

## ZOOMSHIFT

By Robert Sharp

The entire film is a screen recording of a lap top. We only see the main character and his house from the point of view oh his web-cam.

Scene. A computer desktop. A Firefox browser window is open. We have time to read the headline of the BBC News article: SOLAR FLARE ERUPTIONS SET TO REACH EARTH. The web page also has links to COVID19 related stories.

The mouse moves on the screen. The as yet unseen user starts a Zoom meeting. The web-cam fires up and we see his face on the screen.

It is ROBERT. He is in his early 40's, wears glasses. His hair and beard are unkempt, as befits someone who has spent seven weeks in lockdown. He gives permission for the computer to use audio, and then stares patiently at the screen, waiting for something to happen.

A second user window pops up. The video conferencing app instantaneously places it alongside Robert's video window. Someone else has entered the chat.

There is something wrong with the other user's webcam. It is all distorted. Robert can only see the outline of a person.

ANONYMOUS USER 1

Not again.

ROBERT

Mum, is that you?

The other user's voice is distorted and broken.

ANONYMOUS USER 1

No mate, I'm not your Mum!

ROBERT

Oh I'm sorry, it looks like I'm in the wrong chat.

ANONYMOUS USER 1

(Laughs)

That's OK, it's been happening a lot to me today.

ROBERT

Ok, well I'll try again.

His mouse moves and he tries to leave the chat. A password dialogue box pops up.

ROBERT

Oh dear, sorry again! I'm trying to end the chat but it's asking me for a password. It doesn't normally do that. I don't think I know what the password is.

ANONYMOUS USER 1

Actually you know what, someone just gave me a password for this, have you got a pen?

ROBERT

Err, sure. Go ahead.

ANONYMOUS USER

Let me see. It's 314159...

Robert writes it down.

ROBERT

Got it. Let me try.

He types. We see the numbers being entered into the password dialogue.

ROBERT

Ah that works, thank you, bye-bye.

He goes to close the chat.

ANONYMOUS USER 1

Hold on, wait-

The chat ends. Robert fires up on other one. He waits again for a few seconds. Then another person enters the chat. The screen is distorted as before, so he can't see the other person's face.

ROBERT

Not again.

ANONYMOUS USER 2

Mum, is that you?

The other user's voice is distorted and broken.

ROBERT  
(Amused, slightly  
annoyed)  
No mate, I'm not your Mum!

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Oh I'm sorry, it looks like I'm in  
the wrong chat.

ROBERT  
(Laughs)  
That's OK, it's been happening a  
lot to me today.

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Ok, well I'll try again.

Long pause.

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Oh dear, sorry again! I'm trying  
to end the chat but it's asking me  
for a password. It doesn't  
normally do that. I don't think I  
know what the password is.

ROBERT  
Actually you know what, someone  
just gave me a password for this,  
have you got a pen?

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Err, sure. Go ahead.

ROBERT  
Let me see. It's 314159...

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Got it. Let me try.

There is silence at the unknown person types. As Robert  
waits, a look of puzzlement comes over his face, Then a  
moment of shock, and of sudden realisation.

ANONYMOUS USER 2  
Ah that works, thank you, bye-bye.

ROBERT  
Hold on, wait-

But the chat has ended. Robert puts his head in his  
hands, Sits back in his chair, and exhales.

CUT TO BLACK.