

This is Jack, Leave a Message, Alright?

A Radio Drama

By

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This is Jack, Leave a Message, Alright?

ALL SCENES TAKE PLACE IN JACK'S MOBILE PHONE VOICEMAIL.

SCENE 1

RECORDED JACK

This is Jack, leave a message, alright?

VOICEMAIL

You have new messages. To listen to your messages press 2. To return to the main menu press-

First message, received Monday 14th March.

DAD

Jack, where are you? I told you, home by 5:30 on a school night. I want you cracking on with the homework – GCSE's do not pass themselves. No slacking.

SKY

Alright Hotstuff, it's Sky. Where are you? Your Dad been giving you the hassle again? I've been thinking, about what we were talking about...you know, it's time we, you know...yeah. Can you get out tonight? Sneak off if he won't let you, my folks are out, we've the house to ourselves...call me. Love you, properly and everything.

DAD I want you home right now young man. Right NOW.

SCENE 2

VOICEMAIL Tuesday 15th March.

SKY Huh. How long did I wait for you? Nearly all night. No answer to my texts. You're in major trouble Mister. It'll take weeks to make this up to me. Get ready to grovel.

DAD I suppose you think staying out all night is funny. Sulking will not get you anywhere. I told you going out this Friday night is a no-no. Fifteen is too young for nightclubs, even if all your friends are going. You're grounded – two weeks.

BEAT

Call me. Your mum's worried.

SCENE 3

VOICEMAIL Wednesday, 16th March.

DAD We had the police round this morning. Asked all sorts of questions about you. You're Mum couldn't answer them. Far too

upset. So I did. How am I supposed to know who all of your friends are? There's Sky, she's was round at lunchtime. You really could do better. I told them the names of the others, the ones I could think of. They all look the same to me. I don't know who you know. There could be others. We'll talk about this. When you come home.

The good thing is, the police have it all worked out. Already. Took them less than ten minutes. "Do you argue a lot, Sir?" We had an argument, but we don't *argue*.

Normally you do what you're told. I know I can get, with work being so, I can get a little stressed...so that's what they decided happened. Had a row and you'll be back when you've cooled off.

I'm sure they see this kind of thing all the time, but they don't know you. You're not the type. They don't seem too concerned.

SKY

Your Dad, he says, he wasn't happy to see me, he never is, but he says you're missing. You two had another row didn't you? He's a total dictator. Let him sweat. You should call me though, I won't tell anyone. You're

alright aren't you? You haven't gone off with that Corrine have you (LAUGHS) she is *nasty*. Let me know you're okay. Please. Love you, properly and everything.

SCENE 4

VOICEMAIL

Saturday, 19th March.

DETECTIVE KNOX

Jack, this is Detective Abigail Knox from the Missing Person Unit. If you receive this message please call the unit on 01221 777 987 or your parents as soon possible. We just want to know that you are safe. I repeat, please call as soon as you get this message. Thank you.

DAD

I was sure you'd be back for Friday night. Taa-daa! Here I am, now I'm heading up town. Feeling like you'd shown me who's boss. I'd probably have let you go if you had, I don't know, maybe not. You're in all the papers now. It started yesterday. You always said you wanted to be famous. The police think you've had long enough to cool off, that it might, it might be, the newspapers are saying we argued a lot.

“Unnamed sources”. I bet it’s Sky, she looks the type. Everyone thinks we drove you out, I can tell. They’re wondering if we did more than argue. I feel on trial. We’re just normal like everyone else. Please come home.

VOICEMAIL

To repeat this message press 3.

DAD

I was sure you’d be back for Friday night. Taa-daa! Here I am, now I’m heading up town. Feeling like you’d shown me who’s boss. I’d probably have let -

VOICEMAIL

To return to the main menu press 1.

SCENE 5

VOICEMAIL

Wednesday, 23rd March.

DAD

It’s been ten days. We have a constant honour guard of press outside the house. Your Mum, she’s, I have the curtains drawn all the time. They have those telephoto lenses. They can watch you from miles away. So why do they sit outside the house? It’s been ten days, Jack. I need to know where you are. I don’t want to know if

it's something really, really, really, I need a sign that you're okay, do you hear me son? I need a sign because I really feel like you're slipping away from me. It's been ten days.

