

WHAT TIME DID YOU SAY?

by Brigid Amos

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## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

SYDNEY: Any age, gender, or ethnicity.

TAYLOR: Any age, gender, or ethnicity.

The play takes place in the living room of SYDNEY's abode. The time is 11:45 am CDT.

Notes:

-Unless beginning a line, times are written digitally, so 11:00 is "eleven" etc.

-Acronyms are spelled out in letters, e.g. EST is "E-S-T."

-"/" indicates where the next character begins speaking but the first does not break off.

AT RISE:

SYDNEY is lying on the living room couch reading a book. SYDNEY looks at a wristwatch, jumps up, and scurries about getting ready to go out. As SYDNEY approaches the door, there is a knock. SYDNEY opens the door to reveal TAYLOR.

SYDNEY

Taylor! What are you doing here?

TAYLOR

(Pushing past SYDNEY.)

Oh I don't know. Thought I'd take a little walk and stop by. See what you were doing.

SYNDEY

What I was doing? I was just heading out of course. In fact when you knocked I was just—

TAYLOR spots the book on the couch and snatches it up.

TAYLOR

Ah ha! Let me guess. Lying on the couch, reading a book.

SYDNEY

Well yes I was, but I—

TAYLOR

Losing track of time, as always. Am I right? Just admit it. I'm right, aren't I?

SYDNEY

No you are not right. I did not lose track of time. Sydney, what *are* you doing here anyway? We were supposed to meet at the restaurant.

TAYLOR

Oh, I was at the restaurant. Yes indeed, I was there. And how long was I supposed to sit there waiting for you?

SYDNEY

(Looking at watch.)

Hang on. It's only/ 11:45 am and—

TAYLOR

(Grabbing SYDNEY's wrist.)

Oh you do have a watch. And look! It's running. I can see the second hand going round and round.

SYDNEY

I was just going out the door. It literally takes me ten minutes to walk from here to the restaurant, so I'd arrive five minutes early. You really couldn't wait fifteen more minutes/ until I get there?

TAYLOR

We were supposed to meet at the restaurant at 11:00 am. I got there at 10:50 am. If I'd sat there until 12:00 pm, I would've sat there like a dummy for an hour and ten minutes. As it was, I left at 11:30 am and walked here because frankly the place was already crowded. They kept coming to the table, asking me again and again if I wanted to order anything besides coffee. I kept saying no thank you, not at the moment. I'm waiting for my friend.

SYDNEY

(Touched.)

You called me your friend?

TAYLOR

I didn't know how to describe you. Anyway, you weren't there so/ I left.

SYDNEY

I wasn't there because we were supposed to meet at 12:00 pm.

TAYLOR

You said 11:00 am.

SYDNEY

No, I'm sure I—

TAYLOR

Yes, you did. You said 11:00 am.

SYDNEY

It was lunch. I never would've said 11:00 am for lunch. I said 12:00 pm. Twelve pm is lunch. Eleven am is brunch. I never would've scheduled brunch. I don't even eat brunch for heaven's sake. You know that.

TAYLOR holds up cell phone for SYDNEY to see.

SYDNEY

What? What are you showing me?

Here's the text you sent me. TAYLOR

Ok. SYDNEY

Read it. TAYLOR

Ok, I read it. SYDNEY

Out loud. TAYLOR

Let's meet at the Cocky Rooster at 11:00 am EST. SYDNEY

So? TAYLOR

So what? SYDNEY

You see it don't you? TAYLOR

Yes. I see it. But it's daylight saving time now. SYDNEY

What? TAYLOR

Daylight saving time. You see, I said let's meet at 11:00 am EST. EST stands for Eastern Standard Time. But we're in daylight saving time now, so that's really 12:00 pm EDT which is Eastern Daylight Time so— SYDNEY

What? TAYLOR

Well, you see, in daylight saving time you turn the clocks ahead an hour and— SYDNEY

TAYLOR

I know how daylight saving time works. Why on earth, if you wanted to meet at 12:00 pm, would you give me the time as EST? We've been in daylight saving time since March. We're all on the same local time here. I mean, why not just say noon? Or just 12:00? The Cocky Rooster's only open till 2:00 pm. I'm not going to show up there at midnight or anything.

