

TUB TALK

by Ken Bradbury



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(Herb, the perpetually teasing husband, is in the living room. His wife, Freida, is in the tub.)

FREIDA: Herb? You got the phone?

HERB: What?

FREIDA: The phone, you dumbskull! You're sittin' right beside it! You got the phone?

HERB: I can't talk now. The phone's ringin'. *(into the phone)* Uh-huh ... Uh-huh ... Yeh ... Sure do.

FREIDA: Herb! Who is it?

HERB: Just a minute! I'm on the phone!

FREIDA: I know you're on the phone! I'm askin' who it is you're talkin' to!

HERB: Why is it every time the phone rings, you start talkin'?

FREIDA: Because I want know who it is! The last time you took a message for me you fouled the whole thing up!

HERB: Did not!

FREIDA: How would you know? You forget everything you hear! And you don't write nothin' down! Who called me this mornin' about flowers for church?

HERB: I don't know.

FREIDA: See what I mean! You took the call! Marie Daigh called and said she'd leave them out on her front stoop for me to pick up.

HERB: Well, did ja?

FREIDA: No, you idiot! Because you took the call and forgot to tell me!

HERB: I did?

FREIDA: See! See!

HERB: See what?

FREIDA: You dumbskull! By the time I got to her house, the lilies was sittin' there with their tongues hangin' out and the petunias was deader'n a doornail. Are you still on the phone?

HERB: I can't talk now, Freida. I'm on the phone.

FREIDA: (*an animal-like yell*)

HERB: Be with you in a minute, Freida. Uh-huh ... Uh-huh ... Well sure ... I mean if it won't cost me nothin'.

FREIDA: Herb! Is somebody tryin' to sell you somethin'? Herb, if that's a salesman, hang up!

HERB: Freida, I'm tryin' to talk on the phone.

FREIDA: You'll never dial another number once I get done with you! Is that a salesman?

HERB: No, Freida. It sounds like sort of a cute little gal. She says she was just takin' a survey.

FREIDA: 'Cute little gal?' How'd they know I was in the tub and you'd be answerin' the phone?

HERB: She says I'll get my money back if not completely satisfied.

FREIDA: Money! What money? Herb, that's a salesman! Now hang up!

HERB: Freida, if you don't quit hollerin' then I'll just have to hang up.

FREIDA: Hang up! Do it! Hang up! Hang up! Hang up!

HERB: Uh-huh ... Uh-huh ... Sure ... My address? It's ...

FREIDA: Don't you dare give out our ...

HERB: Rural Route number one, Coonridge, Illinois.

FREIDA: Herb!

HERB: Freida, I can't hear with you shoutin'!

FREIDA: You're gonna be listinin' with boxed ears once I get outa this tub! Is

that the Democrats? Herb? Is that the Democratic National Committee again? I should never of sent a donation to save the owls. They give my number to ever'body.

HERB: No.

FREIDA: The Republicans? Tell 'em we ain't got enough money to come to the dinner!

HERB: No Freida, it ain't ...

FREIDA: The Shop-At-Home Channel? Herb, if you order another genuine imitation Indian rug you're gonna be kicked outa the teepee.

HERB: No, it ain't ...

FREIDA: And no more Shirley Temple Collector's Plates! You order any more Wizard of Oz trinkets and you'll be on a one-way trip to Kansas.

HERB: Freida ...

FREIDA: Toto, too!

HERB: Freida, what's our credit card number?

FREIDA: Stop! Stop right where you are, Herb Crump, and slam down that phone!

HERB: But Freida ...

FREIDA: You wanta see a naked, wet, and mad old lady in the livin' room?

HERB: No! Stay put, Freida. It's just a simple combination magazine subscription-life insurance-investment-home equity plan. I think I'm smart enough to figure it out.

FREIDA: We got enough magazines, the house is paid for and your life ain't gonna be worth two cents once I get out of this tub! You couldn't pour bubbles out of a boot, Herb Crump! Hang up and I mean *now!*

HERB: But she sounds like a nice gal, Freida.

FREIDA: So did the Wicked Witch! Kiss her good-bye and hang up, Herb!

HERB: Sorry. My wife's sick and has these spells. You say the second payment won't be due 'til the end of the month?

FREIDA: Second payment! I'm gonna stop payment on the first soon as I dry off! Give me a towel! Herb, throw me a towel so I can slap you with it!

HERB: How long? Oh, she's been like this for pro'bly thirty years. You offer psychiatric insurance too?

FREIDA: Herb!!!!

HERB: Well sure ... I mean, if that's all it costs.

FREIDA: Herb!!!!

HERB: And that comes with the little plot of ground in the Everglades?

FREIDA: Herb!!!

HERB: Here. I found the credit card in her purse. (*a bubble-bustin' scream from the tub*) What! Oh, she's all right.

FREIDA: Herb, get your clammy paws outa my purse! Hang up the phone! Herb, can you hear me?

HERB: Yea. I've learned to live with it. You would? For just another thousand you'll throw in a cemetery plot for her?



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