

CALL YOUR MOTHER

Written by

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EST. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

A modest building, SLOW ZOOM on a second-story window.

INT. APARTMENT 201 - CONTINUOUS

SARAH (20s) sits at a computer desk, dual monitors in front of her, a keyboard and separate numeric pad under her fingers. A large bottle of hand sanitizer to her left.

A microphone headset rests on her greasy hair pulled up into a bun. She wears pajama bottoms and a tank top, looks as if she hasn't been outside or showered in days.

The small wastepaper basket next to her desk overflows with soda cans and takeout boxes.

Next to the front door, a plaque with small hooks holds keys and a pair of surgical face-masks.

A newspaper on the coffee table is open to a story about: "IS WORKING FROM HOME THE NEW NORMAL IN THE PANDEMIC AGE?".

A call comes into her computer.

SARAH

9-1-1, what is your emergency?

A profile of the caller, and their approximate location pops up on one of her screens. The other screen shows a city street map with a marker for where the call is originating.
(If this is over-budget, focus on Sarah's reaction.)

The location marker blinks and then disappears. Sarah bangs the monitor on its side.

EVAN JELIKULL

I need help. I am currently in the soup section of my grocery store and I am being suppressed and enslaved by the manager. There are hippies staring at me, invading my personal ocular boundaries, and other such Satanic nonsense.

SARAH

What is your location, sir? Are you injured?

EVAN JELIKULL

I am indeed injured. My freedoms have been beaten to death, left to rot in this godforsaken place.

(MORE)

2.

EVAN JELIKULL (CONT'D)

And if that wasn't enough, they
don't have Italian wedding soup.
It's the only ethnic food I can
stomach.

Sarah closes her eyes, rubs her temples.

In the background, she can hear the store employees.

MANAGER

Please put that down. That is for
promotional purposes only.

EVAN JELIKULL

I confiscate this life-size St.
Pauli Girl stand-up display in the
name of the Holy Ghost!

SARAH

Sir, if this isn't an emergency, I
can connect you to the local
authorit-

EVAN JELIKULL

How is this not an emergency? My
belief system is being challenged
by a slobbering gang of heretics in
capri pants. I thought they may be
sympathetic as they seem to be
wearing "fish" shirts but they
assure me it's not what I think.

SARAH

Sir.

EMPLOYEE

It's a band, bro.

EVAN JELICAL

I am most certainly not your
brother, you demon spawn from Hell!

MANAGER

Lookout, he's got gun!

SARAH

Sir.

EVAN JELICAL

Stay away!

The sounds of a PHYSICAL SCUFFLE.

The phone is picked up by the MANAGER.

3.

MANAGER

He's down.

SARAH

Dispatching an officer to assist.
Did you disarm him?

She makes a few quick entries into the keyboard.

MANAGER

It was a rhubarb, covered in shoe
polish.

Another heavy SIGH and temple rub.

SARAH

Operator out.

She ends the call, leans back and rests her eyes, grabs a can
of soda without looking, swigs it down.

A few taps on the numeric pad and she's in contact with her
office.

SARAH

Hey, Mary. It's Sarah. I'm getting
that problem with the locator.
Keeps blinking out whenever a call
comes in and I lose it altogether.
... Yeah, I mentioned it to tech
services but they haven't gotten to
it. Kind of important, don't you
think? ... Yeah, I'll make due.
Thanks.

She checks a takeout box, sees only remnants, calls a
restaurant on her cell.

SARAH

Delivery, please ... Yes, apartment
201. What did I get last night? ...
Right, I'll have that again. Please
double check it, they forgot the
egg roll. ... How long? ... No, I
understand. ... Cash.

She hangs up just as another call comes into her computer.

SARAH

9-1-1, what is your emergency?

RICHARD DANFORTH

Send help, please.

4.

Sarah whacks the monitor.

SARAH
Can you give me your location?

RICHARD DANFORTH
I'm at the Haute Yoga studio in
North Hollywood.

A few keystrokes and Sarah has the address.

SARAH
That's at the corner of Vine and
3rd. Am I speaking with Richard
Danforth?

RICHARD DANFORTH
That's me.

SARAH
What is the emergency?

RICHARD DANFORTH
They're laughing at me.

SARAH
Who is laughing, Mr. Danforth?

RICHARD DANFORTH
That bitch of an instructor and her
minions.

Other voices chime in from the background with a chorus of
BOOs.

GIDDY PALMER
(Australian accent)
Sir, I need you to leave
immediately.

SARAH
Who is that?

RICHARD DANFORTH
The aforementioned bitch of an
instructor. What she has
perpetrated goes against all manner
of decorum within the yoga
establishment.

GIDDY PALMER
I'd like to declare this man's ass
as an environmental disaster.

5.

RICHARD DANFORTH

And there it is! An admission of guilt.

SARAH

I'm waiting to hear about the emergency. I can connect you to local law enforcement if you require assistan-

RICHARD DANFORTH

What I require is a licensed fitness professional to acknowledge a natural response to her relaxation techniques.

SARAH

What does that mean?

GIDDY PALMER

The fuckwit shit his pants.

Sarah shakes her head in disgust.

RICHARD DANFORTH

What do you expect when a person is in a state of extreme relaxation?

GIDDY PALMER

I expect you to put a cork in it.

SARAH

This doesn't sound like an emergency, unless you are in physical distress and require an ambulance.

GIDDY PALMER

He requires a nappy and a bog roll.

A chorus of GIGGLES.

RICHARD DANFORTH

This has got to be an infringement on my constitutional rights. Some number... 10? 12? How many are there?

GIDDY PALMER

He doesn't even belong here. He's a bloody blow in.

SARAH

Sir, are you trespassing?

