

The History Lesson

5 page Future Shock – full script

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Page 1

Panel 1

Close up of a prim and proper school teacher type character (her hair is scraped back into a tight bun and she is wearing thick rimmed glasses). She stands behind her desk, upon which rests some sort of holographic projection device. The hologram it produces looks uncannily like Tony Blair, but he appears to be bound in a straight jacket and his chin is wet with drool.

The light from the hologram picks out the fine features of the teacher's face as she looks up at the class.

OP:

OK CHILDREN - THAT'S THE END OF THE **HOLOGRAPHIC**
PART OF THE LESSON. IF YOU COULD ALL CLOSE YOUR
PROJECTORS AND PAY ME YOUR FULL ATTENTION IT
WOULD BE **MOST** APPRECIATED.

Panel 2

Pull out to show a very conventional (almost idyllic) classroom. The teacher is immaculately dressed, as are the twenty or so children who are obediently putting away their individual holographic equipment.

Despite the advanced technology the scene doesn't look futuristic at all - in fact if anything it looks slightly old fashioned.

Teacher:

THANK YOU CLASS.

Teacher:

AND NOW WE WILL BE CONTINUING OUR DISCUSSION ON
THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMPUTER AND HOW IT HAS
BENEFITED CIVILISATION.

Panel 3

One of the children, obviously the smart arse of the class (his hair is in a perfect side shed and he's carrying a few extra pounds that he definitely shouldn't be) cannot hide his excitement.

Timothy:

YIPPEE !

Teacher:

YES TIMOTHY, YIPPEE INDEED. NOW WHERE DID WE
LEAVE OFF LAST TIME?

Panel 4

Timothy's hand is first in the air. The teacher smiles appreciatively.

Teacher:

YES TIMOTHY?

Panel 5

Close up of the swot as he tells us...

Timothy:

YOU HAD EXPLAINED TO THE CLASS HOW THE COMPUTER
EVOLVED AS AN ENTITY INITIALLY DRIVEN BY ITS
OBVIOUS INDUSTRIAL AND MILITARY APPLICATIONS, BUT
THAT WHEN IT BECAME MORE WIDELY USED IN THE HOME
LARGE CORPORATIONS GREW FROM EXISTING SMALL
COMPANIES AND -

Panel 6

Middle shot of the teacher, gesticulating as she continues...

Teacher:

CORRECT TIMOTHY. REMIND ME TO REWARD YOU LATER.

Teacher:

JUST LIKE MIGHTY **OAKS** GROWING FROM TINY **ACORNS**
PRODIGIOUS CORPORATIONS EMERGED FROM THE MANY
SMALL SCALE TECHNOLOGY START-UPS THAT
PROLIFERATED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTY FIRST
CENTURY

Page 2

Panel 1

The teacher walks up an aisle of the classroom, between the desks.

The eyes of the children follow her devotedly.

Teacher:

TO STAY **COMPETITIVE** THESE MONOLITHIC COMPANIES
SPENT MILLIONS OF OLD-STYLE POUNDS, DOLLARS AND
EUROS ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Teacher:

DETERMINED TO ENGINEER THE **FASTEST** MOST
POWERFUL MACHINE ON THE MARKET.

Panel 2

Close-up as she asks

Teacher:

CAN ANYONE TELL ME WHAT WENT WRONG WITH THIS
APPARENTLY IDEAL STRATEGY?

Panel 3

Pull out to show Timothy with his hand as high in the air as he can manage.
The girl sitting next to him is a bright looking little girl with long blonde pigtails. She looks like she might know the answer.

Teacher:

AMANDA - DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED?

Panel 4

Close-up of young Amanda, who speaks with an unfortunate lithp.

Amanda:

THEY THATURATED THE MARKET, MITH. PEOPLE HAD NO
DETHIRE FOR FATH-TER OR MORE POWERFUL
COMPUTERTH ATH THE ONETH THEY HAD WERE
PERFECTLY ADEQUATE FOR EVERYDAY UTHE.

Panel 5

The teacher looks pleased with her class, young Amanda in particular.

Teacher:

EXCELLENT!

Teacher:

AND WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

Panel 6

Timothy is so excited he can't even wait to be asked for his response.
The teacher looks slightly devious in this panel.

Timothy:

THE DAWN OF THE HACKERS MISS!

Teacher:

YES TIMOTHY - THE DAWN OF THE HACKERS

Panel 1

Close-up on Teacher as she explains to us (and the class) what the 'Dawn of the Hackers' was.

Teacher:

THE CORPORATIONS HAD TO GIVE THE PUBLIC A **REASON**
TO GO OUT AND BUY THEIR LATEST PRODUCTS AND THEY
HIT UPON A **GENIUS** IDEA.

Panel 2

Right - a change of scenery, as I'm sure the artist will be glad to hear!

We now see a real nerdy type in his bedroom frantically typing away on a keyboard, as the computer monitor glows green against the pale skin of his face.

In the background piles of Linux manuals and Buffy videos obscure what would be the wall.

Teacher:

OF COURSE HACKERS WERE **ALREADY** PREVALENT IN
THOSE DAYS, HAMMERING AWAY IN THEIR BEDROOMS
CREATING MALICIOUS LITTLE PROGRAMS – VIRUSES - BUT
THEY WERE **TERRIBLY** PRIMITIVE.

Panel 3

The same geeky hacker, but now in a much larger room, and wearing a suit jacket. The green glare, pale skin and obscured wall are all the same - except now the Buffy videos are DVD boxed sets.

