

DIALLED UP

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A 1970's flip wall clock displays "22-Nov 14:59".

Behind it, floral wallpaper. Once fashionable, now torn and nicotine-stained.

The clock flips. "15:00"

RING-RING. A rotary phone below the clock, 70's avocado green.

A liver-spotted hand takes the receiver.

FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY [1977]

Same phone, younger hand. The wallpaper clean and new. Clock displays "22-Nov 15:00"

FRANK (40's) in a wide lapel yellow shirt and striped trousers, brings the receiver to his ear.

ANDY (PHONE)

Dad, listen, I am--

FRANK

--Stop. I'm so mad right now I'm shaking. How's my car?

ANDY (PHONE)

It's fine. I'm fine too, thanks.

Frank puts a cigarette in his mouth, lights it with a Zippo.

FRANK

You won't be unless you bring my car back here, pronto!

ANDY (PHONE)

I'm so--

FRANK

Save it. Get home. Now.

Frank slams down the receiver.

END FLASHBACK

LIVING ROOM [PRESENT]

FRANK (80's) Cardigan stretched over his saggy belly, scrapes his slippers across the carpet as he waddles into the--

HALLWAY

He bends down, slowly. With one hand on his knee, the other just manages to reach the post on the floor.

LIVING ROOM

A large pile of letters on a side table. On the top letter, in large bold print: *"Date of eviction: 22nd November 2020"*

Frank chucks the new letters on top. Waddles to a fireplace.

He caresses the only item on the mantelpiece, an urn.

LIVING ROOM [1977]

Frank removes a carriage clock from the mantelpiece, puts the urn in its place.

He takes a seat at a table. With swollen red eyes, he vacantly stares at nothing.

Silent but for the sound of the flip clock changing. It reads "01-Dec 15:00"

The RING of the avocado phone breaks Frank from his trance.

He plods over, picks up the receiver.

ANDY (PHONE)

Dad, listen, I am so sorry...

Frank's eyes widen.

ANDY (PHONE)

...I know I wasn't supposed to take the car--

FRANK

--who is this?

ANDY (PHONE)

Dad, it's me. Are you mad?

FRANK

Whoever this is, you are a sick!

Frank slams the receiver down, he checks his hands, shaking.

LIVING ROOM [PRESENT]

Frank sips a cup of tea at a table, the urn in front of him.

KNOCK-KNOCK.

Frank doesn't react, takes another sip.

MAN (O.S.)
Mr Hall! Eviction day. You need to
leave the building now.

Frank glances to the clock - "14:45"

LIVING ROOM [1977]

The clock flips. "15-Dec 15:00"

The phone rings, Frank picks it up.

ANDY (PHONE)
Dad, listen, I am so sorry...

Frank struggles to catch his breath. He squeezes his eyes tight but a tear still finds its way out.

ANDY (PHONE)
...I know I wasn't--

FRANK
--Andy, listen to me. Drive back
here carefully, you hear? Drive
slow. Get back to me.

ANDY (PHONE)
Of course, Dad. I'm sorry.

Frank hangs up, his eyes search the room. Not sure what he's looking for, just... *Something*.

He spots the urn, storms over and snatches it from the mantelpiece.

Frank reluctantly opens the lid- *deep breath*- he peers inside.

Still contains ashes.

Frank's shoulders drop, he slowly puts the lid back on and delicately places the urn back in its spot.

LIVING ROOM [PRESENT]

Frank drags two dining chairs into the--

HALLWAY

Where there is already a makeshift barricade in front of the front door. Small bookcase, a table, a lamp.

Frank's skinny arms shake as he adds the chairs to the pile.

LIVING ROOM [1977]

Frank eagerly stands next to the phone, watches the clock as it flips to "16-Dec 15:00"

RING-- Frank answers instantly.

FRANK

Andy, listen to me. You are planning to drive down Henley Street to get home, don't go that way, it's dangerous.

ANDY (PHONE)

Erm, okay? Dad, I am sorry--

FRANK

--promise me you won't go that way.

ANDY (PHONE)

Yeah sure, I promise.

Frank hangs up, heads to the urn.

He checks the contents, still there.

Frustrated, Frank slams the urn back on the mantelpiece.

MONTAGE

- "17-Dec 15:00"

- Frank hangs up the phone, heads to the urn, checks the contents. Still there.

- "18-Dec 15:00"

- Frank hangs up the phone, heads to the urn, checks the contents. Still there. He kicks over a nearby potted plant.

- "19-Dec 15:00"

- Frank hangs up the phone, checks the urn. Still full. He takes a long drag from a cigarette.

- "20-Dec 15:00"

END MONTAGE

Frank hangs up the phone. Hesitantly checks the urn. Contents still there.

Frank gently returns the urn. Places both hands on the mantelpiece and lowers his head.

He scrunches his face as scores of tears fall onto the floor. Frank bawls his eyes out.

LIVING ROOM [PRESENT]

Frank cradles the urn in one arm. Walks to the window and peers through the closed curtains--

--Two burly BAILIFFS watch a LOCKSMITH tinker with the front door lock.

Frank returns the urn to the mantelpiece. Checks the clock
"22-Nov 14:55"

The front door opens. Furniture scrapes as the Bailiffs battle through Franks blockade.

Frank waits in front of the phone, fingers poised, twitching with anticipation.

LIVING ROOM [1977]

Frank waits in front of the phone, fingers poised.

The clock flips. "21-Dec 15:00"

RING. Frank picks it up.

ANDY (PHONE)

Dad, listen, I'm so sorry--

FRANK

--Son, it's okay. I'm not mad.

Frank grips the receiver tight.

ANDY (PHONE)

You're not?

FRANK
No, I'm not.

ANDY (PHONE)
I don't know what to say, I had
this whole apology speech planned.
I'm heading home now, I'll see--

FRANK
--wait wait, just... talk to me for
a bit, please?

ANDY (PHONE)
Have you been drinking?

Frank chuckles as tears roll down his cheeks.

FRANK
I just want to tell you... that I
love you, son.

ANDY (PHONE)
Dad, are you dying?

FRANK
What? No.

ANDY (PHONE)
Sorry. I just haven't heard you say
that before.

Frank leans on the wall, closes his eyes.

FRANK
Well, I'm going to tell you every
day from now on. Every day until
the day I die, I promise you that.

ANDY (PHONE)
I love you too, Dad.

LIVING ROOM [PRESENT]

Frank waits for the phone. Checks the clock "14:59"

Furniture CRASHES to the ground (O.S.)

Both bailiffs enter the room.

Frank stares at the clock, willing it to go faster.

A bailiff places an arm around Frank, gently pushes him away
from the phone.

FRANK

No, please. One more call.

Bailiff shakes his head. Walks towards Frank, forcing him backwards and towards the door.

Frank attempts to push past the Bailiff, futile.

Both Bailiffs position themselves in front of him, usher him towards the front door.

FRANK

(gasping)

I made-- a promise.

Frank drops to a knee, clutches his chest, gasps for breath.

RING-RING.

The Bailiffs help Frank as he tumbles to the ground. One pulls out a mobile phone, dials 999.

The avocado phone rings...

and rings...

and rings.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END