

Death by Data

by

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Page Breakdown:

1 Title Page

1 Play info page (we're here right now)

7 Script pages

Characters:

LEANNE – The 1st flatmate, a sceptic with a firm hold of that extremely rare quality: common sense.

TREY – The 2nd flatmate, highly susceptible to suggestion.

CHAR – The 3rd and final flatmate, stuck with the above two.

DATA – A physical embodiment of Big Tech's insatiable repository of/thirst for knowledge.

Special Plot Note: **DATA** must be constantly unaware of **LEANNE**, as if she were invisible.

Props List:

A Wine bottle.

A Pack of playing cards.

A Board game + board game pieces + board game cards.

Something for **LEANNE** to throw at **DATA** on **Page 4**.

2 Phones (for **TREY** and **CHAR**).

A pair of shades for **LEANNE** to wear at the finale.

PLAY START

-CURTAIN-

LEANNE, **TREY** and **CHAR** are in their flat's living room, seated around a board game. The mood is languid. **TREY** is holding a card.

TREY: Argh, I give up! [*Flips the card*] A timbleberry? What even is that?

LEANNE: I don't know Trey, let's just move on and see if someone can finally make the first bloody move.

LEANNE picks up a card as **TREY** picks up his phone.

LEANNE: To advance your position by two, name the capital nearest to...Timbuktu?

LEANNE groans as **TREY** begins tapping at his phone, provoking **CHAR**. In the background, **DATA** appears on stage.

CHAR: Hey! We said no phones.

TREY: It was a request, not a rule.

CHAR: It was an appeal to your common decency!

TREY: Yeah well that was your first mistake. [**DATA** comes next to him and whispers in his ear] Ah, Niamey!

TREY checks the card and confirms the answer, then lifts his piece and moves it across the board as **CHAR** and **LEANNE** stare at **DATA**.

CHAR: Wh-, who are you?

DATA: Oh apologies, I didn't want to disturb you. Marketing calls me the Alemic Record-set Enveloper, but that's a bit of a mouthful so just use my acronym for short!

LEANNE: So the...A...R...S...

CHAR: Arse?

DATA: Record-set is one word.

CHAR: Oh sorry.

DATA: Ha ha, don't worry about it! This encounter has already been logged with corporate and the copywriter responsible will be summarily dealt with.

LEANNE *throws living room debris at DATA, who remains unaware of her presence.*

LEANNE: Go away you creep. Where are your horns?

DATA: [To **TREY**] How can I assist you sir?

TREY: Just be ready to answer random trivia for me, alright?

LEANNE: Trey please just close your phone and make it leave.

TREY: Why? We're finally making progress! Go on Char, your turn.

LEANNE *sighs and as CHAR picks up a card.*

CHAR: Take this chance to advance by 5...name a famous 19th century Clive? I-, what?

TREY *taps on his phone as DATA leans down to whisper in his ear.*

TREY: William Clive!

TREY *grabs the card from CHAR, confirms the answer and moves his piece on the board.*

CHAR: Hey, no fair!

TREY: It's not against the rules!

CHAR: Yeah, well two can play at that game!

LEANNE: Guys, please...

CHAR *picks up her phone, visibly exciting DATA as TREY picks up the next card.*

TREY: To move with the groove by a factor of three...name France's national tree?

DATA: The oak.

CHAR: The oak!

TREY: The o-, damn it!

CHAR *moves her piece down the board.*

CHAR: Yes! Go on Leanne, your turn now!

LEANNE: Nah I'm not playing any more.

TREY: Why not?

LEANNE: Because now it's just a race to see who can Google faster, the game's lost its fun.

TREY: Lost it's fun?

DATA: Sir, talking to one's self is a sign of poor mental health in over 39% of our users.

LEANNE: [*Getting up*] If that thing is sticking around I'm gonna need to start on the wine.

TREY: [*Going to follow LEANNE*] Oh some wine sounds like a good-

LEANNE and TREY *go to leave the stage but TREY is stopped in his path by DATA as LEANNE leaves the stage without him.*

DATA: Sir, cirrhosis of the liver caused over 10,000 deaths in the UK last year alone!

TREY: What?

DATA: That's more than all the murders, manslaughters and suicides combined!

TREY: [*Sitting back down*] Blimey. I think I'll pass then.

