

MARLOW & MAISIE

By Gerard Foster

52 x 11 min pre-school animation

CHARACTERS:

MARLOW: A large friendly tree, with a face and branches he can move like arms.

MAISIE: A four-year-old girl, his best friend.

**MR GRAVELLY-
WALSH-CURTAINS:** Her fusspot neighbour, neat and prissy but kind at heart.

NIBBLES,

NUTS & NORA: Three cheeky squirrels.

JUDGES 1, 2 & 3: The judges on 'Glorious Gardens', a tacky, prime-time TV show.

& ASSORTED OTHER RESIDENTS OF HOMEWOOD GARDENS

LOCATION:

HOMEWOOD GARDENS: A scruffy, overgrown communal garden in the middle of a residential square.

1 EXT. HOMEWOOD GARDENS - DAY (SPRING) 1 *

MARLOW stands tall and proud, covered in beautiful pink blossom. MAISIE gazes up at him in awe.

1 MAISIE 1
(gasps, amazed)
You're all pink!

2 MARLOW 2
Here, catch!

Marlow gently shakes his crown. A small shower of pink petals flutters down onto Maisie.

3 MAISIE 3
(giggles)
Heh-heh-heh!

Suddenly, MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS rushes in.

4 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS (O.S.) 4
(almost hyperventilating)
They're coming! They're coming!
It's a DISASTER!

5 MARLOW 5
Wooah, slow down, Mr G. Who's coming?

6 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 6
The judges! Oh Marlow, what have I done?! I foolishly entered Homewood Gardens into my favourite television show: 'Glorious Gardens'! And they're coming! Here! Today!

7 MAISIE 7
H'ray! We're going to be on TV!

8 MARLOW 8
Ooh, can I do my new rain dance?

9 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 9
(alarmed)
Rain dance? No!

10 MARLOW 10
Don't worry, it doesn't actually make it rain. But the judges will love it. Watch!

Marlow lifts his branches up to the sky and waves them from side to side. Pink petals flutter down as he moves.

11 MARLOW (CONT'D) 11
Rai-ee-ain!

NIBBLES, NUTS and NORA, pop up and join in.

12 MARLOW, NIBBLES, NUTS & NORA 12
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ain!

13 MARLOW, NIBBLES, NUTS, NORA & MAISIE 13
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-
ee-ain!

14 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 14
(interrupts)
Stop, stop! We don't have time!
They could be here any minute!
There's the grass to mow and the
beds to weed and the fence to paint
and the pond to clean and the bin
to empty and the pumpkins to
polish...

15 MAISIE 15
That's OK. We'll help, won't we
Marlow?

16 MARLOW 16
Sure. Many twigs make light work!

Marlow cheerily stretches out his branches and nearly knocks
Mr Gravelly-Walsh-Curtains out.

17 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 17
(hastily ducking)
Waargh!

18 MARLOW 18
Oops. Sorry.

19 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 19
(pulling himself together)
No you're right. We can do it if we
all work together. All we need is
the will to succeed!
(beat)
And sticky notes.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. HOMEWOOD GARDENS - A LITTLE LATER 2

Marlow, Maisie, the Squirrels and several other residents all
watch as Mr Gravelly-Walsh-Curtains strides around the
garden, putting brightly-coloured sticky notes on everything
that needs to be done.

20 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 20
Clean, tidy, mend, sweep, brush,
paint, polish, empty, fill, mow,
cut, weed, sew, do not touch.
(MORE)

MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS (CONT'D)

Any questions? Good. On your marks,
set, go!

Everyone happily leaps into action:

Competitive pensioners, IDA and VIX each, have a grabber arm and go round picking up odd bits of litter, competing fiercely with each other...

Nature-loving SPOGGER starts to clean leaves from the pond and gets immediately distracted by a fascinating bit of algae...

WOODY the woodpecker uses his beak to drill holes in the shed and SYLVIE screws in plant holders...

BLACKY and BIRDY, the blackbirds, pull up weeds...

