

Act 1

Scene. A police office. Desk, three or four chairs, odds and sods including a tape recorder on desk. Door stage right. Opens with Love sat at desk. Enter Darling.

Love Good morning Darling. Did you have a nice weekend?

Darling Good morning Love. Not bad thanks. Took the other half and kids to the coast for a change.

Love You had decent weather for it too. I spent the weekend decorating.

Darling Sounds exciting. **(Moving round desk to sit opposite Love)**

Love About as exciting as this job's been getting. God I hate bloody Mondays. What we need is a nice murder.

Darling Plenty of blood, guts, and gore splattered about the place.

Love **(Picking up some papers)** Something we can get stuck into instead of this boring crap they keep giving us.

Darling If we get another car theft I'll resign and become a traffic warden.

Love Might as well be one. We're supposed to investigate murders not car theft. That last one took the biscuit.

Darling Some old biddy calling us in because they couldn't find their car in the car park of the shopping centre.

Love Trouble is you have to smile and be kind and understanding instead of wringing their bloody necks and shouting at their stupidity.

Darling Bloody thick shit he was. What sort of car is it sir?

Love One with a wheel at each corner.

Darling Do you remember the colour sir?

Love Yes, it's sort of a blackish green, or is it red, or it might be silver.

Darling And what make is it sir.

Love My last one was a Ford, or was that the one before that. I think that it's Japanese with a sun roof.

Darling Well that narrows it down a bit sir. Not many Japanese cars in this country are there?

Love It has an aerial on the roof, at the back. I think it might be an estate car, but then it might not.

Darling We're narrowing it down aren't we sir? Can you remember any other distinguishing features so we can pick it out from the crowd? Blood all over the bonnet from when you ran into that group of school kids, the odd brain or hand still stuck in the grill.

Love Now then Darling, don't get carried away. I know that you have to press a button on the key to unlock it, and the lights flash when you do.

Darling Right sir well if you'd be so kind as to give me your keys then I'll walk round this square mile of car park flashing your key at every Japanese car I see until I find one that flashes back.

Love Keys? I haven't got the keys with me.

Darling You've lost your keys as well sir?

Love No! I know exactly where they are.

Darling And just where that might be sir?

Love On my bedside cabinet.

Darling Then how did you drive here sir?

Love I've just remembered that I came by bus. I could never have found my car in this lot. They all look the same don't they? I'd have looked a right bloody idiot flashing my key at every car wouldn't I?

Darling Would you like a lift home sir?

Love If it's not too much trouble, thank you. Are you going to charge me?

Darling No sir they haven't fitted meters in police cars yet. Mind you with the government cutbacks it's only a matter of time before they charge us to use the bloody things.

Love I'll buy a bike when that happens.

Darling Hope you can peddle fast then. How the hell could we do a high speed chase on push bikes?

Love We'd have a tandem of course. Oh for a lovely murder.

Darling Nip out and commit one will you? We could spend a month investigating it then blame it on some eastern European.

Love They'd only let him off because he couldn't speak the language, either that or he'll have fled the country.

Darling Or been elected to parliament. Where would they put the blues and twos then?

Love On the bike you mean? Well they could fit them to the helmets couldn't they? With the wires going down your back.

Darling I'll not ask where they'll put the batteries.

Love If they fed us beans we'd go faster.

Darling Be bloody jet propelled wouldn't we. You'd have to go on the back though.

Love Why put me at the back?

Darling I've smelt it when you've had baked beans. The whole office can tell when you've had baked beans.

Love I can just see the Flying Squad casing jack the lad round London in his beefed up XR3 on their mountain bikes.

Constable **(Enter constable)** Morning you two. I think I might have something right up your street. This will make your day, if not week, or month, or even year.

Love Not another lost bus pass is it? If it is I swear I'll jack the job in.

Constable Nothing like that. It's a murder.

Darling You're pulling his whatsit aren't you? We don't do murders in here.

Love No just helping old people discover that they've left the bleeding car at home and gone shopping on the bus.

Darling I think I've forgotten what a good murder looks like, it's been so long.

Constable No this is a genuine murder. Chap has come in and confessed to doing it too.

