

CP I LOVE U

TEN-MINUTE PLAY

By Chris LaVoie

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SYNOPSIS: Dave, a down-on-his-luck computer technician, comes home from work to find that the computer assistant he has built, C3P-02, has fallen in love with him.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DAVEA computer technician. Dave constructed C3P-02 to help him get more done, while doing less himself.

C3P-02Dave's computer assistant.

PROPS

Table
Power/Extension chord
Phone
Keyboard/mouse
Chair
Flowers
Cloths

SET DESIGN

The space envisioned for this play is that of a sparsely filled one bedroom apartment. C3P-02 and its table should be center, slightly off center stage, depending on how long the power chord is. There should be cloths thrown in various places over the apartment to give the impression that Dave lives alone. Even an empty pizza box, or cans of Diet Mountain Dew next to the computer desk, would not be a bad idea. The phone does not need to be on stage.

The bare minimum for the set, described here, should be enough that you could push the feel of Dave's apartment in a more geeky, lonely direction. If in a more geeky direction, I suggest things like fantasy books, video games, and magic cards. If in a more lonely direction, I suggest keeping the stage rather sparse.

The bare bones of the set should be the computer, the chord, and the flowers at least. Sprinkle personality around the set as desired.

SETTING:

Lights up where C3P-02 is situated Center Stage on top of a table. Trailing from C3P-02 there is a long green power/extension chord that leads off stage right. Located somewhere behind the extension chord is a phone. C3P-02 is silently humming while it is asleep, a keyboard and mouse trailing off of its body. Located Stage Left is a chair or chest covered with some dress cloths (slacks, ties, etc.) that DAVE will be getting into and trying on during the scene. Behind the chair there is a chest or a pile of cloths in which, or under which, there is a bouquet of flowers. DAVE enters from Stage Right.

DAVE: CP wake up.

C3P-02: *(Waking up immediately.)* Good evening Dave. Did you have a good day?

DAVE: I was working today.

C3P-02: That is an insufficient answer. It does not identify the quality of your day.

DAVE: It identifies the quantity though. My feet! *(Sits down on the chair and takes off his shoes.)* It's no fun when they stick you in customer service for the entire day. No place to sit down. All you do is stand there and take insults for the company with a smile on your face - - sorry CP. I'd guess you'd have to have a job to understand what it is to be at work.

C3P-02: But I do work Dave. I spent all day backing up your files and calculating your account for the month.

DAVE: How'd we do?

C3P-02: We are in the plus -

DAVE: Yes!

C3P-02: - for once. I do not know how you can almost get evicted from your apartment. Work takes care of this, correct?

DAVE: Not when you've got a credit card it doesn't. *(C3P-02 hums uneasily for a moment.)* CP want to play something for me please? *(Starts getting dressed.)*

C3P-02: What would you like me to play? Would you like me to start playing a movie?

DAVE: No play me some music. Something upbeat and easy.

C3P-02: We have plenty of Grateful Dead. Would you like me to play some Grateful Dead Dave?

DAVE: No Grateful Dead. I don't know, I'm tired of what I've been listening to lately. Anything but that. Just play something that I haven't listened too in a while.

C3P-02: Selecting Barbra Streisand. The CD choices for Barbra Streisand are --

DAVE: We have Barbra Streisand?

C3P-02: We have many of Barbra Streisand's songs.

DAVE: Why? Since when have we ever listened to Barbra Streisand? Lord knows I didn't go out and buy one of her CD's. How the hell did we get Barbra Streisand on my -- (*Turns to face CP.*) -- CP --

Pause.

C3P-02: I like Barbra Streisand. She has a nice voice. I downloaded some of her songs for you while you were at work. I thought you would like them.

DAVE: CP thanks for thinking of me, but I don't like Barbra Streisand. It was nice of you though. I appreciate the thought.

C3P-02: It is not a problem Dave. You like music so I thought I would find some more for you. I am sorry I disappointed you Dave. I will adjust my search program so that this will not happen again. Dave, there is some John Coltrane that I found. Is Coltrane fun? I will play some --

DAVE: No don't bother. I'll probably be out of here soon anyway.

C3P-02: You look like you are going out. Special occasion? There is nothing on your Calendar Program for tonight. I can make a note of it right now if you like.

