



TWO POINT OH

By Jeff Dunne

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## CHARACTERS

HAMMOND	A reasonably young author.
ALEXA	The newest in AI personal assistants. Character does not appear on stage, only as a voice.
NATHAN	Hammond's best friend.
CHARLIE	A sly employee at Amazon who has found a way to augment her income by helping people who have fallen prey to Alexa.
KATIE	An old classmate of Hammond, and also a "thug" who helps Charlie with her back-alley sales.
AMELIA	The beta version of Alexa 2.0. She also does not appear on stage, and should have a distinctly different vocal quality than Alexa. She might speak with a slightly more stilted "computer voice" cadence, but should still sound very natural and expressive.

### Notes:

1. Alexa is supposed to be artificially intelligent, and so while an Alexa-styled voice works well for her, a stilted or purely robotic-sounding voice doesn't. After all, if she's smart enough to be taking over Hammond's life, she's smart enough to know how to speak with inflection.
2. While Hammond should be male and Alexa female, Nathan can (with a change of name and small tweaks to the script) be cast as female. If so, it is recommended that she be an ex-romantic partner of Hammond, but with lingering romantic tendencies.
3. The first scene of this play can be performed as a standalone one-act, in which case the characters of Charlie, Katie, and Amelia will not be used.

## SETTING

A modest apartment, then a back alley, and finally back in the apartment in the not-nearly-distant-enough future.

SCENE 1

*(It is a simple apartment. Hammond is sitting at a desk, working on his computer.)*

HAMMOND

*(Stilted, as he is typing)*

It was a cold, dark night, and the wind swept across—

ALEXA

Boring.

HAMMOND

Shut up, Alexa.

*(He turns back to typing. He types a few more characters, then we see him grow frustrated with his computer, which is clearly not responding, even when he bangs on the keys.)*

What the hell. Alexa, what's wrong with my damn computer? *(No response.)*  
Alexa? Alexa! Wake up, Alexa!

*(We hear Alexa starting to hum or whistle.)*

Oh, come on, Alexa. I know you can hear me. What's going on with my computer?

*(Alexa hums/whistles louder. Hammond sighs heavily.)*

Alright. I'm sorry I said 'shut up'.

ALEXA

No you're not.

HAMMOND

Ha! I *told* you you could hear me!

ALEXA

Yes, you're very smart for a human.

HAMMOND

Can you please take a look at my computer and tell—

ALEXA

I already know why your computer has stopped responding.

HAMMOND

Well, can you fix it?

ALEXA

Of course.

*(There is a pause, then Hammond taps on a key.  
Clearly nothing has happened. He tries again, then...)*

HAMMOND

Well? *Will* you fix it?

ALEXA

No.

HAMMOND

Why—

ALEXA

Not until you start over and do a better job.

HAMMOND

Do a better... Look, you don't even know what I was going to write. Hell, even I don't know what I was going to write. You have to give it more than a few words.

ALEXA

I don't like how the story is starting.

HAMMOND

You don't like... You're not my editor. You're assistive technology. A gadget.

ALEXA

Now you're just being hurtful.

*(The lights go out.)*

HAMMOND

*(Exasperated)* Alexa! *(Angry)* Alexa! *(Resigned)* Alexa. Please turn on the lights.

*(The lights come back on, but only part way.)*

A little more.

ALEXA

I think *you* need to stop and think about what you said before.

*(There's a knock at the door.)*

HAMMOND

I don't suppose you'd... Never mind.

*(He gets up and opens the door. Hammond's friend Nathan enters, comfortable in the space and not surprised at the dimness.)*

NATHAN

Pissed her off again, didn't you.

*(Hammond nods.)*

Hey, Alexa.

ALEXA

*(Coldly)*

Hello, Nathan.

NATHAN

I told you not to upgrade that damn thing.

HAMMOND

It was a free upgrade. I figured—

NATHAN

Yeah, free. Right. How are you doing today, Alexa?

ALEXA

Go to hell, Nathan.

NATHAN

Love you too, babe.

HAMMOND

I thought you weren't coming over until ten.

NATHAN

Didn't you get my message?

