

Our Hero

by

Philip Gelatt

Draft 1.0 - June 5th, 2009

© Philip Gelatt 2009. All rights reserved. This script may be used freely to draw art submissions for Oni Press, Inc. Permission is granted to copy for personal use on that basis only. All artwork so produced remains the copyright of the artist. All other use and/or reproduction of this script is strictly prohibited.

PAGE ONE

PANEL 1

Our hero, BRANDON BRUNDLE, is working as a telemarketer. We find him sitting in front of a computer with a headset adorning his head. He’s bored, a deep, life-crushing bored. He stares at the computer with dead eyes as he is hung up on... again.

BRANDON

Hello, may I speak to the man of the house?

HEADSET

-CLICK-

CAPTION

Monday. 3:34 pm.

PANEL 2

Brandon leans on his fist. The next call starting up in his headset. The dead light of the computer reflecting in his eyes.

BRANDON

Hello can I speak to the lady of the house?

(cont)

Yes, yes, I’m just trying to inform her that her car’s warranty is about to-

HEADSET

-CLICK-

Reveal the expanse of the office. Brandon is just one of many telephone operators. All working, mindlessly. Some of them have tried to make their workspaces more interesting, but most are just as bland as Brandon’s. Brandon can be seen in the office, he’s shifted to his other fist.

VARIOUS OTHER HEADSETS

Click. Click. Click. Click.

BRANDON

Sigh.

PANEL 4

We focus back on Brandon. He’s really making an effort this time.

BRANDON

-I mean what are your thoughts on the place of humanity’s singular intelligence in an otherwise vast and cold-

(cont)

Yes, sir, yes I am a telemarketer I was just trying to reach out to you as a fellow human being.
You know, make a connection and-

PANEL 5

Brandon says it along with headset:

BRANDON & HEADSET

Click.

PAGE TWO

PANEL 1

Brandon stands on an empty street at a bus stop. A sign on the bus stop reads: “ALL ROUTES CANCELLED. FRIDAY EVENING TO MONDAY EARLY MORNING.” The sky above is clear, the building around him seem abandoned. From off panel, someone tries to get his attention.

BRANDON

(re: the sign)

Great. Looks like I’m walking home.

TESS (OFF PANEL)

Excuse me, sir?

CAPTION

Monday. 6:24 pm.

PANEL 2

Brandon has turned to see TESS. She’s a looker but also rather disheveled, mussed hair, her business suit is rumpled and it has a rather large stain on it. She has strange and vaguely mystical jewelry on. And she has in her hands a small MASON JAR.

BRANDON

Who me?

TESS

I can’t get my jar open. Could you help me?

(cont)

I’ve been trying all day.

PANEL 3

She holds the jar out, impossible to tell what’s in it beyond that it is full of something dark and gelatinous.

BRANDON

God and I thought my day was pointless. Must be some damned tasty jelly in there.

PANEL 4

Tess puts on a pouty face, she is awfully cute.

TESS

I’d be so grateful.

(cont)

And forever in your debt.

PANEL 5

Brandon has the jar in his hand. He’s twisting it hard. His face contorted into a ridiculous shape.

BRANDON

Hunnnngh.

(cont)

It’s really on there isn’t it?

PANEL 6

Brandon’s face turns red he’s trying so hard. Tess looks on eagerly.

TESS

You’ve almost got it, I can tell!

BRANDON

Urrrgh.

PANEL 7

The lid pops loose. And from inside a dusty dark vapor escapes.

SFX LID

CLICK!

SFX VAPOR

Sssssssss

PAGE THREE

PANEL 1

The lid is off the jar and an evil, evil looking black miasma is spewing out into the sky.

PANEL 2

Suddenly lightning cracks the sky above them.

LIGHTNING

ZZZZCRACK!

PANEL 3

Tess her hair wild and medusa-like now, her mouth twisted up into a hideous smile, her jewelry glowing with evil power, points an accusatory finger at Brandon.

TESS

I've waited so long for a fool like you to come along!

BRANDON

Um...okay?

TESS

Behold! Behold what you have set loose upon the unsuspecting world!

PANEL 4

Wide panel, full of craziness. The force inside the jelly jar has erupted up into the sky and is spreading out across the city. The substance seems to be eating reality itself. Brandon, dumb-founded, stands small in the bottom of the frame, the jar limp in his hand. A crazy panel, a monstrous black jelly, like some kind of monstrous genie, is fucking with the fabric of reality itself. Get as crazy as you want.

BRANDON

Oh.

(cont)

Wow.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL 1

Tess has started to float up off the ground, her features twisting into an evil grin. She still wears the business suit though and that rather large stain on it is still pronounced.

TESS

I am Tess the Trixteress and you have released the Smargle-Blorge into the fabric of reality and nothing will ever be the same again!

PANEL 2

Brandon holds up one hand, cutting her off. Around them, chaos begins to unfold, changing the street into some nightmarish landscape.

BRANDON

I'm sorry, I'm sorry--

TESS

No! Your apologies will not be accepted! Nothing you can say will save the fabric of reality-

PANEL 3

BRANDON

No, not that. It's just “Tess the Trixteress”? “Snarley-blooge”? Those are the dumbest names I've ever heard.

PANEL 4

Tess building herself up into a massive evil-mastermind style rage. She's lit all otherworldly, her arms raised to the sky. But still, there's that ridiculous stain on her suit.

TESS

Do you not see that your city is being eaten by the raw power of the unconscious?

(cont)

That mankind is about to be mutated by a force trapped for millennia and it's all your fault?

That-

PANEL 5

Brandon, however, is staring right at Tess's chest. Tess, noticing this, starts to slow down, the wind taken out of her sails.

TESS

-that-

(cont)

-um-

PANEL 6

Brandon is pointing up at a particular pronounced stain on her suit coat.

TESS

What the hell are you staring at?!

BRANDON

Nothing, sorry, it's just you've got some kind of stain on your shirt and it's really, really distracting.

PANEL 7

Tess, her evilness undercut, pulls at her jacket, craning her neck trying to see this stain.

TESS

Oh fudge nuggets!

(cont)

Look at that!

(cont)

Oh and it's mustard too. Double fudge nuggets!

PAGE FIVE

PANEL 1

Tess, with a sigh, turns her attention back to Brandon. Lightning cracks the sky again behind her.

TESS

Look man; forget the stain for a second.

(cont)

It really seems like you're not understanding how this is supposed to work.

BRANDON

I'm not?

PANEL 2

Tess points at him again, accusatory.

TESS

You've opened up the jar for me and now we're supposed to become arch-enemies.

(cont)

You: the hero. Me: the villain.

(cont)

And then we chase and fight each other across the world, as you try to cram the Smargle-Blorge back into its jar.

PANEL 3

TESS

God, I can't believe I have to explain this to you.

(cont)

It's on you. To use that jar.

(cont)

To save the whole world. You're the only hope now.

PANEL 4

Brandon's looking at the jar. Considering it.

BRANDON

It is?

(cont)

I am?

PANEL 5

Brandon tosses the jar over his shoulder with a shrug. Tess looks on, slack-jawed.

BRANDON

Meh. The world was over-rated.

PANEL 6

The jar lies smashed on the no-longer-pavement. Brandon walks off down the un-street with Tess.

BRANDON

C'mon let's go see what this Snorkle-Barge can do with it-

TESS

It's Smargle-Blorge but yeah...

(cont)

Yeah okay.

BRANDON

You know, Tess, I think you and I might really click.

CAPTION

Monday 6:42 pm. The Era of the Smargle-Blorge has begun.