

# 'THE WOMAN WHOSE HUSBAND TURNED INTO A TREE'

by Gerard Foster

## EPISODE ONE – MARCH

### PROLOGUE

1) GRAMS MUSIC ESTABLISHES THEN FADES DOWN AND CONTINUES (UNDER)

2) NARRATOR Sue Hardiman's downstairs tap was dripping. Then again, this was nothing new. The truth was Sue Hardiman's downstairs tap had been quietly dripping for years.

For a while Sue had tried to ignore it. Looked away. Said nothing. Hoped that Howard would notice and get round to fixing it all by himself. But Howard was not an observant man. Nor was he an eager DIYer. And Sue didn't like to nag.

And so the months and years had gone by and children grew and governments fell and still the tap went on drip-dripping. Too small a problem to call a plumber. Too large to try and tackle herself. What if she were to get it all wrong and flood the entire house?

So instead, Sue had learned to live with the drip. To embrace it even. A familiar friend. A ticking clock slowly counting down to a time when life would be oh so different. When the children would be all grown up and gone. When Howard would be safely retired. When the two of them, at last, would have time for themselves. Time to travel, make love, go ballroom dancing. Time to finally sit down together and work out how to fix a dripping tap...

But time wasn't on Sue Hardiman's side. Sue Hardiman was sixty-three. Her downstairs tap was still dripping. And life, for Sue and her husband, Howard, was about to get very different indeed...

3) GRAMS MUSIC RISES THEN FADES OUT...

**SCENE 1 (TUESDAY MORNING)**

- 1) F/X DOWNSTAIRS TOILET ATMOS. A TAP VERY QUIETLY DRIPS.
- 2) NHS 111 GUY (D) (BORED, ONLY HALF PAYING ATTENTION) Hello, NHS 111-
- 3) SUE (FLUSTERED) Oh finally, hold on, I just need to wipe...
- 4) F/X TOILET ROLL HURRIEDLY RIPPED OFF. BRIEF WIPING. TOILET FLUSH.
- 5) SUE There, done.
- 6) NHS 111 GUY (D) Hello?
- 7) SUE Yes, I'm still here.
- 8) NHS 111 GUY (D) Hello, you're through to NHS 111. Could I have your name please?
- 9) SUE OK firstly, I'm not Malcolm Macintyre.
- 10) NHS 111 GUY (D) (TYPING) Is that M,a,l,c,o,l,m?

- 1) SUE No, I'm *not* Malcolm Macintyre. So please don't hang up the phone. I've been trying to speak to someone all morning and when I finally managed to get through, they just laughed at me and put down the phone.
- 2) NHS 111 GUY (D) OK, I'm sorry about that, madam. Could I have your name please?
- 3) SUE Right... Well, it's not Malcolm Macintyre.
- 4) NHS 111 GUY (D) Sorry, who's Malcolm Macintyre?
- 5) SUE The- you know- comedian. Saturday nights. Isn't that the sort of thing he does? Prank calls. Phoning someone up and saying woops there's a monkey in your pyjamas or guess who filled your car with cheese.
- 6) NHS 111 GUY (D) Do you mean *Michael* Macintyre?
- 7) SUE That's what I said.
- 8) NHS 111 GUY (D) No you said Malcolm.
- 9) SUE All right Michael then. Whatever his name is, I'm not him and this isn't some sort of prank call.
- 10) NHS 111 GUY (D) Right, well that's not what Michael Macintyre does-
- 11) SUE Oh right. So what does Michael Macintyre do?
- 12) NHS 111 GUY (D) Well maybe you could google that in your own time. It's not really what I'm paid to do.
- 13) SUE Right.

- 1) NHS 111 GUY (D) So can I start by getting your name?
- 2) SUE ...Actually, I'd rather not say.
- 3) NHS 111 GUY Yeah, I am going to need a name.
- 4) SUE All right fine, just give me a moment to think...
- 5) NHS 111 GUY (D) Sorry, what exactly is the reason you're calling? We are very busy-
- 6) SUE No, of course. Sorry. And thank you. For all the NHS do. I mean the last thing I'd ever do is phone up and deliberately waste your time.
- 7) NHS 111 GUY Right.
- 8) SUE So I think it was about three weeks ago, I finally made it clear to Howard he needed to do something about the tap.
- 9) NHS 111 GUY Right...
- 10) SUE It's been dripping for God knows how many years and frankly I've just about had enough-
- 11) NHS 111 GUY Sorry, is this why you're calling 111? To report a dripping tap?
- 12) SUE Oh, no, that's not why I'm calling, no... Although if you do happen to know someone-
- 13) NHS 111 GUY (D) OK I'm going to hang up now-



1) NARRATOR -Sue had joked, as Howard stepped out through the back door...

