIE:** Hang up!

**FRANK:** But he's in dire need.

**MARIE:** Hang up! It's a scam.

**FRANK:** You're sure?

**MARIE:** Yes!

*FRANK hesitates.*

**MARIE:** Frank!!

*FRANK hangs up.*

**FRANK:** You're certain that was a scam? He sounded quite frantic.

**MARIE:** Think about it, Frank... how did a Nigerian prince get your phone number? And of all this Prince's contacts, he calls you? That doesn't strike you as a little odd?

**FRANK:** Well, if you look at it that way... But, goodness, he did sound legit.

**MARIE:** I'm sure. *(Slight pause.)* Frank, we need to talk.

**FRANK:** Of course, sugar pie, of course.

*SFX: Phone #1 buzzes, indicating FRANK has an email. FRANK'S attention goes to his desktop.*

**FRANK:** Just let me check this email... and then I'll give you my absolute... undivided attention... Goodness!

**MARIE:** What now?

**FRANK:** That poor Nigerian prince sent me a link... says it's a photo of him being held with a gun to his head. Oh, how awful! And here you are saying it's a scam...

**MARIE:** Don't click on it! It's a scam!

**FRANK:** But he sent a photo of him with a gun to his head. Does that sound like a scam to you?

**MARIE:** Yes. If you click on it, you'll probably be downloading a virus.

**FRANK:** But he sounds so desperate.

**MARIE:** Delete it. Now.

**FRANK:** Are you sure?

**MARIE:** Yes.

**FRANK:** Come to think of it, I did read something about that *(Deletes email.)* Ta-da! That certainly was close.

**MARIE:** Frank, we really have to talk.

**FRANK:** Yes, precious, certainly. Talk away. *(As MARIE speaks, he returns to scrolling on Phone #1.)*

**MARIE:** We used to go out. We used to do things. We used to talk... for hours, even. Hours. But now, with all these devices... Frank, are you listening to me?

**FRANK:** Hmm?

**MARIE:** I said, are you listening to me?

**FRANK:** Of course I am.

**MARIE:** No you're not.

**FRANK:** I just said I am and...

*SFX: Phone #2 makes a sound indicating FRANK has a text.*

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