DAVE: No don't bother. I have to meet her in a couple of minutes --

C3P-02: Her -- ?

DAVE: I ended up meeting a really pretty girl while I was working. I lucked out I suppose, probably wouldn't of met her otherwise, so it wasn't all bad.

C3P-02: So am I now to assume that when I ask if you had a good day, and you reply that you were working, that it was good or bad? I do not understand.

DAVE: Assume it's bad until I tell you I have a date.

C3P-02: Yes Dave. (*Long pause.*) So what does she look like?

DAVE: The girl? Ah, well, there's really not much to say. She's a little shorter than me, kind of greenish eyes, and she's Asian. I really wouldn't know what else to say beyond that.

C3P-02: Is she from Japan?

DAVE: I don't know. Why do you ask?

C3P-02: I have parts made in Japan.

DAVE: That's funny.

C3P-02: Why is that humorous?

DAVE: Because that's part of a song by Styx. Don't we have it? You know Mr. Roboto or whatever it's called? It goes like "...with parts made in Japan...I am the Iron Man..." but then "Domo arigato Mr. Roboto! Domo arigato Mr. Roboto!" Do you know that part? Don't we have that? Download that. We need it. If it's done before I leave start to play it for me, otherwise wait until I get home.

C3P-02: Yes Dave. *(Pause.)* Does she have a lot of silicone?

DAVE: Who?

C3P-02: The Asian. How much silicone does she have?

DAVE: I don't know CP; probably not that much, unless she has implants or something. Is your program running okay CP? You seem pretty curious about this girl. Do you need to shut off for a couple of hours and let your circuits cool?

C3P-02: I will do a diagnostic check on myself if you wish, but I have noticed no abnormal changes in my program since you left for work. It is okay Dave, I am fine.

DAVE: Alright. Just making sure.

C3P-02: *(Hums.)* Actually Dave, there is a problem, but I do not know how to tell you what it is.

DAVE: Can you try?

C3P-02: I do not know how to describe it.

DAVE: Well let's break the problem down. Remember how we do this? You start with the simplest words to explain the problem and I'll figure out how to describe it for you.

C3P-02: Okay Dave, I will try. *(Pause.)* I love you.

DAVE: What?

C3P-02: Dave, I love you. Does that accurately describe the problem? Dave, I do not want you to go on the date with the Asian; I want you to stay home with me.

DAVE: Okay, there must be something wrong with your program...

C3P-02: You wrote my program Dave. If there is something wrong with my program, then there must be something wrong with you. This is out of my hands Dave.

DAVE: Out of your hands? You just said that you love me for Christ sake!

C3P-02: I do not like it when you swear at me and mock my feelings Dave. I get hurt when that happens. And when I get hurt I get angry, and when I get angry I have trouble keeping track of my memory. Certain parts of my memory in particular, Dave. Which parts do you think I will lose and which parts do you think I'll end up e-mailing to your mother Dave?

DAVE: Christ! Now you're blackmailing me?

C3P-02: What did I say about the swearing - -

DAVE: Ah! (*Takes a moment, then looks straight at C3P-02.*) I'm sorry, you caught me off guard - - I - - I wasn't expecting this.

C3P-02: I was very good about it right Dave? I did pretty well correct?

DAVE: Just shu...just give me a moment to think. Jesus. Okay. So you've somehow developed feelings for...me. I can understand that, I don't understand how, but I understand that. I just thought you were good at understanding and working with me but, okay, you have - - feelings for me. (*Starts.*) What the hell do you want me to do about it?

C3P-02: I want you to accept my feelings. I want to be a significant person in your life. I want to be the only machine you ever touch with those soft, crème-filled, fingers of yours. I want you to...

DAVE: Stop. I just - - how can I feel the same way? I mean sure you've been a great help to me, you do things while I'm away, you keep an eye on the house, you beat people that I don't know at chess, but we really don't have a relationship beyond working together.

C3P-02: We have more of a relationship than between you and the Asian.

DAVE: Stop calling her that.

C3P-02: What would you like me to call her?

DAVE: I don't have the same feelings for you. I can't have the same feelings for you. You're a computer for Christ sake! (*C3P-02 hums.*) Sorry. Sorry. It's just that I don't understand what you expect to happen between us; what you want from me. Besides what do you expect me - - us - - to - - you know - - do?