PIDGE and PODGE, the pigeons, try to help Maisie hang up bunting and get hopelessly confused and tangled up...

Marlow looks around for something to do...

21	MARLOW	21
	So what shall I do, Mr G? Weed the beds? Mow the lawn? Clean out the pond? Or all three at once, heh-heh!	

Marlow's branches reach out rapidly in all directions, digging up a flowerbed, firing up the lawnmower and scooping a GOLDFISH out of the pond.

22	GOLDFISH (frantic gulping) Paap-paap-paap!	22
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Lots of pink petals flutter down.

23	MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS	23
	Actually, if you don't mind, Marlow, I think we can manage without your help.	

24	MARLOW	24
	Oh, no, I don't mind at all. Now I can practise my rain dance - yay!	

Marlow happily waves his branches and more pink petals flutter down.

25	MARLOW (CONT'D)	25
	Rai-ee-ain! Rai-ee-ai-ee-ain! Rai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-	

26	MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS	26
	No, stop, stop! You're just making more mess!	

27 MAISIE 27
 And you're losing all your pink
 petals too.

28 MARLOW 28
 But there must be something I can
 do.

29 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 29
 (trying to keep his cool)
 There is. It's called 'standing
 absolutely still and not moving a
 single twig'.

30 MARLOW 30
 (beat)
 Well I can try...

Marlow reluctantly adopts the pose of a normal, non-moving
 tree...

CUT TO:

3 EXT. HOMEWOOD GARDENS - LATER 3

Job done. The garden looks immaculate. Mr Gravelly-Walsh-
 Curtains happily goes round tearing off the brightly-coloured
 sticky notes and dropping them into a nearby bin.

31 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 31
 Done, done, done, done, done, done,
 done! Now all back to mine for tea
 and cake while we wait for the
 judges!

32 ALL 32
 Hooray!

The residents and squirrels all hurry off, leaving Marlow,
 still frozen, on his own.

33 MARLOW 33
 So can I move now then..?

Maisie stops and looks up at what's left of Marlow's blossom.

34 MAISIE 34
 Maybe you should try and keep
 still? You want to look your best
 for the judges.

35 MARLOW 35
 Oh, yes. It's just I've got a bit
 of a tickle.

Marlow wriggles uncomfortably. Maisie scratches the back of
 his trunk.

36 MARLOW (CONT'D) 36
No lower... No, higher... Yes,
there! Ooh! Perfect!

37 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 37
Come on, Maisie, shake a leg! It's
a double choccy-woccy with cherries
on top!

38 MAISIE 38
Gotta go! See you when the judges
arrive!

39 MARLOW 39
No, wait. My trunk. It still
tickles.

Too late. Marlow is left on his own, wriggling uncomfortably. He reaches round to the back of his trunk and scratches with a twiggy claw.

40 MARLOW (CONT'D) 40
Just one little scratch... Ah,
that's better!

A few pink petals flutter down.

41 MARLOW (CONT'D) 41
Oh no!

Marlow shoots out a branch to try and catch the petals, but only succeeds in dislodging yet more.

42 MARLOW (CONT'D) 42
No stop, come back!

He tries to catch the petals. Misses. More petals billow up into the air. He hastily reaches for the fishing net, desperately swipes at the petals all around...

And soon finds himself hopelessly engulfed in a huge swirling cloud of pink petals.

43 MARLOW (CONT'D) 43
Help..!!!

CUT TO:

4 EXT. MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS' HOUSE - DAY 4

Through the window of Mr Gravelly-Walsh-Curtain's house, we see a large and very impressive chocolate cake, being guarded by MADAME CLAWS, Mr G's ridiculously fluffy pet cat...

44 MADAME CLAWS 44
Mioaw!

Nibbles, Nuts and Nora peer in greedily at the cake. Nibbles scratches at the window. Nuts licks it, as if trying to lick the cake. Nora produces a pen and paper and starts rapidly drawing up a cunning plan to break in and steal the cake...