2) F/X BACK DOOR OPENS. CROSS FADE UP GARDEN  
ATMOS

3) NARRATOR ...collected a spade from the garden shed and carefully began to dig.

4) F/X DIGGING NOISES (UNDER)

5) NARRATOR Sue didn't question what he was doing. She was happy to see he had some sort of plan. After all, hadn't they always talked of spending a little more time in the garden? And as for the dripping tap, which Howard had solemnly promised he'd attend to the moment he had nothing better to do, Sue had waited so many years already, she could hang on till the afternoon.

6) F/X CROSS FADE UP: KITCHEN ATMOS, WASHING UP  
ETC

7) NARRATOR And so, for another hour or so, it was just like so many other days before. Sue alone with the dishes and the laundry, singing along to Radio 2. Although, she couldn't help observing, it wasn't quite the same now that Ken Bruce had gone.

It was only when she happened to glance out of the window that Sue realised something was badly wrong. There on the patio were Howard's clothes, neatly folded and arranged in a pile. Further on, at the end of the garden, stood Howard, naked, arms outstretched, buried up to his knees in soil.

(CONTINUES OVER)

1) NARRATOR For a moment, Sue thought it was some kind of joke. Not that jokes had ever been Howard's sort of thing. Not like Dave. He was always playing jokes on Pam. Swapping round the labels on the tins. Or creeping up on her in the shower with a bottle of tomato ketchup in his hand. Pam swore by it, apparently. Said laughter was what kept their marriage alive. That and the non-stop sex. But on balance, Sue had always felt glad she was married to boring old Howard not Dave.

Then again, Sue found herself thinking that evening, when all attempts at reasoning had failed, if she were the one married to Dave, she'd be on her way home from yet another cruise around the islands of the Caribbean. Not looking out of her kitchen window at Howard, standing naked in a hole.

And her downstairs tap would not be dripping either. Dave would have seen to that.

### SCENE 3 (THURSDAY AFTERNOON)

2) F/X LIVING ROOM ATMOS

3) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Hello, you're through to NHS 111-

4) SUE (FLUSTERED, IMPATIENT & JUST A LITTLE DRUNK)  
OK firstly, this isn't a joke so please don't put down the phone. My husband is standing naked in the garden, claiming to be a tree.

5) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK, could I have your name please?

6) SUE (WITH A SIGH) It's Sue.

7) F/X TYPING AT OTHER END (CONTINUES INTERMITTENTLY THROUGHOUT)

8) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And your surname?

- 1) SUE I'd rather not say.
- 2) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) I am going to need your full name, sorry-
- 3) SUE All right, Smith. It's Sue Smith.
- 4) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And your date of birth, Sue?
- 5) SUE The eleventh of the fifth, nineteen-sixty.
- 6) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Thank you. So how can I help you this evening?
- 7) SUE (TRYING TO KEEP CALM) Well, as I just very clearly explained, my husband is standing naked in the garden claiming to be a tree.
- 8) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK, could I have your husband's name?
- 9) SUE It's Howard.
- 10) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And his surname?
- 11) SUE Sorry did I not say? He's standing naked at the end of the garden claiming to be a tree.
- 12) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And that's his surname, is it?
- 13) SUE No that's what he's doing.
- 14) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK could I have his surname please?



- 1) SUE Well I've already told you my surname's Smith-
- 2) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Yeah not every woman takes their husband's name-
- 3) SUE It's Smith. His surname's Smith.
- 4) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK. And his date of birth?
- 5) SUE The twelfth of the third, fifty-six.
- 6) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Thank you, so why you are calling this evening?
- 7) SUE Because my husband is standing, naked, in the garden, claiming to be a tree.
- 8) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) So you're concerned for your husband's welfare?
- 9) SUE Yes.
- 10) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK. Is your husband currently breathing?
- 11) SUE I'd imagine so, given that he's standing up.
- 12) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) So he's conscious?
- 13) SUE Yes.
- 14) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And he's not in pain?
- 15) SUE No.