Darling Confessed? He can't do that! That's our job that is. Beating, err. Wringing a confession out of 'em.

Love Trying to do us out of a job now. Does he work for the government?

Darling Or the council? Is he in the union?

Constable Don't know what he does. You two can wring that out of him can't you? Shall I bring him in?

Love I think you'd better. **(Exit constable)** Bloody hell a real murder.

Darling But a confession, I'll never get to use those thumb screws I bought on e-bay.

Constable **(Enter constable and Tom)** This, gentlemen, is Mr Bomadil and he has something he wants to get off his chest, so to speak.

Darling Come in sir, take a seat, make yourself comfortable and when you're ready you can tell us your story.

Tom **(Sitting)** Thank you. I must say that I didn't expect this sort of treatment when I walked through the door.

Love What did you expect sir?

Tom Well I thought that I'd be clapped in irons, thrown in a cell for a week. Loud music playing all the time so I couldn't get any sleep and taken to an interrogation room every two hours for questioning.

Love **(To Darling)** That's a new one! Loud music to keep them awake. We've not tried that one.

Darling **(To Love)** We've done water boarding and the hood over the head.

Love **(To Darling)** The fire hose every twenty minutes. Hanging them up by their thumbs.

Darling **(To Love)** Hanging them up by their toes. Electric shock between their nipples and testicles every half hour.

Love **(To Darling)** We did that to that drunk the other day.

Darling **(To Love)** All he did was get an erection and piss all over us, I had to go home and get changed.

Love **(To Darling)** But never loud music.

Darling **(To Tom)** I think that you've been watching too much American television sir. Now are you comfy?

Tom Yes thank you.

Love **(Takes some paper out of desk drawer and pen from inside pocket.)** Right well this is Sergeant Darling and I'm inspector Love. And you are sir?

Tom I'm a murderer.

Darling Yes sir! We mean your name. We can't keep calling you Mr Murderer can we?

Tom Sorry! Yes. I am Thomas Gondalf Frido Bomadil. My parents were mad keen on The Lord of the Rings by J. R. R. Tolkien, but rotten at spelling. Aren't you going to tape this or something?

Love This is just the preliminary enquiry sir. We'll tape it later and take your statement then.

Darling If you'd like to start from the beginning Tom. You don't mind our calling you Tom do you?

Tom Of course not! It is my name.

Love Right Tom can you tell us exactly what happened. You told the constable that you killed someone.

Tom No I didn't kill anyone.

Darling But you told the.....

Tom I murdered my wife.

Love You're actually telling us that you've murdered your wife?

Tom That's right. I was in the kitchen chopping onions and she got on my nerves so I stabbed her eleven times.

Darling Just wanted to make sure did you Tom?

Tom Had to. No I didn't have to; I just got carried away with myself that's all.

Love ***(Takes two tapes out of a drawer in desk)*** Right! As you can see these are tape cassettes. There are two of them. One for us to use as evidence against you, the other is for you and your solicitor, so you can plan your defence.

Tom Oh! I don't want a defence. I know what I did and will plead guilty.

Darling Look Tom! I don't want to spoil your dreams or plans, but this isn't the way things are done. You don't come in here and tell us that you murdered your wife. You come in and tell us that your wife has been murdered.

Tom She has.

Darling We go out to the crime scene, look at the body.

Love Look at the blood spattered room.

Darling See if we can find a murder weapon.

Tom It's lying in a pool of blood by her right arm.
Love Photograph everything.

Darling Dust for fingerprints.

Love Find a point of entry.

Darling Then call you in for questioning.

Love You of course deny everything.

Darling We hold you for forty eight hours, questioning you all the time.

Love Then you can confess, after we've tortured you, err questioned you first.

Tom But I'm saving you all that time and trouble, aren't I?

Darling We'd prefer you not to save us time and trouble Tom. We are desperate to get stuck into a real live murder investigation. I don't think you understand how this all works Tom. It's nothing like you might see on the television. You don't just come in here and admit to murdering your wife. We have to wring it out of you; it's our job to do that.

Love We know more ways of making someone talk than are written in any books. What we know about torture would make the CIA in Guantanamo Bay look like amateurs.

