

## Missed Calls

### 5 page Future Shock – full script

DAVID BAILLIE

#### Page 1

**Panel 1** - Our protagonist, JIM BIRYANI, lies asleep in bed as the mobile phone resting on his dressing table goes off, rudely interrupting his dreams and illuminating the darkened room.

JIM is a young professional in his mid twenties with a trendy haircut and an Ikea furnished bedroom.

**Caption:**

I USED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY LIFE. I HAD NO IDEA HOW GOOD IT WAS BEFORE... BEFORE...

**Caption:**

BEFORE.

**Sfx:**

*Ring Ring ... Ring Ring ...*

**Panel 2** - Tighter on JIM as he answers the phone, bleary eyed and not quite awake.

**Jim:**

HELLO?

**Phone voice:**

STOCKS OF LEMONADE ARE DANGEROUSLY LOW. THE  
WAREHOUSES MUST BE REPLENISHED.

**Jim:**

WHAT?

**Jim:**

WHO THE HELL IS THIS?

**Panel 3** - He hangs up, baffled and pissed off. The VOICE continues until he cuts it off.

*The first caption is at the top of panel 3 and the second at the bottom, sandwiching the telephone speech bubble.*

**Caption:**

IF I COULD RETURN TO THOSE DAYS, I'D NEVER COMPLAIN  
AGAIN. I SWEAR.  
MY NAME IS JIM.  
JIM BIRYANI.

**Phone Voice:**

STOCKS OF LEMONA -

**Caption:**

LET ME TELL YOU A STORY.

**Panel 4** - The next morning. JIM readies himself for work in front of his full-length bedroom mirror. He's dressed smartly – suit, tie, shiny shoes and gelled-up hair.

**Jim (thinks):**

WHAT A BIZARRE PHONE CALL. I WONDER WHAT THE **HELL** IT WAS ABOUT.

**Jim (thinks):**

PROBABLY SAM GOT PISSED IN SOME DODGY WATERING HOLE AND DECIDED TO PLAY A PRACTICAL JOKE.

**Jim (thinks):**

I'LL HAVE TO HAVE WORDS WITH THAT BLOODY JOKER NEXT TIME I SEE HIM.

**Panel 5** - JIM at work in a Dilbert-like cubicle office.

He sits at a desk with a PC and two tidy stacks of paper in front of him.

He is talking to someone on his mobile phone:

**Caption:**

THEY CALLED TO **APOLOGISE** OF COURSE.

**Phone voice:**

**TERRIBLY** SORRY MR BIRYANI - IT'S OUR AUTOMATIC RESTOCKING SYSTEM YOU SEE. IT TELEPHONES THE LOCAL SUPPLIER WHENEVER ONE OF OUR VENDING MACHINES RUNS LOW ON A PARTICULAR ITEM - AND YOUR PHONE NUMBER WAS **ACCIDENTALLY** SAVED INSTEAD OF HIS

**Phone voice:**

JUST **ONE DIGIT** OF A DIFFERENCE. DREADFUL COCK UP ON OUR PART AND IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN. YOU HAVE MY **PERSONAL** GUARANTEE.

**Page 2**

**Panel 1** – JIM stands by the water cooler in the same office. His colleagues chat around in the background as his mobile rings again. This time we can see the 'PRIVATE NUMBER' message on its digital display.

**Caption:**

THAT'S HOW IT **WORKS** - THEY THROW YOU OFF THE SCENT AND GIVE YOU A SLIVER OF **HOPE**.

**Caption:**

NOT THAT I HAD **ANY** NOTION OF THIS AT THE TIME.

**Sfx:**

*Ring Ring ... Ring Ring ...*

**Panel 2** – JIM picks up and hears the PHONE VOICE again. He's visibly shaken by this, as he wasn't expecting it.

**Caption:**

IT WAS THAT SAME VOICE AGAIN - COLD, ELECTRONIC AND INDIFFERENT YET AT THE SAME TIME **PLEADING** FOR SOMETHING I COULDN'T GIVE IT.

**Phone voice:**

WE HAVE NO CLOTHES. PLEASE DELIVER US SOME CLOTHES.

**Panel 3** - JIM hangs up but the mobile rings again immediately.

**Caption:**

BUT THEY JUST WOULDN'T STOP.

**Sfx:**

*Ring Ring ... Ring Ring ...*

**Panel 4** - and it's the same VOICE again!

**Phone voice:**

WE HAVE NO BRICKS. PLEASE SEND US MORE BRICKS.

**Jim (thinks):**

BRICKS? WHAT SORT OF **BLOODY** VENDING MACHINE -

**Phone voice:**

WITHOUT BRICKS WE CAN'T BUILD HOUSES THE PEOPLE WILL  
GO WITHOUT SHELTER.

**Panel 5** – He switches the phone off.

Perhaps the phone can display a 'Switching Off' message or something to convey this to the reader.

**Caption:**

OF COURSE IT FREAKED ME OUT. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS  
HAPPENING. IT CERTAINLY DIDN'T SOUND LIKE AN AUTOMATED  
VENDING SYSTEM AND I RECKONED IT HAD GONE TOO **FAR** TO  
BE A PRACTICAL JOKE.

**Panel 6** – And when he SWITCHES the phone back on the calls continue

**Jim:**

WHAT **THE** - ?

**Sfx:**

*Ring Ring ...*

**Panel 1** – JIM stands at the counter of a mobile phone shop explaining his problem to a nerdy manager type, who is slightly younger than he is.

He is agitated.