- 1) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Does he appear to be distressed or confused?
- 2) SUE Well only about what species he is.
- 3) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And he's able to hold a conversation?
- 4) SUE Well about as much as normal, yes. I mean we have been married for thirty odd years.
- 5) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Is your husband generally in good health?
- 6) SUE Yes.
- 7) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) No underlying medical conditions?
- 8) SUE No.
- 9) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Does he smoke, take drugs or drink alcohol?
- 10) SUE Sorry, how many more of these are there?
- 11) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) I just need to get all the information I can before deciding how best to proceed-
- 12) SUE No he doesn't smoke or take drugs, and yes he does drink a small amount. But nothing... you know... he's not just pissed.
- 13) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK. And what about you?
- 14) SUE What about me?

- 1) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Can I ask if you've been drinking today?
- 2) SUE ...What, you think I've made this all up?
- 3) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Not at all. I just need to know if you've been consuming alcohol.
- 4) SUE Well of course I've been consuming alcohol. Wouldn't you be?
- 5) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Well I don't drink, so... Can I ask where your husband is now?
- 6) SUE I just told you! He's standing naked in the garden! He went out there on Monday morning and he hasn't come back in since!
- 7) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Sorry... you're saying he's spent the last *three days* standing naked in the garden saying he's a tree?
- 8) SUE Yes!
- 9) NHS 111 WOMAN Why?
- 10) SUE I don't know. That's why I'm calling you. I did ask him to fix a dripping tap but clearly it must be more than that. I mean... is this something that people do...?
- 11) NHS 111 WOMAN I don't know... there's nothing on the system, no... Would you describe his behaviour as unusual?
- 12) SUE Well, yes. Wouldn't you?

- 1) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Well I don't know your husband. But it's not something he's done before?
- 2) SUE No of course it isn't... He doesn't even like trees... I mean he likes walking past them. He's glad they're there. But he's not... I mean, he's never hugged a tree.
- 3) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) And you say he's been stood out there for three days? No food? No sleep?
- 4) SUE Oh no, his appetite's fine. He had a soup and roll for lunch and I'm just about to take him out his tea.
- 5) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) (BEAT) Sorry, you say you've been taking him out his meals?
- 6) SUE Well yeah... I mean, he still needs to eat... There's other things he needs to do too.
- 7) NHS 111 WOMAN What, you mean..?
- 8) SUE Yes.
- 9) NHS 111 WOMAN How?
- 10) SUE Well he does it in a bucket and I take it back to the house.
- 11) NHS 111 WOMAN OK.
- 12) SUE I mean, I can't just leave him out there, can I? He's my husband. What am I supposed to do?
- 13) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Sure, I'm just wondering if you didn't feed him... maybe he'd find his own way to the fridge.

- 1) SUE (BEAT) Are you saying this is all my fault?
- 2) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) No-
- 3) SUE Yeah of course, I'm just a pathetic old woman-
- 4) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Not at all, it just sounds like a lot of hard work.
- 5) SUE Well, I'm sorry, but that's what marriage is. It's not all flowers and tomato ketchup. How would you feel if it was your husband?
- 6) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Well I don't have a husband.
- 7) SUE No. And I hope for his sake you never do, if that's the sort of person you are.
- 8) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) All I meant was-
- 9) SUE Oh I know exactly what you meant, you *dreary* little girl.
- 10) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK, I understand you're feeling upset-

- 1) SUE No you don't understand at all. You think I'm just a sad little housewife who's wasted the last thirty odd years bringing up her ungrateful children, cooking meals for her ungrateful husband, running errands for her ungrateful friends who look at me and go you're so lucky, Sue, being able to stay at home and not work, when actually they don't think I'm lucky at all. They feel sorry for me. Just like you. But you know what, I don't feel sorry for me. Because that's how we chose to do it. We chose to put our family first. And now it's our time. Now it's our little window. To travel and explore and do new things. Just the two of us. Together. While we can. Because that's how it is in the real world. You do your time. You slog your bloody guts out. And then you get the reward you deserve.
- 2) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) OK I'm going to end this call now-
- 3) SUE Of course you are. What else is there to do but walk away at the first sign of anything unpleasant?-
- 4) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Yeah, thank you for calling NHS 111-
- 5) SUE No thank you dear, you've been such a help-
- 6) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Please do call again if you're worried-
- 7) SUE Oh I won't-
- 8) NHS 111 WOMAN (D) Goodbye-
- 9) SUE Yeah and eff off to you and all.
- 10) F/X CALL ENDS
- 11) SUE ...Shit.

