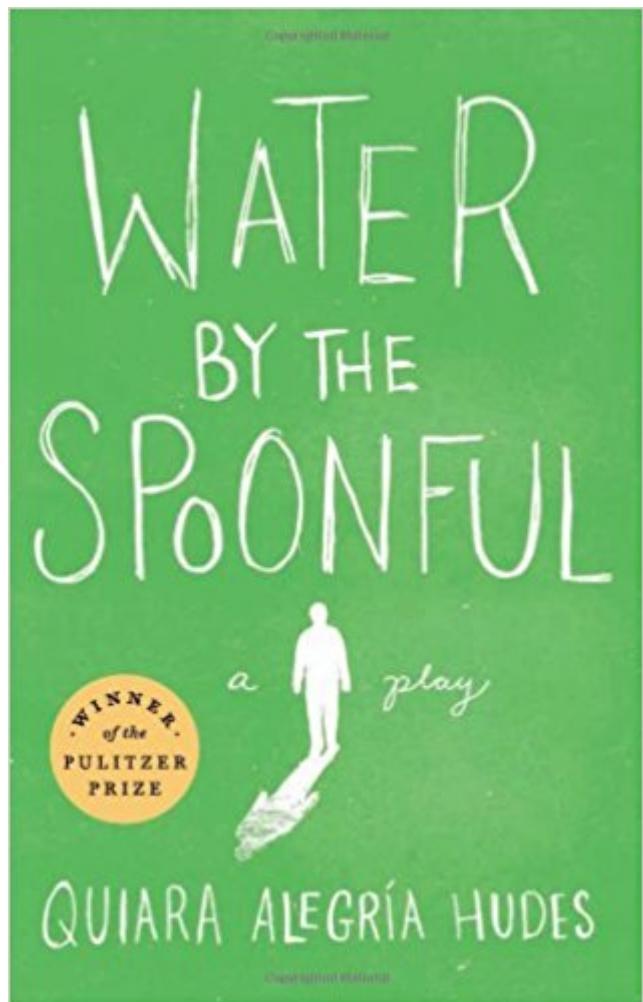


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# Water By The Spoonful



## Synopsis

How many plays make us long for grace? *Water by the Spoonful* by Quiara Hudes is such a rare play; it is a yearning, funny, deeply sad and deeply lyrical piece, a worthy companion to Hudes' *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*. The play infects us with the urge to find connection within our families and communities and remains with us long after we've left the theater. •