**Caption:**

I EVEN CHANGED MY MOBILE NUMBER. I EXPLAINED TO THE SPOTTY SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD IN THE SHOP THAT I HAD A STALKER AND HE WAS MORE THAN HAPPY TO GIVE ME A NEW NUMBER... AFTER **CONSULTING** THE COMPANY MANUAL... AND **CALLING** HEAD OFFICE.

**Caption:**

TWICE.

**Panel 2** – JIM sits at a pub table with some mates.

They all seem to be having a fine time except JIM who is alarmed to discover that his new mobile number seems to be getting these calls as well.

He is more distressed and desperate each time this happens.

**Caption:**

THAT DIDN'T HELP.

**Phone voice:**

PLEASE LISTEN. THE PEOPLE ARE COLD, HUNGRY AND THIRSTY.  
WE NEED -

**Panel 3** - Finally he throws it off a bridge – his car still ticking over on one side of the road.

**Jim:**

HA HA HA HA

PHONE ME **NOW** YOU BASTARDS!

**Panel 4** - At work the next day JIM seems refreshed, free from the worry of the mysterious robot caller

**Jim (thinks):**

THANK GOD THAT'S ALL OVER WITH. I CAN DO WITHOUT A PHONE UNTIL I FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON. MUST BE SOME MIX UP WITH A DIRECTORY SERVICE OR SOMETHING.

**Caption:**

I RATIONALISED THE WHOLE THING.

**Panel 5** – Back in the cubicle farm. Bright sunlight streams in through large windows in the background. JIM's desk phone rings, from behind a pile of papers (which are noticeably less tidy than when we saw them before) and he casually picks it up.

**Jim:**

HELLO?

**Panel 6** – He realises it's THE VOICE again and his expression changes to one of horror...

**Phone voice:**

MR BIRYANI WE NEED YOUR HELP. THE PEOPLE ARE STARVING.  
IT IS A COLD AND DARK NIGHT. THEY NEED –

**Page 4**

**Panel 1** - JIM goes absolutely nuts! He pulls the phone out of its socket, throwing it against the wall. Spittle flies from his mouth, just like when The Hulk gets fed up with puny humans bugging him and wigs out, leaving gobs of saliva all over the place.

**Jim:**

**RAAAARGH!**

**Panel 2** – JIM storms out of the office.

As he goes, office phones all around him ring. His fellow cube dwellers look on, baffled as all their desk phones ring simultaneously.

**Multiple Sfx:**

*RING RING ... RING RING ... RING RING ...*

**Panel 3** - The pay phone in the car park rings as he gets in his car; he glares at it like a maniac, his grip on sanity loosening quickly.

**Sfx:**

*RING RING ...*

**Panel 4** –Safely inside his home, JIM collapses in a despondent heap beside the front door, cradles his head in his hands and sobs like a child.

**Caption:**

**THEY HAD PUSHED ME TOO FAR. I WAS **BROKEN**.**

**Panel 5** - Close up on JIM as a phone within the house rings – he had forgotten all about his landline.

His eyes are bloodshot - tears and drops of sweat mingle as they run down his tortured face.

**Caption:**

AND THEY JUST KEPT **PUSHING!**

**Sfx:**

*Bring ring. Bring ring.*

**Panel 6** – Pull out so we can see JIM on the floor, and the landline telephone in the same shot. It's an innocent looking phone, benignly sitting upon a lovely Ikea miniature table. JIM lies motionless, his eyes wide and unfocused, as the phone rings out onto answer machine.

**Sfx:**

*Bring ring. Bring ring – **Beep!***

**Answering Machine:**

THIS IS JIM, PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE.

**Phone Voice:**

ALL OF THE PEOPLE ARE DEAD. NONE HAVE SURVIVED. PLEASE  
DO NOT SEND SUPPLIES NOW, AS IT WILL BE TOO LATE AND  
THEY WILL ONLY GO TO WASTE.

THANK YOU...

FOR YOUR TIME.

**Sfx:**

***BEEP***

**Page 5**

**Panel 1** - Silent panel as JIM sleeps exactly where we last saw him. The new day's sunlight shines in through the hall window, but he lies in a patch of shadow.

**Panel 2** - JIM wakes up.

He's looking really rough, and still bewildered.

**Caption:**

I WAS BARELY HALF A MAN WHEN I WOKE THE NEXT DAY.

**Jim (thinks):**

I'M GOING MAD. IT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION. I NEED TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE – A DOCTOR OR A SHRINK OR... **SOMEONE...**

**Panel 3** – JIM lurches for the front door

**Jim (thinks):**

I HAVE TO GET MYSELF CHECKED OUT. MAYBE SOMEONE SPIKED MY COFFEE AT WORK. MAYBE I'M SCHIZOPHRENIC. MAYBE -

**Panel 4** – Medium shot as JIM opens the front door and we see his face, his features hard in the bright morning sunlight.

His eyeballs are in danger of falling out of their sockets.

**Panel 5** – Long shot showing JIM standing at his open front door looking out onto a world that defies belief. His house is the only one still standing – all around is rubble and debris.

Naked, starving people lie everywhere for as far as the eye can see.

The sun is blood red in the sky.

**Caption:**

AND THAT'S HOW THIS ALL STARTED.

IF ONLY I'D KNOWN, IF ONLY I'D UNDERSTOOD WHAT WAS  
GOING ON...

**Caption:**

I USED TO COMPLAIN.

**Caption:**

I HAD NO IDEA HOW GOOD IT WAS...

**FIN**