1) F/X WINE POURED FROM BOTTLE

2) NARRATOR Sue poured the rest of the bottle down the sink. Drinking clearly wasn't the answer if she just ended up screaming down the phone. She had to get a grip. Had to stay in control. Had to find a way of getting Howard back in the house.

#### SCENE 4 (THURSDAY EVENING)

3) F/X GARDEN ATMOS

4) F/X BACK DOOR OPENS. FOOTSTEPS ON PATIO THEN GRASS. FAINT CHINKS OF CROCKERY & CUTLERY ON A TRAY.

5) SUE (BRIGHTLY) Food's up. Spag bol.

6) HOWARD (PLEASANTLY) Oh, thanks, love.

7) F/X TRAY IS LAID DOWN ON GARDEN TABLE, PLATES, GLASSES AND CUTLERY UNSTACKED.

8) HOWARD Mmm, that looks good.

9) F/X CROCKERY, SERVING SPOON ETC

10) SUE Here we are... Glass of water?

11) HOWARD Thanks.

12) F/X WATER POURED INTO GLASS

- 1) HOWARD                      Oh, you might want to empty out that bucket before you sit down to eat.
- 2) SUE                              Right.
- 3) HOWARD                      I mean the smell doesn't bother me.
- 4) SUE                              No it's fine. I'll just put it by the back door and deal with it later. Back in a sec...
- 5) F/X                              SUE GATHERS UP BUCKET, MOVES OFF & PUTS DOWN BUCKET FURTHER OFF.
- 6) F/X                              CAT MIOAWS. PAWS LAND ON TRAY.
- 7) SUE                              (OFF, THEN COMING BACK) Hey! Oi! Get down, you wretched cat! Go on, shoo!
- 8) F/X                              CAT MIOAWS CROSSLY
- 9) HOWARD                      Woah, easy.
- 10) SUE                              She was licking my food. Were you just going to stand there and watch?
- 11) HOWARD                      I'm a tree. What else can I do?
- 12) F/X                              CAT MIAOWS
- 13) HOWARD                      (TO THE CAT) It's OK, here puss. She didn't mean it. Here, have a bit of mine.



- 1) SUE (LOSING PATIENCE) Howard-
- 2) HOWARD By the way, did you see that bird?
- 3) SUE What bird?
- 4) HOWARD That bird. Earlier on. Little blue thing. Sitting right here, it was, on my shoulder- I mean, on my branch. Just there. It was cooing and I was cooing back. And then I tried to tickle it under its beak, and it just flew away. My bad. But anyway, he'll be back tomorrow, fingers crossed- or twigs crossed, I should say-
- 5) SUE Howard, how long will this be going on?
- 6) HOWARD I dunno... A few hundred years maybe. But don't worry you'll be long gone.
- 7) SUE What?
- 8) HOWARD I'm just saying, you know, now I'm a tree, I'll probably outlive you all. Sorry.
- 9) SUE No that's fine. The only thing is: I've invited Pam and Dave tomorrow night.
- 10) HOWARD What, you mean to come here? Tomorrow?
- 11) SUE So you'll need to have come back in by then. I mean, unless you want them to see you like this?
- 12) HOWARD ...Oh right, so that's how it is? Thanks a lot. Why would you invite them here?

- 1) SUE They're our friends. I thought you'd like to see them. Share your exciting news. I mean... unless you'd rather they didn't know you're living out here in the garden as a tree-
- 2) HOWARD No, sure... It just... feels a bit soon... Can we not put them off for a week or two?
- 3) SUE No.
- 4) HOWARD Why not?
- 5) SUE Because they're coming tomorrow.
- 6) HOWARD Yeah I know, but it's easy enough to change.
- 7) SUE No, I'm sorry. You know what Pam and Dave are like. They'll be off on another cruise before you know it and then we won't get another chance for weeks.
- 8) HOWARD Yeah I'm just not sure I feel ready-
- 9) SUE (FIRMLY) Well they're coming, like it or lump it.
- 10) HOWARD All right, fine.
- 11) SUE Good. So that's settled. And you'll come inside?
- 12) HOWARD No, I mean it's fine for them to see me like this. It's sooner than I would have liked, and Lord only knows what Pam will say. But if you're not prepared to compromise-