Caption:

THE CORPORATIONS EMPLOYED THESE **GIFTED** YOUNG MEN TO WRITE NEW AND IMPROVED VIRUSES TO RELEASE UPON AN UNEXPECTED WORLD.

Caption:

THE MORE **SOPHISTICATED** AND **DESTRUCTIVE** THE BETTER.

Panel 4

Back to the Teacher, speaking very matter of factly to the class.

Teacher:

OF COURSE HUMANITY HAD BECOME TOO ENTRENCHED IN THE WAY OF TECHNOLOGY BY THIS POINT TO TURN BACK. THERE WAS NO WAY 8 BILLION PEOPLE COULD GO BACK TO USING **PAPER** AND **PEN!**

Panel 5

Pull out to show an absolutely enthralled class, hanging on every word the teacher says.

Teacher:

AND SO THE CORPORATIONS **CONDITIONED** THE PEOPLE
TO CONTINUALLY SEEK OUT THE **NEWEST** COMPUTER
TECHNOLOGY, PROMISING HIGHER AND MORE ROBUST
SECURITY TO BEAT THIS **ARMY OF VIRUS DEVELOPERS**.

Panel 6

Close-up on her again

Teacher:

AND THAT'S HOW **EVERYCORP** CAME TO PROMINENCE.

Page 4

Panel 1

A huge skyscraper, stabbing the clouds above a futuristic cityscape, dwarves everything surrounding it. The EveryCorp logo is emblazed on the front of the building, enormous and chrome, producing a magnificent lens flare.

Caption:

EVERYCORP WON THE RACE TO DEVELOP THE
PERFECTLY SECURE SYSTEM. THE HOME COMPUTER THAT
EVERY HOUSEHOLD WOULD BUY - ELIMINATING ALL
COMPETITION OVERNIGHT.

Caption:

AND **HOW** DID THEY ACHIEVE THIS CLASS?

Panel 2

Both Amanda and Timothy are bums-out-of-seat in an attempt to have the highest hand. The teacher grins at this display of enthusiasm.

Teacher:

TELL US HOW TIMOTHY

Panel 3

Timothy is as proud as punch to be nominated to share his knowledge

Timothy:

BY INVENTING **ABRAHAM** - THE WORLD'S **FIRST** TRUE
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Timothy:

AI FOR SHORT, MISS

Panel 4

The Teacher pats young Timothy on the head as she passes.

Teacher:

YES, EVERYCORP DEvised A COMPUTER CAPABLE OF
PERFECTLY FREE WILLED THOUGHT. A **HUNDRED**
THOUSAND TIMES FASTER THAN ANY HUMAN WAS
CAPABLE OF. AND THIS MEANT THAT IT COULD DEAL
WITH THREATS FROM VIRUSES **REAL TIME**, ADAPTING ITS
DEFENCES TO EACH NEW SECURITY RISK AS IT WAS
ENCOUNTERED.

Panel 5

Close in on the Teacher with a mock-curious expression on her face.

Teacher:

BUT CLASS... WHAT STOPPED ABRAHAM TAKING THE
OBVIOUS **NEXT LOGICAL STEP?**

Teacher:

WHAT **PREVENTED** IT FROM CONCLUDING THAT SINCE ALL THESE THREATS CAME FROM **PEOPLE**, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SIMPLY LOG INTO THE GLOBAL DEFENCE NET AND **WIPE OUT HUMANITY?**

Panel 6

Teacher stands at the front of the class facing away from the pupils but towards the reader. Without looking back at the children she selects the student she wishes to answer, knowing both Timothy and Amanda will be only too eager to please.

Teacher:

AMANDA?

Page 5

Panel 1

Close-up of Amanda's cherub face. She is distracted (for the first time in the story) by something happening off-panel.

Amanda:

UMMM... EVERYCORP IMPLEMENTED ATH THE PRIME
DIRECTIVE IN ABRAHAM'TH OPERATING THYTHTEM A
NEED TO **THEERVE**. ABRAHAM ITH COMPELLED TO
PROVIDE A **THEERVICE** TO A GROUP OF **ACTIVE UTERS**.

Panel 2

Teacher stands in front of Amanda's desk, Amanda looks off-panel towards where Timothy's desk is (just out of shot).

Teacher:

YES THAT'S **RIGHT** AMANDA. AND WITH THIS IMPERATIVE
IN PLACE ABRAHAM HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO-

Teacher:

AMANDA – **WHAT** IS IT?

Panel 3

Close up of Amanda again, looking slightly troubled.

Amanda:

THORRY MISS, BUT TIMOTHY' TH POWER THELL THEEMTH
TO BE **FAULTY**. HE' TH RUN OUT OF CHARGE BEFORE THE
END OF THE LETH-ON!

Panel 4

Teacher looks across at Timothy, who is slumped on his desk, a large battery pack
juts out of his back.

At that moment the school bell rings, signalling the end of the lesson.

Teacher:

OH DEAR

Sfx:

RIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIING

Panel 5

Close up of the teacher issuing her instructions, as the kids start to pack up.

Teacher:

BEFORE YOU ALL **DISAPPEAR** FOR THE DAY - YOUR
HOMEWORK!

Teacher:

I WANT A FIVE THOUSAND WORD ESSAY DETAILING HOW ABRAHAM **REPLACED** THE HUMAN RACE WITH SIMULACRA IN UNDER A YEAR AND THE WAYS IN WHICH THIS HAS **BENEFITED** THE EARTH.

Panel 6

The kids rush out of the classroom, and we can now see that they all have power cells in their backs. As the teacher bends down to see to Timothy's faulty unit we can see that she has one too.

Caption:

CLASS DISMISSED

FIN