Paula Vogel, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *How I Learned to Drive*; Hudes' writing is controlled and graceful. Each of the play's 15 short scenes is perfectly balanced, the language both lyrical and lucid. • Richard Zoglin, *Time*; For a drama peopled by characters who have traveled a long way in the dark, *Water by the Spoonful* gives off a shimmering, sustaining warmth. Ms. Hudes writes with such empathy and vibrant humor about people helping one another to face down their demons that regeneration and renewal always seem to be just around the corner. • Charles Isherwood, *New York Times*; Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Water by the Spoonful* is a rich, brilliant montage of American urban life that is as dazzling to watch as it is difficult to look away from. • (Associated Press). Somewhere in Philadelphia, Elliot has returned from Iraq and is struggling to find his place in the world. Somewhere in a chat room, recovering addicts forge an unbreakable bond of support and love. The boundaries of family and community are stretched across continents and cyberspace as birth families splinter and online families collide. *Water by the Spoonful* is a heartfelt and poetic meditation on lives on the brink of redemption and self-discovery during a time of heightened uncertainty, as startling and innovative and human on the page as on the stage. • (Junot Díaz, Pulitzer Prize-Winning author). Hudes' cycle of three plays began with *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue* (Pulitzer Prize finalist) and concludes with *The Happiest Song Plays Last*. Quiara Alegría Hudes is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Water by the Spoonful*, the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights* and the Pulitzer Prize finalist *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*. Her other works include *Barrio Grrrl*, a children's musical; *26 Miles*; *Yemaya's Belly* and *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, the third piece in her acclaimed trilogy. Hudes is on the board of Philadelphia Young Playwrights, which produced her first play in the tenth grade. She now lives in New York with her husband and children.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“A beautiful, heartbreaking knockout of a play, as startling and innovative and human on the page as on the stage.” • Junot Díaz, Pulitzer Prize-Winning author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* “This is one of the best new plays I’ve seen in years. This is a very funny, warm, and yes, uplifting play with characters that are vivid, vital, and who stay with you long after the play is over.” • Frank Rizzo, *Hartford Courant* “To Hudes’ credit and our benefit, the ways in which the people within those worlds bicker, undermine and support each other are as compelling as the inevitable intersections and intrusions between them.” • Robert Hurwitt, *San Francisco Gate* “Hudes corrals harsh voices and brutal stories into a magnificent whole that is beautiful not because it is lovely but because it is brokenheartedly tender and true.” • Charles McNulty, *LA Times* “Beautifully resounding drama... The playwright examines an array of emotional toils by splashing together droplets of life’s bleak realities, harsh revelations, fragile successes and modest triumphs, all of which conspire like tiny specks of contrasting colors on a canvas. A rich, brilliant montage of American urban life that is as dazzling to watch as it is difficult to look away from.” • Peter Santilli, *Associated Press* “Hudes brilliantly taps into both the family ties that bind as well as the alternative cyber universe.” Her dialogue is bright, her characters, compelling; It’s only when cyber meets the real world that anger gives way to forgiveness and resistance becomes redemption; the heart of the play opens up and the waters flow freely. • Variety “A beautiful, heartbreaking knockout of a play, as startling and innovative and human on the page as on the stage.” • “Junot Díaz, Pulitzer Prize-Winning author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* “This is one of the best new plays I’ve seen in years. This is a very funny, warm, and yes, uplifting play with characters that are vivid, vital, and who stay with you long after the play is over.” • “Frank Rizzo, *Hartford Courant* “To Hudes’

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Bought the text after seeing a production of the play. This is really powerful stuff--and very timely (one of the characters is an Iraqi War vet). One especially clever writing technique is having the characters from a "chat room" speak what they are posting--but without any obvious/literal typing on a keyboard. In performance, this allows the actors to look at each other, and interact (sometimes, quite closely). As you read the play, it's easy to "miss" this, and forget that these people are miles apart--both physically and psychologically. Despite the many heartbreakng themes, there is considerable humor--again, easy to miss if you are not attuned to irony/sarcasm. And, although the play is painful, it ends on notes of hope and optimism.

This play is a lovely read. The characters are well-developed, each with human flaws but a sense of hope surrounding each of them. This play explores relationships within a blood families, as well as relationships within an online chat room family of recovering crack addicts. Each character struggles

with forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others. At the end of the play, each character has to go down the road that is right for him/her - and the choice for each person varies depending on their own needs. It's a complex look at life that does not have the neat and tidy Disney ending, but ends in a way that is satisfactory. Most characters grow and change as they face the situations of the play. An extremely satisfying read.

Quiara does a great job in the transitions from scene to scene. The story is captivating but ends abruptly at a point where the reader doesn't want it to end. Out of the three scripts they follow this story Water by The Spoonful is the best one. It doesn't require the reader or viewers to have read the previous script. It touches the subject of drug abuse, death, and family.

I honestly don't see the appeal. The only "good" thing was the realness factor. But it's honestly like a stale live performance show. The characters seem pretty unlikeable throughout the story and I was ultimately surprised to find out how celebrated this book was

Great condition and very good for use in class!

Very well written play with an interesting perspective on characters and the subject it handles is very moving.

This is a very original, densely emotional and verbal play. It relies on the conceit that the same set of characters operate by different names on different sides of the stage - one representing their everyday reality, the other their relationships on the internet under different names. I have not seen it, but I found it complex to visualize, and like a film it relies on visual metaphors to communicate its full meaning. Reading it made me want to see it. It explores the bizarre discrepancies in our lonely real lives and our gregarious online lives in a way that ultimately seems deeply -- and counterintuitively hopeful. The publication would benefit from photos or drawings that help the reader follow the characters in their different incarnations.

Left me heartbroken. A must-read.

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