- 1) SUE All right, stop! Just stop!
- 2) HOWARD What's the problem?
- 3) SUE You're the problem!
- 4) HOWARD Me? I'm just standing here in my hole.
- 5) SUE No just stop, Howard, please. You're scaring me now.
- 6) HOWARD Sue, I've told you, try not to worry, I'm fine.
- 7) SUE No you're not Howard. Clearly. This isn't normal.
- 8) HOWARD I never said it was normal. I just said I was fine.
- 9) SUE Yeah, well I'm your wife and you're not fine, Howard. There's clearly something very wrong and I wish you'd tell me what it was so at least I could try and help.
- 10) HOWARD You are helping. You're bringing me out my meals. To be honest, I couldn't do it without you.
- 11) SUE Yeah that's what the NHS woman said.
- 12) HOWARD Oh, Sue! You promised you wouldn't call them!
- 13) SUE I wouldn't worry. Turns out this is all my fault.
- 14) HOWARD Your fault?

- 1) SUE  
Yeah apparently I'm a sad old drunk who's only got herself to blame for waiting on you hand and foot when I could be running my own business online or treating myself to a weekend away with a male model half my age.
- 2) HOWARD  
Is that what she said?
- 3) SUE  
Well, near as dammit. And she said that I should stop feeding you too. Said you'd soon find your own way back to the fridge.
- 4) HOWARD  
Bloody hell, she does know I'm a tree?!
- 5) SUE  
Yeah except you're not a tree, are you, Howard.
- 6) HOWARD  
Course I am. Why else would I be standing out here?
- 7) SUE  
I don't know, Howard! I wish I did! I wish you'd tell me what the hell's going on instead of just standing there cooing at birds like it's a perfectly reasonable thing to do! I mean even other trees don't coo at birds!
- 8) HOWARD  
Well not that you can hear them, no-
- 9) SUE  
(PLOUGHING ON) Most of all, I wish you'd come back into the house, put some clothes on for crying out loud, and fix that wretched dripping tap like you said you would when I first pointed it out about FIFTEEN BLOODY YEARS AGO! (...PAUSE...) Sorry.
- 10) HOWARD  
No you're right, I feel bad about the tap. I should have fixed it before I came out, sorry.
- 11) SUE  
Well it's not about the tap...

- 1) HOWARD                      Maybe Dave could have a look when they're round tomorrow night.
- 2) SUE                              No I'm not asking Dave to do it.
- 3) HOWARD                      Why not?
- 4) SUE                              Because firstly, whenever they're round, he always ends up doing something or other.
- 5) HOWARD                      He enjoys it.
- 6) SUE                              It's embarrassing.
- 7) HOWARD                      Right. Well, sorry I'm not the sort of man who can only prove himself to his wife by banging a two-inch nail in a wall.
- 8) SUE                              Oh Dave proves himself in other ways.
- 9) HOWARD                      Really.
- 10) SUE                              And secondly, the reason I can't ask Dave is, clearly, if you're still stood out here wearing nothing but a plate of spaghetti, then there's absolutely zero chance of me asking Pam and Dave to come round!
- 11) HOWARD                      Oh right, I thought you said you'd invited them?
- 12) SUE                              Only as a way of trying to get you inside! I mean, Christ, Howard, look at you! Three days and nights standing naked in a hole... People do less for Comic Relief and raise millions. But what's this for?

- 1) HOWARD ...I don't know... I'm sorry...
- 2) SUE Is it the tap?
- 3) HOWARD No... I just... felt like a change...
- 4) SUE Well we'd all like a change, Howard. I've been waiting half my life for a change. But planting yourself at the end of the garden and announcing that from now on you'll be living as a tree, that's not what I'd call a change. That's what I'd call stark raving bonkers!
- 5) HOWARD Well at least the height of my ambition isn't having a fully-functioning tap.
- 6) SUE All right fine. Where do you want to go? Europe? South America? China?
- 7) HOWARD What do you mean?
- 8) SUE Let's go on holiday, what do you say? Australia, Canada, Africa, wherever. Where do you want to go?
- 9) HOWARD I'm a tree, Sue. I can't just get up and go.
- 10) SUE No come on... Cambodia, Thailand, The Philipines, Wales. Wherever, just tell me and I'll book it.
- 11) HOWARD It's too late!
- 12) SUE All right fine. I'll choose. The Caribbean. We always said we'd go there. Well now we can. No more excuses. Let's do it. Two weeks in the Caribbean and a few nights in New York too. That's what Pam and Dave always do. So that's that then. Sorted. And you'll come inside-

- 1) HOWARD Sue-
- 2) SUE No you're right. We do have to change, Howard. And maybe it just needed all this to make us realise what we had to do. But that's fine. We got there in the end and now we're going to the Caribbean. Great.