Darling We don't get that many murders round here, so when we do get one, we like to make the most out of it.

Love So please don't spoil our fun.

Tom But you don't understand! On Friday I stabbed my wife eleven times.

Love Friday! But it's Wednesday Tom.

Tom I know! I've just been sat there looking at her body, wondering how I could have done such a thing. What made me do it after forty years of marriage?

Darling You've been married for forty years Tom?

Love Hells bells! I've been married for five and I feel like strangling her at times.

Darling Serves you right for marrying the boss. I mean Tom, if everybody walked in here and said I done it; we'd be out of a job wouldn't we?

Tom I'm sorry but I can't live with the knowledge of what I've done. I had to tell someone and the only ones I could think of were you. I mean you are the people who investigate crime and I have committed a crime

Darling Allegedly Tom! Allegedly. We have to investigate first. Couldn't you have told a priest?

Love How do we know that you're telling the truth? You'd be surprised at the number of people who turn up here and only want attention.

Darling Time wasters Tom. We charge them of course, but all they get is a fine and told not to do it again.

Tom But I did it. It took me three days to wash all the blood off my hands. I think that there's still some on my watch strap, **(Taking it off and offering to them)** do you want to take it and check? I want to give myself up. I want to be punished for the crime I've committed.

Darling So it's just a crime now is it? And not murder.

Tom Oh it's murder alright. Can I ask you a question?

Love Of course you can Tom.

Tom Well since I walked into this police station, no one has asked me for my address. You know, so they can go check on the body.

Darling Haven't they? Didn't the constable take your details?

Tom No he didn't and you haven't either. Aren't you going to put those tapes in the machine?

Love Not yet Tom . If you give me the address of the alleged crime I'll send someone round to check it out.

Darling I'll go chief. Just to see some blood and gore. Sorry Tom, I didn't mean to upset you.

Tom You've not upset me. The place is in a right mess I'm afraid, blood spattered all over the walls and ceiling, a big pool on the carpet where she's laying.

Darling Fantastic!!!!

Love Your address Tom?

Tom Yes its Seven A Crippen Gardens. The flat above the Spar shop. She works there part time. Of course that should be, she worked there.

Love **(Gets up, goes to door opens it and calls.)** Constable! Would you like to go round to Seven A Crippen Gardens above the Spar shop and check on this body?

Constable **(Off)** Do I have to sir?

Love Yes you do. Do you have your keys Tom?

Tom Yes of course. I made sure that no one would stumble in and find her. I even covered her with a blanket just in case anyone looked through the window. **(Hands Love keys who hands them out of door)**

Love You've been very thorough Tom. Alright constable, be off with you. It's been so long since we've had a proper murder in these parts.

Darling Look!! Shall we start again? For the tape you understand Tom. Start at the very beginning.

Love **(Sitting down)** Would that be possible Tom?

Tom I can do that yes. Where would you like me to start?

Darling Your first memory Tom.

Tom Well my parents called me Tomas Gondalf Frido after characters in the book Lord of the Rings. Only I think that my dad must have been dyslectic or just couldn't spell. Anyway my name stopped the kids at school taking the piss out of me and calling me lemon head and fatso, things like that and I started making up little rhymes. The girls all loved that and the boys crowded round because the girls were there. I'd say things like!

*"Old Tom sits on the grass alone,
Licking the melt from the ice cream cone.
For almost an hour, Tom had sucked it sour,
With hair as dark as a raven.
For an hour he glowered as the ladies cowered,
With hair as dark as a raven."*

The girls all laughed and as they did their little breasts jiggled, that's what the boys were there for. Then when I was nineteen I met the right girl and we were married.