SYDNEY

Force of habit, I guess.

TAYLOR

Force of habit.

SYDNEY

Yes.

TAYLOR

You never had this habit before.

SYDNEY

Well, you're forgetting the work I do. I always use EST in my work because I have to schedule online meetings with people all over the country, and you know, some states don't have daylight saving time.

TAYLOR

This one does.

SYDNEY

Ok, but when you're scheduling with people all over the country, you really have to stick to one time zone. If you didn't, I mean, think how confusing that is, because their time zones are all over the place, and some are ST only and some are DT some of the time and... What?

TAYLOR

Nothing, I'm listening.

SYDNEY

OK. Well, it makes it simpler if you give everyone the time in EST, so that's what I did. Force of habit.

TAYLOR

Sydney, listen. Going forward? When we schedule to meet somewhere. In person. Let's just use local time.

SYDNEY

Ok fine. But, Taylor, you really need to get used to this. We're in a very interconnected world now, and you need to know the difference between EST and EDT.

TAYLOR

Sydney, I do know the difference.

SYDNEY

Well then, Taylor, you should have gone there a little before 12:00 pm EDT. Did you not notice the EST?

TAYLOR

Frankly, I never dreamt you were giving me the time in EST. I assumed EDT. People don't do that.

SYDNEY

They do. I just explained—

TAYLOR

To set up a lunch in the same city? I don't know anyone who does that.

SYDNEY

I do. And you know me.

TAYLOR

Well stop.

SYDNEY

Fine. If you prefer confusion over—

TAYLOR

Stop!

(Slight pause.)

I'm starving. Let's go. It's going to be a bear to get a table in that place during lunch hour. Eleven am would've been better, and I meant 11:00 am EDT not EST would've been better.

SYDNEY

That's brunch not lunch.

TAYLOR

All right. Let's go and eat whatever they're serving now.

SYDNEY

Yeah, I'm hungry too. I could actually eat a Cocky Rooster.

They start for the door, but TAYLOR stops at a sudden thought.

Wait a minute.

TAYLOR

What?

SYDNEY

Wait just a minute.

TAYLOR  
(Working it out.)

What is it?

SYDNEY

We're in Nebraska.

TAYLOR

So?

SYDNEY

We're in the Central Time Zone.

TAYLOR

We're in the center of the country so—

SYDNEY

CST. CDT. Not EST, EDT.

TAYLOR

Oh, yeah, but since my company's headquarters are in New York, I always do everything in Eastern Standard Time. Otherwise all those New Yorkers just get confused.

SYDNEY

You're the one who's confused.

TAYLOR

Huh?

SYDNEY

You said to meet at 11:00 am EST. That's 11:00 am Eastern Standard Time. But we're in Nebraska, so that would be 10:00 am CST, Central Standard Time. But since we're in daylight saving time now, that would be 11:00 am CDT, Central Daylight Time. So I was there at exactly the time you told me to be there. Eleven am local time.



Long pause as SYDNEY works this out.

SYDNEY

You know? From now on, let's just use local time when we're meeting somewhere.

TAYLOR

That's a great idea.

SYDNEY

I think so. Less confusing.

TAYLOR

(Heading for the door again.)

Come on. I need a cheese omelet.

SYDNEY

Really? A cheese omelet is something you order for breakfast or brunch. This is lunch. You should order a BLT or something like that.

TAYLOR stops, slowly turns, and stares at SYDNEY.

SYDNEY

(A bit cowed.)

Cheese omelet sounds good.

SYNDEY and TAYLOR exit through the door.

END OF PLAY