6.

RICHARD DANFORTH

I most certainly am not. I won a lawsuit for the right to be here.

GIDDY PALMER

The incel dickhead sued the yoga studio because we had all female classes.

RICHARD DANFORTH

It's the only hot yoga class in walking distance and it's unfair that women are the only beneficiaries.

GIDDY PALMER

You're a pervert, mate.

The yoga students chant "PER-VERT!".

SARAH

I'm sending an officer to assist.

RICHARD DANFORTH

Thank you.

SARAH

Not for you. Operator out.

Immediately there's another call.

SARAH

9-1-1, what is your emergency?

MOM

Hello, dear.

SARAH

Mom? You can't use 9-1-1 to call me. I've already gotten a warning. I'm lucky some of the dispatchers know your voice and transfer the call.

MOM

If you'd answer your cell when I call, I wouldn't have to. I get worried.

SARAH

I don't know why, mom, I'm fine.

7.

MOM

Tabitha left you a week ago. You must still be upset. You can talk to me.

SARAH

Oh my God. I don't want to talk about it.

MOM

Who else are you going to talk to? All your friends were hers. You never go out.

SARAH

Not sure if you've heard, there's a deadly pandemic happening.

MOM

Even before that. You were never that congenial.

SARAH

Congenial? Are you upset I took last place in that Tootie Cutie toddler pageant show?

MOM

Of course not, it was rigged from the start. I mean, you could have danced better, we worked on that routine for months.

SARAH

Holy shit, mom. There are real emergencies out there.

MOM

Fine. I'm just checking on you. Answer your phone once in a while.

SARAH

I will, goodbye.

She ends the call, goes to the kitchen, opens the fridge, closes her eyes as the cold air washes over her.

Calmed, she grabs a can of soda, returns to her chair, takes a long drink.

SARAH

9-1-1, what is your emergency?

8.

No answer at first, then the sound of the phone rubbing against fabric.

SARAH

9-1-1, what is your emergency?

More sounds of SCRUFF, then a HUSHED VOICE.

MARGARET

Help.

Sarah glances at the screen, whacks the monitor, but no marker pops up.

Her fingers fly over the keys.

SARAH

I'm here to help. What is your location, Margaret?

MARGARET

Under my bed.

SARAH

Is there someone there?

MARGARET

Yes.

SARAH

Are you afraid to speak out loud?

MARGARET

Yes.

SARAH

If it's safe, can you tell me your address?

MARGARET

My apartment is at-

A LOUD NOISE, then a WOMAN'S SCREAM.

SARAH

Margaret? Margaret?!

A moment of silence, then the phone is picked up, a new voice comes through.

STRANGER

Who is this?

9.

SARAH
Sir, where are you?

STRANGER
Do you always answer a question
with a question.

SARAH
It's my job. What happened to
Margaret?

STRANGER
Was that her name?

Sarah rub her eyes, distraught.

SARAH
What is your name, sir?

His soft chuckle drips from her headphones.

STRANGER
You may call me, Todd.

SARAH
I need you to stay right where you
are.

STRANGER
Where are you?

Sarah pauses.

STRANGER
I can come see you if you want?

A KNOCK at Margaret's door.

STRANGER
Is that your friends? Pardon me.

The phone is set down, in the background Sarah can hear a
DOOR OPENING, muffled conversation.

After a moment, the phone is picked up.

Silence.

Sarah turns up the volume on her headphones.

STRANGER
HEY!

The sudden shout startles her, she knocks her soda can on the wood floor where it spills out into an expanding puddle. She loses her balance in her chair and falls backwards out of it.

SARAH

Shit.

STRANGER

What was that? So loud. Like the sky opened, thunder above me.

SARAH

Nothing.

STRANGER

I must run. Places to be. People to see. Talk soon.

The call ends.

Sarah sets up her chair, sits.

SARAH

Sir?

Nothing more, no location marker on the map.

She tosses the headset onto the desk, rocks back, rubs her temples.

A KNOCK at her door almost send her flying.

SARAH

For fuck'sake.

She looks through the peephole, sees a delivery guy in a face-mask, logo baseball cap, delivery bag held up so she can see it.

She puts on a mask, unlocks the door, opens it.

He reads from a receipt.

DELIVERY MAN

That's forty-five fifty. Tip not included.

Sarah checks her pajama pants, realizes she left her cash on her coffee table.

SARAH

Right, hold on.

11.

She goes to the coffee table, grabs some bills, turns and sees the delivery man has stepped inside the door.

SARAH

Forty-five fifty you said?

He nods.

The delivery man's cell phone rings, he ignores it.

SARAH

You wanna get that?

He slowly shakes his head.

A BEEPING sound comes from her computer.

On screen we see Margaret's profile and call info still active.

A MARKER blinks on and off until it appears on the map.

It shows Margaret's cell phone is located at the same location as Sarah's apartment labeled with "HOME".

She looks at the delivery man, takes a step back.

He drops the delivery bag.

For the first time, Sarah sees a splash of blood on the collar of the restaurant's logo t-shirt.

He closes the door, locks it.

Takes off his face mask.

STRANGE MAN

You really should get to know your neighbors. Margaret seemed like an agreeable young woman. Now, let's have that chat, shall we?

He takes a nasty-looking hunting knife from behind his back.

Sarah is frozen with fear as he steps toward her.

His foot hits the soda spill, slips out from under him, he lands face first in front of Sarah with a GRUNT.

She waits for him to get up, but he remains down.

Sarah rolls him over to see the knife buried deep in his chest.

12.

The marker on the screen flickers and fades away.

Sarah takes a deep breath, checks the food delivery.

SARAH

Where's the egg roll, asshole?

THE END.