

Texan sues first date who texted at movie

United States

Will Pavia New York

On the screen at a multiplex cinema in Texas a troop of interstellar superheroes were beset by a monster and a fleet of drones, and by new revelations about the mysterious father of their leader.

Yet Brandon Vezmar, 37, watching from his seat as the drama developed, witnessed an even greater outrage unfolding before his very eyes: the woman beside him, his date for the evening, was texting on her phone.

Mr Vezmar is wreaking a terrible vengeance: he has sued her for \$17.31 in a local small claims court in a complaint that describes her conduct as "a threat to civilised society".

He told the *Austin American-Statesman* newspaper that his effort to recover the price of his cinema ticket followed "a first date from hell". They had gone to see *Guardians of the Galaxy, Vol. 2*, at a multiplex on the outskirts of Austin. Fifteen minutes into the film, he said, she had begun texting. "This is, like, one of my biggest pet peeves," Mr Vezmar said.

He claims that while the Guardians were on their tricky quest to discover the parentage and origins of Peter Quill, the Star-Lord, his 35-year-old date "activated her phone at least 10-20 times in 15 minutes to read and send text messages".

He said he had asked her to stop, but

she refused. When he insisted, she left the Barton Creek Square multiplex — and never came back. This was a problem for Mr Vezmar as she was driving, and he had no other way of getting home.

Mr Vezmar did not possess the super-human powers of Peter Quill, a master of alien firearms who is said to have a psychic link to his space ship, but he does work as a communications consultant, and he was sure that he had justice on his side. After texting her several requests for the \$17.31, he filed a lawsuit.

Soon an eclectic regiment of supporters were massing behind him. One suggested that this should be a class-action. James Gunn, director of *Guardians of the Galaxy*, weighed in too. "Why stop at suing? She deserves jail time," he wrote on Twitter.

His foe in this battle sought to remain anonymous but told the *Austin American-Statesman* that she had been texting one of her friends who had had a difficult fight with a boyfriend. She gave a statement to a local television station. "I did have a very brief date with Brandon, that I chose to end prematurely," she said. "He has escalated the situation far past what any mentally healthy person would. I feel sorry that I hurt his feelings badly enough that he felt he needed to commit so much time and effort into seeking revenge. I hope one day he can move past this and find peace in his life."