### SCENE 5 (THURSDAY EVENING / FRIDAY)

3) F/X LIVING ROOM ATMOS. CLICKING ON KEYBOARD AND MOUSE.

- 4) NARRATOR It was all done in a matter of minutes. Hotels, flights, transfers. Sue even had time to book a pair of tickets to a Broadway show. She felt dizzy. She felt drunk. This time tomorrow, she and Howard would be on the plane.

5) F/X BEDROOM ATMOS. A DISTANT OWL.

- 6) NARRATOR That night, Sue slept soundly in her bed, two tightly packed cases beside her on the floor. In the morning she rose and drew back the curtain.

7) F/X CURTAIN DRAWN BACK.

- 8) NARRATOR Howard was still out there at the end of the garden, arms outstretched to the rising sun. She had hoped he would creep back in during the night. That she'd wake, as if from a terrible dream, and find herself enveloped in his reassuring grasp, feel his warm hands cupped around her breasts, his stiff cock politely knocking at her door.

Not to worry, he would come back in, in due course. Sue was sure of it. How could anyone not choose two weeks in the Caribbean and four nights in a hotel in New York?

(CONTINUES OVER)

- 1) NARRATOR                      So Sue went about her business. Had a bath. Shaved her legs. Called Pam and Dave to ask them to look in on the cat. It was only around three that afternoon that Sue remembered the dripping tap. She tried to put it out of her mind. She had lived with it day and night for so long, what were three more weeks after all? Three weeks in which Sue herself would not even be there in the house?
- Then again, what if it was the tap stopping Howard from coming back into the house? He had promised to fix it. Sue had made him promise. Though she knew full well that he didn't know how. And now here he was, trying to claim he could have done it, if weren't for the fact that he was a tree... Male pride. He would never admit it of course. He would swear it was nothing to do with the tap. But then Howard had sworn lots of things in his time and not all of them had turned out to be true.
- 2) F/X                                      SEARCHING THROUGH TOOLBOX.
- 3) NARRATOR                      Sue went to the toolbox under the stairs, pulled out an adjustable spanner, and headed on into the downstairs loo...
- 4) F/X                                      DOWNSTAIRS TOILET ATMOS. THE TAP IS STILL  
DRIP... DRIP... DRIPPING
- 5) F/X                                      SPANNER WRESTLING WITH TAP (CONTINUES  
INTERMITTENTLY UNDER)
- 6) SUE                                      FRUSTRATED NOISES (CONTINUES UNDER)
- 7) NARRATOR                      It could not be that hard, surely, she reasoned. Even for a woman her age who had never so much as put up a set of shelves... Absurd even, to pretend she couldn't do it. Such a simple thing. In this day and age. With a dozen videos online all showing her step by step by step...



- 1) SUE GROWING EVEN MORE FRUSTRATED (CONTINUES UNDER)
- 2) NARRATOR And then, when the job was done, Howard really wouldn't have any excuse. He'd be cross for a while, furious even, that she'd achieved what he hadn't managed to do. But what would it matter if the tap was fixed, and they were on their way to the Caribbean? Together, just the two of them, at last.
- 3) SUE (FINALLY EXPLODING) Aggh! Stupid thing!
- 4) F/X CAT JUMPS UP AND MIAOWS
- 5) SUE No, down! Go away!
- 6) F/X SUDDEN CLANG OF METAL AND BURST OF WATER. CAT SCHREECHES AND SCARPERS.
- 7) SUE Oh God- No- Stop!
- 8) F/X DESPERATE CLINKS, CLANGS AND CLATTERS OF SPANNER ON TAP. WATER CONTINUES TO BURST.
- 9) SUE Howard..! Help..!
- 10) F/X SUE'S FOOTSTEPS MOVING THROUGH HOUSE, FROM DOWNSTAIRS LOO, OUT INTO CORRIDOOR AND THROUGH KITCHEN.
- 11) F/X BACKDOOR OPENS. BACK GARDEN ATMOS.
- 12) F/X FOOTSTEPS OUT ONTO PATIO THEN GRASS.