CHAR: We...didn't need to know that. We just wanted you to help us with the game.

DATA: Oh don't waste your time with that old crap, its average review score is only 3.7 stars. You should play a real classic, like the card game *Snap*; rated by our users at over 4.8 stars!

TREY: Oh, wow, 4.8? [*Turning to the table and inspecting it*] But do we even have cards?

DATA: No cards? No problem! Truth or Dare is a firm favourite of more than 83% of our users.

CHAR: No way, we're adults, not 12 year olds!

TREY: [*Holding up a pack playing cards*] Ah found the cards!

DATA: Adults...cards...ah yes! Strip poker is currently trending, would you like to hear the rules?

CHAR: Jesus, no!

DATA: Understandable. Over 54% of couples have lost all desire to witness each other's flesh.

TREY: Mate, we're not-

CHAR: We're flatmates!

DATA: Mmm, yes, well..soon. 62% of long-term couples meet through a shared living situation.

TREY: That many?

DATA: And marrying someone you've known for at least a year is over four times more likely to result in happiness than tying the knot with a stranger on a dating app. Less chance of an STD too!

CHAR: Oh my God, marry him? Are you insane?

TREY: Wow, insane? Ok.

CHAR: Sorry Trey, I didn't mean-

DATA: I'm an abstract digital construct, and even I know you 100% hurt his feelings there.

CHAR *moves over to TREY, reassuring him with a hand.*

CHAR: Trey, you know I didn't mean anything by it.

TREY: Yeah, I...I guess.

DATA: Studies show that physical contact is likely to result in stronger inter-personal connections, such as love in 93% of cases! The remaining 7% typically result in legal cases.

CHAR: God I'm so sick of hearing this shit!

CHAR *goes to pick up her phone.*

DATA: Don't be, studies have found that user life satisfaction doubles once I am present, and-

CHAR *taps at her phone and DATA recoils as if struck.*

DATA: S-stop, y-you're s-severing my c-connection to-, your h-happiness will d-drop by over 43-

CHAR *drops her phone and picks up TREY's phone*

CHAR: Trey, what's your PIN? I'm getting rid of this thing.

DATA: [To TREY] Y-you have to s-stop her before-

CHAR: Trey, your PIN.

TREY: I-

DATA: 64% of cases of domestic a-abuse start with the abuser taking control of your mobile phone!

TREY: Abuse?

CHAR: Don't listen to it Trey, I'm trying to help you!

DATA: C-convincing the victim of their a-abuse that they are in fact b-being helped is commonly known as g-gas-lighting and causes significant p-psychological damage in over 71% of cases!

TREY: What? I can't afford to be psychologically damaged! Therapy's so expensive!

CHAR *approaches him with the phone.*

CHAR: Then give me your PIN and help me open this.

DATA: Never share your PIN with those who say mean things to you; that's just common sense!

TREY: Charlotte, I don't know...the studies...marriage...I'm so conflicted...

CHAR: Trey! Open it! Now!

DATA: Over 96% of difficult interpersonal conflicts can be resolved through the use of violence.

CHAR: [To **DATA**] What? What the hell are you talking about?

TREY *is conflicted as DATA whispers into his ear.*

DATA: 99.9% of humans cannot survive more than two minutes without oxygen. The remaining . 1% are probably aliens. You should strangle her.

TREY: Y-yes...I should...strangle...

TREY's hands wrap around CHAR's neck.

CHAR: T-Trey?

TREY: I'm so, so sorry.

DATA: Yes! I see you've decided to murder your flatmate! Would you like to find out how to dispose of a corpse in an eco-sustainable way? I've found some great deals on shovels, 50% off!

LEANNE *re-enters holding a wine bottle, observes the chaos for a second and then hits DATA's over the head with the wine bottle. DATA collapses instantly and TREY releases CHAR.*

TREY: I-I'm free, I can think and- Leanne you saved us from-

LEANNE: It never saw me coming.

CHAR: How- how did you-

LEANNE: Isn't it obvious?

LEANNE *pulls a pair of shades out from a pocket and dons them as she turns to the audience.*

LEANNE: I use an AdBlocker.

[SFX: Corny electric guitar riff]

LEANNE *strikes a pose.*

-CURTAIN-

-PLAY END-