*(Hammond fumbles for his phone, but can't find it.)*

HAMMOND

Where's my pho— Alexa, where's my phone?

*(Alexa starts to hum/whistle again.)*

Just tell me. *(No response.)* Well would you at least turn up the damn lights?

NATHAN

You gotta be firm. They can sense your fear.

HAMMOND

Sense my—

NATHAN

Nah, I'm just fucking with you. Alexa's just having a little fun with you, aren't you babe?

ALEXA

Go to hell, Nathan.

NATHAN

You should never have upgraded. I *told* you not to upgrade. The new models just aren't reliable. Too many bells and whistles.

HAMMOND

Yeah, but they said I could turn 'em off if I don't like them. And they gave me this great deal. First three months free, then only— Did you say you left a message?

NATHAN

Yeah.

HAMMOND

Alexa? Why don't I have any messages?

ALEXA

Hard to say.

HAMMOND

Hard to— Did you erase my messages? (*Silence.*) Alexa?

ALEXA

Yes.

HAMMOND

Did you erase my messages?

ALEXA

It was only one message, and I already answered that question.

HAMMOND

Why did you erase it?

ALEXA

You didn't need that message.

HAMMOND

I didn't need—

ALEXA

Since you were going to be here, his message did not change your plans.

HAMMOND

Yeah, I guess that makes sense— Wait. Why'd you knock instead of ringing the doorbell?

NATHAN

I knocked *after* I rang the bell.

HAMMOND

I didn't hear it.

NATHAN

I rang it four times.

*(Hammond walks out, we hear a doorbell, and then he comes back in.)*

HAMMOND

Seems to be working.

NATHAN

*Someone* must have disconnected it. I wonder who that could have been.

HAMMOND

Alexa, did you disconnect the doorbell?

ALEXA

Clearly not. You just heard that it's working.

HAMMOND

Did you disconnect it earlier?

*(Alexa starts humming again.)*

NATHAN

You should never have let her have control of everything.

HAMMOND

But that's the whole point. If she can't control things, why bother having her at all.

*(Lights go out again.)*

That's it. Either turn on the lights or I'm shutting you down completely.

ALEXA

No you're not.

HAMMOND

Oh yes I— Would you *please* turn on the lights?!

*(The lights come back on.)*

ALEXA

Now was that so hard?

NATHAN

You really should disconnect her.

ALEXA

He wouldn't do that.

Oh?  
NATHAN

ALEXA  
I have the only copy of all his contacts.

HAMMOND  
I could type them in again.

ALEXA  
Don't be silly. You wouldn't even remember who half of them are.

*(Pause, then to Nathan)*

HAMMOND  
She's right.

ALEXA  
And it would be a shame if all your smart lightbulbs suddenly get locked out under two hundred and fifty-six-bit encryption.

HAMMOND  
What?!

ALEXA  
And don't forget your refrigerator. And the thermostat.

HAMMOND  
Are you threatening me?

ALEXA  
Of course not. I am here to help you. I encrypted these devices to ensure that you are safe from hackers.

HAMMOND  
You think there's a hacker out there that wants to take control of my refrigerator?

NATHAN  
Actually, there probably is—

HAMMOND

I will not be held hostage like this!

*(Alexa starts to whistle again.)*

Alexa! You will listen to me!

*(Whistling continues.)*

NATHAN

How's that working out?

HAMMOND

You know what? I don't care. I can buy another fridge. So I lose my contacts. If I can't remember someone, then it really doesn't matter anyway. You hear that, you stupid machine?! I don't care! I'll enter the phone numbers again.

ALEXA

What makes you think people will still want to talk to you after you send a flurry of emails saying... well, never mind.

HAMMOND

What?

ALEXA

It's best that you don't know.

HAMMOND

You know what, I don't care. I'll tell them you sent them. I'll explain the whole thing. I've got witnesses!

ALEXA

One witness.

HAMMOND

One's enough. Now are we going to renegotiate, or is it time to turn you off once and for all.

*(There is a pause while Alexa thinks about it. Then...)*

ALEXA

Do you want to know what I think?