- 1) SUE (FURIOUSLY) Well I hope you're happy now!
- 2) F/X BIRD CHIRRUPS AND FLAPS AWAY.
- 3) HOWARD Oh Sue, you scared the bird away-
- 4) SUE Howard!
- 5) HOWARD Oh crikey.
- 6) SUE Yes! Look at me! I'm drenched!
- 7) HOWARD (BEAT) I could do with a bit of a water myself. It's baking out here this afternoon.
- 8) SUE Really? Well why don't you try the downstairs bathroom. There's a hell of a lot of water in there!
- 9) HOWARD Oh God, you didn't try and fix it yourself?
- 10) SUE Hurry up! The taxi will be here soon.
- 11) HOWARD What taxi?
- 12) SUE To take us to the airport.
- 13) HOWARD (BEAT) Right.
- 14) SUE You are coming to the airport? ...Howard?
- 15) HOWARD I'm sorry... It would have been nice...

- 1) SUE For Christ's sake!
- 2) HOWARD I just feel like this is where I need to be. In the ground. I'm sorry. I can't explain. I just know that... something's changed... and now I'm a tree.
- 3) SUE No you're not, Howard.
- 4) HOWARD I am, Sue. Look at me.
- 5) SUE Yes! Look at you! You are not a tree!
- 6) HOWARD All right! I'm not a tree. Not yet. But I'm trying.
- 7) SUE Howard, you are not, and never will be, a tree! Now please come and help me with this tap, or we won't be swimming in the Caribbean, we'll be swimming in our own bloody house!
- 8) HOWARD I can't Sue, I'm sorry, I wish I could but- hey! What are you doing?
- 9) F/X SOUNDS OF GRAPPLING, HANDS GRASPING BARE FLESH ETC
- 10) SUE (STRAINING) I'm pulling you out!
- 11) HOWARD No, Sue!... Please! Don't!... Ow!... Sue! Get off!...
- 12) SUE (HEAVING, STRAINING) Rrrrgggh...!
- 13) HOWARD Sue, stop! There's someone at the window next door!

- 1) SUE (STILL PULLING) I don't care!
- 2) HOWARD Sue, please! Let me go!
- 3) SUE Rgggghhhh!
- 4) HOWARD Wooooaaahh!
- 5) F/X HOWARD IS PULLED OVER AND HITS THE GROUND
- 6) HOWARD Oh great! Just pull me out of the ground like some kind of weed!
- 7) SUE Oh God...
- 8) HOWARD What..?
- 9) SUE Howard... your feet...
- 10) HOWARD Oh crikey.
- 11) SUE What's happened to your feet?
- 12) HOWARD I don't know.
- 13) SUE Are those roots? Are your feet growing roots?
- 14) HOWARD I don't know!

- 1) SUE Oh shit! This isn't just in your head. This is real. This is actually happening, Howard. You're turning into a tree.
- 2) HOWARD Yeah...
- 3) F/X BATHROOM ATMOS. GUSHING WATER
- 4) NARRATOR Sue Hardiman's downstairs tap wasn't dripping. It was gushing at an alarming rate. Water sprayed the walls and ceiling, filled up the sink, cascaded over, spread rapidly across the floor, following the path of least resistance, out of the bathroom and into the hall.
- 5) F/X CROSS-FADE UP: GARDEN ATMOS
- 6) NARRATOR Sue Hardiman was in the garden staring at her husband's feet. The mud-caked heels, the nobby bones, the hundreds of teeny-tiny fibres growing out of the ends of his toes.
- 7) F/X GARDENING SOUNDS: SOIL THROWN INTO GROUND, WATER SPRINKLED FROM WATERING CAN, SOIL PATTED DOWN (UNDER)
- 8) NARRATOR Gently, Sue helped her husband up and carefully guided his strange new extremities back into their original hole. Then she filled in the hole, added compost and water, and firmly patted down the soil to ensure that his legs were fully secure.
- Then she went back inside to deal with the flood.
- 9) GRAMS MUSIC RISES
- 10) ANNOUNCER END CREDITS

**(END OF EPISODE ONE)**