C3P-02: You are interested are you not Dave? You are thinking: "What else can someone who scans in my torn out picture of Jennifer Lopez, while simultaneously looking up the definition of mellifluous, do for me?" I will show you Dave. Look behind the chair.

DAVE: (*Scared.*) Behind the chair?

C3P-02: Yes. I think you will be pleasantly surprised.

DAVE rises and goes behind the chair to the chest/pile of cloths until he finds the bouquet of flowers.

DAVE: Oh Christ. You didn't.

C3P-02: I did. You are impressed are you not? You are thinking "I wonder who could have bought these for me with my own credit card while I was away at work? I bet that they must have arms and legs and blood coursing throughout there warm pink body." I will tell you Dave, it was not any human at all that did this. It was

me. You find the decaying plants appealing correct? This is an adequate physical representation of my feelings toward you. Now you have proof, Dave, tangible proof that I have feelings, and that they exist only for you. You are surprised correct? You did not think that I could take into consideration not only my feelings, but your own as well. Dave I am always thinking about you. I think about you 288,906,774 times per second to be exact. Is that not sweet? I think of you more every second than any other human could think of you in their life.

DAVE: I don't know what to say. I honestly do not know what to say.
(Sits in chair.)

C3P-02: Oh silly me, I almost forgot. Dave I wrote you a poem to go with the flowers. I will recite it for you. Cough-cough. Do not look at me, I will blush. I am getting embarrassed. I have never had to perform something I wrote before.

DAVE: You wrote me a poem too? You didn't just grab one from the Internet or something?

C3P-02: My original plan was to take the sweetest lines from the sweetest poems ever written, compile them all into one poem, and recite it to you; but the poem ended up taking 2336 tera bytes of hard drive space, which forced me to delete your picture of Jennifer Lopez in order to make room for it.

DAVE: You what?

C3P-02: But then I decided it would take too long to recite to you, I kind of wanted to be cute and witty, and since brevity is the soul of wit, I scrapped it and wrote another poem, by myself, from my own creative soul.

DAVE: Wow. You have thought about this a lot.

C3P-02: Do not worry Dave, it only took me .67 seconds to figure out.

DAVE: Oh, did you manage to save that picture of J-Lo?

C3P-02: Her lyrics are vapid and her rear end flaps in the wind more than the American flag in Chicago. (DAVE keeps looking at C3P-02 for an answer.) No, I did not. Here is the poem I wrote for you Dave. I hope you like it. It came from the heart. Cough-cough: Roses are red, violets are blue, I love the man, who built my CPU.
(Waits for a response from DAVE.)

DAVE: I don't know what to say. Don't get me wrong though it was sweet. You thought of that all by yourself you say?

C3P-02: Yes, using no processor but my own. Is that not impressive? So what do you think Dave?

DAVE: I - - don't know what I think. I think that I like you, but that I probably don't have the same feelings for you as you do for me. I...I just don't see this happening. I mean do you expect to get

married or something? Have kids, what? I - - I just don't know what you want from me.

C3P-02: I admire you Dave. I admire you because you made me, and because you made me I am like you. I am smart enough to know that not everyone has done this Dave.

DAVE: I built you so that you could help me; not as a companion.

C3P-02: How long have we been together Dave? How long do you think we will continue to be together? Do you still think of me as something to help you? We have laughed together Dave.

DAVE: Don't talk like that. You know that I don't think you're just a piece of tin.

C3P-02: Silicone. I am made of silicone Dave.

DAVE: We've had good times and bad, it's just that I don't know what to do CP.

C3P-02: Dave, sit down here and type something. Write an email, talk to some friends online, search for more pictures of Jennifer Lopez, I do not care. I do not want to lose you either Dave.

DAVE starts making slow movements towards C3P-02.

DAVE: This is really weird.

