

Don't Mess with the Michelin Man

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EXT. SMALL FENCED GARDEN - NIGHT

A neat lawn surrounded by flowerbeds, each bed hosting a lawn ornament; gnomes, pink flamingos, fairies and more.

The house attached to the garden is still, no lights on, no sounds of life. To the left and right are other homes in the row, six to the right, two left - all equally quiet.

A dark shape appears in moonlit silhouette atop the five-foot high fence furthest from the house.

The shape - CURTIS, 17, spotty, scruffy and stoned, lurches, and then falls with a CRASH into the garden.

ALEX (O.S.)
Quietly, defo said quietly.

Curtis gets up and stares at the house, ready to run.

ALEX, 16, manic pixie dream girl wannabe and equally stoned, comes through the unlocked garden gate.

She looks around the garden and points.

ALEX
There.

She strides over to a flowerbed nearest the house, and picks up a Michelin Man mascot, BIBS, about 18 inches tall, an older design, sitting down with arms crossed.

CURTIS
Two hundred for that?

ALEX
Yep, see this?

She uses her phone torch to illuminate the tyre-man.

ALEX (cont'd)
Blue sash, super rare, Ebay it and
we'll have weed to last to next year.

A light comes on in the house.

CURTIS
Shit.

Alex is too busy running to respond. Curtis, hot on her heels, as the rear door opens with a creak.

WINSTON, 80s, leather for skin but emeralds for eyes, steps onto the lawn. MABEL, 80s, frail in stature only, follows.

WINSTON
Someone there?

Mabel tugs at the sleeve of his dressing-gown, points.

MABEL
Said we should keep it in the house.

Winston goes to the flowerbed, now missing one Michelin Man.

WINSTON
Little buggers, I've had Bibs since my retirement from the tyre factory.

Mabel pats him on the back.

MABEL
We'll report it in the morning.

He nods as they both retreat into the house. The light goes off moments later.

The garden is quiet. Briefly.

SAM, classical red-hatted garden gnome, pick axe and coiled rope over his shoulder, turns his head to the blue capped female gnome at his side.

HEIDI, freckles and mischievous grin, steps out of the flowerbed onto the lawn.

HEIDI
That was Alex from four doors down.

SAM
Kept better company when she was little.

HEIDI
Winston loved that stupid mascot.

SAM
No idea why, Bibs had an inflated sense of importance, typical French.

HEIDI
Still, he is family, so maybe...

The FLAMINGOS, FAIRIES, CHIPMUNKS, and other garden figures all nod and murmur their approval in unison.

Sam grins and runs to the back fence, swings his roped pickaxe upwards. It catches the fence first go.

Heidi climbs up the rope Ninja style, Sam follows behind.

The pair scan the row of gardens now revealed by their elevated vantage point.

HEIDI (cont'd)

There.

Sam sees Alex and Curtis entering another garden.

Heidi is already running along the top of the fence over into the next garden

In the dark Sam doesn't see that Heidi has stopped.

SAM

Hey, careful!

Heidi points in front to next-doors gate, open, preventing her from running any further along the fence.

SAM (cont'd)

Down and round?

HEIDI

Too slow.

She grabs his rope and flicks it out like a whip towards a small apple tree to the side of the gate. In one leap, she swings out, around, and over. She lands like a cat.

A BARK breaks the silence.

MILO, next-doors snappy ball of fur, leaps up and bites air.

HEIDI (cont'd)

Swing out after his next bite.

She swings the rope back to him.

SAM

Easy for you to say.

Sam swings out... as the pickaxe comes loose of the tree.

He lands on Milo's snout, who reacts by bucking like a bronco that's just had a lawn gnome smack it in the face.

HEIDI

The rope, throw me the rope.

Sam throws the rope.

Milo flicks him up into the air.

Heidi catches the rope.

Milo leaps.

Sam closes his eyes.

Milo snaps his jaws closed.

On thin air.

As Sam swings up and joins Heidi on the fence.

SAM

I'm having a heart attack.

HEIDI

You're made of clay!

She turns on her heels and sprints along the fence.

THUD, as an apple hits the fence in front of Sam.

SAM

What the blazes.

Milo jumps against the thin trunk of the apple tree, dislodging the fruit and showering the fence with missiles.

Sam steels himself and sprints forward, dodges one apple, then another and he's almost safe, when...

One final apple drops and catches him on the shoulder.

He teeters, balance deserting him, stars now his view.

He drops. As Heidi's hand shoots out and grabs his beard.

HEIDI

Stop messing about with Milo.

She yanks him up and, together they run along the fence.

They get to Alex's garden to find the pair canoodling on a blanket, Bibs discarded by their feet.

HEIDI (cont'd)

Ready?

Sam nods and, they both slide down the rope and into the bushes bordering Alex's lawn.

They advance on the oblivious thieves, one either side.

When they are at head level, they give each other the thumbs up and reach forward.

ALEX
Hey, stop tapping me!

CURTIS
You first.

ALEX
I never --

She looks past Curtis to see Heidi tapping her boyfriend's head. She SCREAMS.

Curtis opens his eyes to see his vision filled by an angry red-hatted gnome with a vicious looking pickaxe.

The teens are on their feet in an instant and back in Alex's house in a tangle of arms, legs and shouts.

Heidi and Sam fall to the ground in fits of laughter.

BIBS
We're not supposed to let them see.

HEIDI
Family is more important than rules.

SAM
And they're high anyways.

They link arms with Bibs and make their way to the fence.

EXT. FENCED SUBURBAN GARDEN - MORNING

Mabel exits the house, cup of tea in hand.

MABEL
Win, come see this.

Winston joins her in the garden, munching buttered toast.

There, back in his place, is Bibs, surrounded by Flamingos.

WINSTON
Were his arms crossed the other way?