SCENE 6

VOICEMAIL

Friday, 25th March.

LENNY

(OFF) Here, here, we're on Max, ready?

LENNY & MAX

Loser (LAUGHTER)!

LENNY

Everyone says you've run away.

MAX

Or dead (LAUGHTER).

LENNY

Little crybaby.

MAX

(MAKES CRYING SOUNDS)

LENNY

You better not come back to school or maybe *we'll* kill you.

MAX

Yeah, you listen to Lenny.

LENNY & MAX

Loser!

LENNY

(OFF) Pass the bottle.

VOICEMAIL

To repeat message, press 2.

LENNY

(OFF) Here, here, we're on Max, ready?

LENNY & MAX

Loser (LAUGHTER)!

LENNY

Everyone says you've run-

VOICEMAIL

Message deleted.

SCENE 7

VOICEMAIL

Sunday, 27th March.

DAD

The newspapers are saying you were bullied at school. I didn't know. Everyone in the country knows now. Is this why you've gone? Because that would be good, I mean, it's not good you were bullied, you should've said, but it is good. It means you left. If you left that means you're out there. Are you listening to me Jack? I can feel you out there, because if you left then that means, it

means no one took you away. It means
you're alive.

SCENE 8

VOICEMAIL

Wednesday, 30th March.

MORGAN

...we need a frontpage.

ROB

Like what?

MORGAN

Like the grieving girlfriend, not heard from
her in a few days, anything?

ROB

Nothing.

MORGAN

Fickle cow, crying all over the news, but
where is she when we need her? What
about the school kids?

ROB

It's the usual stuff from the Dad.

MORGAN

Not much we can use there, hang on are
we...are we recording? Hell, delete it, hang
up and, hell!

VOICEMAIL

Message deleted.

SCENE 9

VOICEMAIL

Thursday 31st March.

DAD

You're alive Jack! The police told me –
you've been checking your messages.
You're listening to me! I knew it! I knew it!

SCENE 10

VOICEMAIL

Sunday, 3rd April.

SKY

(CRYING) Jack...(CRYING) I...properly
and...(CRYING).

DAD

(LOW, BROKEN) The police brought a
laptop to the house first thing. They showed
me the video. By lunchtime it was all over
the news. Running over and over again.
Two men, CCTV of two men dragging you
into a car, my boy, I saw you kick one as
they pulled you in...

PAUSE – RAGGED BREATHING.

I thought you'd gone to London, or
somewhere, you'd come back when you ran
out of money. Your Mum's gone to stay with
Aunty Linda for a bit, she's not, we're not,

she's gone to your Aunty Linda's. I don't know why I'm telling you this.

SCENE 11

VOICEMAIL

Friday, 2nd May.

SKY

I miss you Jack. I left flowers with all the others. I miss you. Ten weeks. You're never coming back are you? Love you. I'm sorry, there's this, it's been really...Lenny's been good to me, and there's this thing between us now. I'm sorry. You're not coming back. I'm sorry.

VOICEMAIL

Message deleted.

SCENE 12

VOICEMAIL

Monday, 24th May.

DAD

She deserves it. If Sky forgets you that easily, she deserves all that the papers say about her. I bet she's been selling them stories all along.

The honour guard outside the house is severely depleted. More important stories to tell. You're vanishing from the world. Soon

all that will be left is “This is Jack, leave a message...alright?”

I’m calling because I wanted to say, there are things, things that I, you’re not here for me to say what I want to say to you so I rang this recorded you. Now I don’t know what to say.

When you were a little boy you’d call from your bedroom at night, do you remember? If you’d had a nightmare or you couldn’t sleep because of the shadows on the wall, you’d call for us. Your Mum, she’d always want to go, but I wouldn’t let her. I’d say we have to leave him, he’s got to learn and toughen up. So we wouldn’t go and comfort you. I’m sorry.

PAUSE.

I’m calling, I’m calling to say I miss you my precious boy. My Jack.

PAUSE.

RECORDED JACK

This is Jack, leave a message, alright?

END