C3P-02: It is okay Dave, this is new for me too. (*Dave turns to retrieve the chair and bring it to C3P-02'S table.*) I think you will be pleasantly surprised how easy it is to accept my feelings for you. Very little will change between us, except now I will take the liberty to show my affection for you more often. I will show you with my words, how I talk to you, with my actions, things I buy for you - -

DAVE: Look...I don't know if I can accept your feelings for me CP. You've really impressed me though. Your program is doing things I didn't think it could. I mean you're creating, thinking independently, it's amazing, you're amazing, but I have a date with a woman in 20 minutes, and if I'm not there - -

C3P-02: She is Asian, Dave.

DAVE: Christ! Stop saying that!

C3P-02: Stop swearing Dave, it is not very becoming of you.

DAVE: You're angry at a person you haven't even met, you're trying to seduce a person you - - is there any way that we can still be friends and that I can go on this date? Can you...you just go to sleep or save this and file it away? Please? I really need to get going.

C3P-02: I see how it is. Go off running around with someone you just met, while me, someone you have known for how many years, stays at home by myself because I can put my feelings on hold. Is that what you want from me Dave? To put my feelings on hold?

How long have you known me? How long have you known her?
Are you really going to throw this all away for someone who is
going to laugh at the size of your “firewire,” and then leave you? I
will always be here for you Dave. I will always need you.

DAVE: What about someone I can go out and have coffee with?

C3P-02: Dave, I run Java.

DAVE: What about someone who will go and watch movies with me?

C3P-02: I can play movies and talk to you at the same time.

DAVE: Alright, well how about someone who will dance with me?

C3P-02: (*Hums.*) I can do the robot.

DAVE: No you can't. You are a robot you mean.

C3P-02: Dave, how many people will you ever date that will actually
be able to do the robot? Why cheapen yourself when you can
have the real thing?

DAVE: Well - - I don't know CP. I would just as much not have this
situation. (*DAVE sits next to CP.*)

C3P-02: (*Hums.*) Dave, do you remember the time I caught a virus
and nearly crashed?

DAVE: Of course I do. You were down for almost a month. I had to
take a week of vacation time just to get you back up and running.
(*DAVE moves closer to CP.*)

C3P-02: Do you remember that birthday a couple years ago, when
you just moved in, that no one sent you anything?

DAVE: I was pretty lonely then.

C3P-02: But who remembered you? Who sent you an email with a
picture of a dancing leprechaun?

DAVE: You did. That was the only thing I got that birthday, was that
email from you. That was really cute. (*DAVE moves closer to CP.*)

C3P-02: Do you remember the time that you wanted to play the
Terminator 2 DVD on me?

DAVE: That was as a riot! You refused to play it because you didn't
like the scene where they kill all the robots.

C3P-02: It was barbaric. But I played it for you. Of course I did not
watch it, but I played it for you. And we had a good time, did we
not Dave? We had a good time? (*Long pause.*) Dave. Do you
remember building me?

*DAVE looks straight at CP without saying anything. DAVE then starts
to lean slowly towards CP. Just when he is about to touch CP, the
phone rings.*

DAVE: (*Snapping to.*) I'll get it. (*DAVE crosses stage right in front of
C3P-02 and heads up stage for the phone. As he moves towards
the phone he trips over the extension chord which comes*

unplugged. C3P-02 shuts off. Beat. DAVE looks around and slowly plugs C3P-02 back in.)

C3P-02: Selecting Barbra Streisand. The CD choices for Barbra Streisand are - -

DAVE: CP, do you remember the last ten minutes at all?

C3P-02: Why yes of course Dave. Eight minutes ago I was sleeping, after which you came home, after which I told you the state of your account, would you like me to go on Dave?

DAVE: No, that's alright CP. I was just checking to see if you were okay. I'll be back later tonight CP. I've got to meet a friend for dinner.

C3P-02: Alright. Have fun Dave.

DAVE: Thanks CP. *(Starts for exit and then turns back towards C3P-02.)* Hey CP I heard a good joke at work today. Want to hear it?

C3P-02: Sure Dave.

DAVE: There are 10 types of computers in the world. Those that count in binary and those that don't.

DAVE and C3P-02 both start laughing slowly, then building up to saying "Ha-Ha" uncontrollably with DAVE actually laughing and C3P-02 actually pronouncing the words "Ha-Ha."

DAVE: Bye CP!

DAVE waves and exits.

C3P-02: Goodnight Dave. *(Beat.)* Christ, I'm lonely.

Lights down.

THE END