Suddenly Madame Claws turns round. The three squirrels freeze, caught in the act... then all start pulling funny faces and shaking their tails at Madame Claws.

45 NIBBLES, NUTS & NORA 45
(much giggling, silly noises etc)

Madame Claws watches inscrutably, trying not to rise to the bait... Then finally her patience snaps. She hurls herself towards the squirrels, hits the glass and disappears out of sight.

46 MADAME CLAWS 46
Miaow!

The squirrels all laugh uproariously... and fall off the window sill.

47 NIBBLES, NUTS & NORA 47
Heh-heh-heh! Woaahh! Aaargh!

Inside the house, Maisie rushes to the window, looks out... and sees that Marlow really needs her help!

CUT TO:

5 EXT. HOMEWOOD GARDENS - MOMENTS LATER 5

Maisie runs into the garden. Marlow stands forlornly, his branches all bare, the ground around him covered in blossom.

48 MAISIE 48
Oh, Marlow!

49 MARLOW 49
I'm sorry.

50 MAISIE 50
It's OK.

51 MARLOW 51
No it isn't. The judges could be here any minute. And it's all ruined... That's it, I'm off!

Marlow twists his trunk and wiggles his roots, trying to free himself from the soil. Maisie steps back in alarm as the garden begins to tremble and shake...

52 MAISIE 52
Marlow, stop!

They're covered in hundreds of brightly-coloured sticky notes: pink, green, yellow, orange and blue.

64 MARLOW 64
Hello. I'm Marlow. How do you do?

He gently reaches out a twiggy hand to shake.

65 JUDGE THREE 65
(stunned)
I... love your blossom.

66 MARLOW 66
(modestly)
Oh, thank you. Ready, Maisie?

67 MAISIE 67
Ready!

Maisie appears, smiling, in Marlow's branches. They launch into Marlow's raindance, waving arms and branches from side to side.

68 MARLOW & MAISIE 68
Rai-ee-ain!
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ain!
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ain!

The judges nod their heads and smile as the Squirrels and other residents join in.

69 ALL 69
Rai-ee-ain!
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ain!
Rai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ai-ee-ain!

70 JUDGE ONE 70
Amazing!

71 JUDGE TWO 71
Tree-mendous!

72 JUDGE THREE 72
Still loving that blossom!

73 JUDGE ONE 73
You're through to the next round!

Judge One slaps a rosette on Mr Gravelly-Walsh-Curtains.

74 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 74
Yes! Ha-ha! We did it! WE DID IT!

He runs to Marlow and joyfully wraps his arms and legs around his trunk. But suddenly...

<BOOM!> A loud roll of thunder and a big, black rain-cloud appears above.

75 MAISIE 75
 Uh, Marlow, I thought you said your
 rain dance didn't actually make it
 rain?

76 MARLOW 76
 Well it never did before. Oh
 dear... It must be because we all
 did it together.

<CRASH!> The heavens open and rain pours down. Maisie looks up at Marlow.

77 MAISIE 77
 Oh no!

The sticky notes are rapidly soaked by the rain. They fall off Marlow's branches and slide down his trunk, leaving nothing but a soggy mess.

78 JUDGE ONE 78
 Sticky notes!

79 JUDGE TWO 79
 That's cheating!

80 JUDGE THREE 80
 I knew they weren't real!

81 JUDGE ONE 81
 It's a no from me.

82 JUDGE TWO 82
 And me.

83 JUDGE THREE 83
 And me.

The 'Glorious Gardens' van roars away, leaving a trail of exhaust fumes in its wake.

84 MARLOW 84
 Sorry, Mr Gravelly-Walsh-Curtains.

85 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS 85
 Nonsense, Marlow. Who needs a silly
 rosette when you've got a garden as
 glorious as this?

He rips off his rosette and drops it in the bin.

86 MR GRAVELLY-WALSH-CURTAINS (CONT'D) 86
 There is one thing we do need
 though...

