

And Then There Were None

Announcer

Welcome to another episode of Drama Queen Theater. Tonight's Episode: And Then There Were None. As our show begins, teenage daughter Meg is washing the dishes when her mother, Doris, comes in from the yard.

Doris

It's happened! (Music: dramatic chord). I couldn't do anything to stop it!!

Meg

(Concerned) What is it, mother?!

Doris

(Tearful) Dead. And it's all my fault! Oh, why couldn't I have done something, anything?!

Meg

Dead? (Seriously concerned) Who's dead, mother? It's not Tommy again, is it?

Doris

(Distracted) No, not him. I, I, it's the bushes.

Meg

Mr. and Mrs. Bush? That nice couple down the street?

Doris

No, the bushes I planted. The ones I bought... (choking)... only yesterday. At the garden center.

Meg

But they were so young! And they looked green, and healthy!

Doris

(Even more distraught) I know, I know! That's why it's so unfair!
But, it's only the one closest to the house.

Meg

(Distraught but hopeful) Just the one? (Through tears) The others...

Doris

They're fine, Meg. (Sobbing) Just fine.

Meg

How are we going to tell father?

Doris

Meg, darling, he will understand. He **has** to understand.

Announcer

Suddenly, there is a knock on the door and Penny, the next door neighbor, bursts in.

Penny

Oh, Doris!! Oh, my poor, poor Doris!!

(The women sob together)

Penny

Life has certainly been hard on you. First there was the time the store ran out of your hair color...

(Music Dramatic chord again)

Doris

I thought we were never going to mention that again.

Penny

Sorry.

Doris

I'd put that out of my mind...

Penny

I know.

Doris

And yet you constantly remind me of it – I'm not the only one with secrets, you know!

Penny

Please! Not in front of the girl!

Meg

What is it, mother?

Doris

(Archly) Penny is afraid I might reveal her own, dark, dirty laundry!

Penny

(Imploring) Please!!

Doris

Ah! It's not so pleasant when the shoe is on the other foot, thinking that dirty laundry will come out into the open?

Meg

Tell me, mother!

Penny

All right! You might as well hear it from me, Penny, before your mother or some one else tells you. Yes, it's true, I had my own dirty laundry once. It was when the store ran out of my bleach, you remember that day well, don't you, Doris? You had all that bleach and some of us... (dramatic musical riff) Some of us had dingy gray laundry that day! (Bursts into tears)

Doris

(Remorseful) I'm sorry, Penny! Can you ever forgive me?!!

Penny

Yes!! Friends forever!!! (Triumphant music) (Now sad) But, how brave you are now, to cope with this tragedy!

Doris

(Reminded) Oh, yes!! That poor, poor bush!

Penny

Bush? You mean, you don't know?

Doris

Know what? I know the one closest to the house is dead...

Penny

It's not just that one (Dramatic chord) – the next one over has plant blight! It's only a matter of time!!

Doris and Meg

Nooooooooooooo!!!

Meg

Hold me, mother!

Doris

It'll be all right!

Meg

I'm afraid!

Doris

Penny, is there nothing we can do?

Penny

I'm afraid it's almost gone. Let me look out the window (sounds of footsteps going and coming back). It's gone!

Doris

Life is so unfair!

(Sound of car coming up into the driveway, screeching sound of brakes and tires)

Doris

Oh, father is home, Meg!!

Meg

(Hopeful) He'll know what to do? Right?

Father

(Gravely serious) Penny. I'm... glad you're here. Um, Doris, Meg, I have some bad news for you.

Doris

We know. (Sobs) We know!

Father

Know what?

Meg

About the bushes, Daddy!! Both of them... dead!

Father

(Pondering the situation) Hmmmmm. Well, you see, as I was driving up... (stops)

Doris

(Confused) Yes?

Father

That bush you planted, the one I said was too close to the garage.

Doris

(With dread) Yes?

Father

I'm afraid I ran over it. (Most dramatic music yet)

Doris

You?

Meg

Father?

Penny

Mr. Downs!

Father

I'm afraid they're all dead, now.

Meg and Penny and Doris

Nooooooooooooooooooooo!!!!

(All sobbing, all hysterical)

Father

Now, now, they're just some bushes...

Doris

(Coming out of her sobs to anger) Just bushes!! Oh, that's easy for you to say! You didn't pay \$6 for the three of them!! You didn't spend 10 minutes planting them!!! Or two or three minutes watering them every single day since yesterday!!! What do you know??!

Penny

I think I had better be going... (sound of feet running away)

Meg

Oh, father!! How could you!! (sound of feet storming off)

Doris

Well, I hope you're satisfied!! Your daughter may never speak to you again! And as for **us**...

Father

Doris, please!

Doris

I could forgive you if this was the first time anything like this had happened. But 20 years ago you forgot to buy milk at the store when I asked you, **specifically**, to get milk. Do you remember that, Robert!!

Father

Doris...!

Doris

So that's it!! That's the end of it!! You'll never sleep in my bed again!! At least, not until tomorrow. Tonight you sleep on the couch!

(Crescendo of dramatic music)

Announcer

And so ends another episode of Drama Queen theater!