*"Old Tom walks up the church's aisle,
With a love kept chaste in a secret vial,
For almost a year, we had kept it pure;*

*Frustration as deep as an ocean.
For three hundred days, in a thousand ways
Frustration as deep as an ocean.”*

- Darling That sounds good. Have you always made up little rhymes Tom?
- Love Tell us more about your past Tom. Just so we can see what sort of person you are.
- Tom Well when I was a kid I read all the Tolkien books, they were about the only books in the house. I was taken with my namesake Tom Bombadil and his way of life. I took to wandering in the Chase.
- Darling You went in there?
- Love It's dangerous in there. Isn't it haunted or something?
- Tom Well I found this track by the river that runs through it and there, just like in the book is big old willow by a marsh, then there's a small lake with water lilies in. Well in the autumn I'd go in there and cut the lilies and take them home to my mum and put them in bowls and dishes round the house just like Tom did for his Golden berry in the book, and I'd sing the same song as Tom did.
- Love I've never read the books Tom. Who is "Golden berry?"
- Tom Golden berry is the river ladies daughter. Tom's wife if you like.
- Love What about the song? How does that go?
- Tom You've never read the books? Well here is the song.

*Hey! Come merry dill! My darling!
Light goes the weather wind and the feathered starling.
Down along under Hill, shining in the sunlight,
Waiting on the doorstep for the evening starlight,
There my pretty lady is, River-ladies daughter,
Slender as a willow wand, clearer than the water.
Old Tom Bomadil water lilies bringing
Here he comes hopping home again. Can't you hear him singing?
Hey come merry dill! Derry dill! And merry-o,
Golden berry, Golden berry, merry yellow berry-o!
Poor old Willow man, tuck your roots away!
Tom's in a hurry now. Evening will follow day.
Tom's going home again water lilies bringing.
Hey! Come derry dill! Can't you hear me singing?*

My mum used to love it when I got home, my arms full of water lilies.

- Darling How long do you think it'll take the constable to check this body out?

Tom Well it took me half an hour to walk here.

Love At least an hour and a half then, that's if he can stomach seeing a body. But that depends on how he gets there.

Darling You should have sent me chief. I'd have put the blues and twos on and been over there in five minutes flat. All that lovely blood and gore, sorry Tom.

Tom *Old Tom sits in his room alone
And watches and worries a withered crone
For many a year he had taken the sneer
And his mind began to shrivel.
Tom left her a-lying in a pool of blood.
And his mind began to shrivel.*

Love What was that Tom?

Darling You were saying about taking these water lilies home to your mother Tom.

Tom Well one day, I was eighteen and I met this girl at collage, it was love at first sight and I asked her out she said yes and that was that. I went home to meet her mum and dad. I should have known shouldn't I? My mum told me to look closely at Avril's mum and I'd see what Avril would turn out like. Well Avril's dad couldn't do any right according to her mum. It turned out that my mum was dead right. Oh it was all right for the first five or six years then when her mum died suddenly Avril seemed to change overnight. You see before I got married I told Avril about the water lilies and she said that she thought that it was so romantic. When we got married I started to take water lilies home to her as well, then her mum died and she didn't want the lilies anymore, said they were full of bugs and I was filling the flat with filth and mud. I started to do the cleaning and polishing because she stopped, and she'd go round wiping her finger over the furniture then tell me to do it again. At first it was just her finger then she started to wear white gloves, just so any dust would show up better. She stopped doing the washing, so I did that, and then she wanted everything ironing. I got home from work one day to find that she hadn't cooked any tea, when I asked her about it, she told me that if I wanted any then I'd have to cook for myself. She stopped doing anything except sitting around and reading or watching the TV. I'd be out at work all day and have to get home and do everything. I'd even have to leave her lunch ready for the next day, but all this wasn't good enough. She'd criticise me for the slightest little thing, if I put one pea too many on her plate she'd throw the whole thing on the floor. Yes she'd count the number of peas or beans on the plate, there had to be exactly thirty two, one less or one more and she'd throw the plate at me. At first I thought that it was the

grief of losing her mother that was causing it but over the years she just got worse.

Love Why the hell didn't you leave her Tom?

Tom She was my wife. For better or for worse. That's what I said in the church and that's what I meant. I couldn't leave her. She was always picking fault with everything I did. I thought that she had someone else and was just trying to drive me out, so I hired a private investigator to see if she was seeing someone else. He watched the flat for a month, asked people around lots of questions but she wasn't seeing anyone. I managed to keep that quiet from her, I don't know what she would have done if she'd have found out.

Darling I think that I would have done her in years ago.