

# TO BE IN YOUR SHOES

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## CHARACTERS

HELEN: 30's, (Todd inside. The husband.)

TODD: 30's, (Helen inside. The wife.)

## LOCATION

Helen and Todd's suburban bedroom.

## TIME

Early Morning. The present.

## BACKGROUND

Helen and Todd, mid to late 30's, have been married for ten years and have two children. Though they are opposites, they've always had a lively, vibrant relationship. Helen is a successful gynecologist, and Todd is a school counselor. Their marriage has had its ups and downs and an occasional weird moment, but nothing this weird. A week ago, while attending a neighbor's New Year's Eve party, Helen and Todd, blitzed on Tequila, made a New Year's wish with the party's hired fortune teller. Each of them wished to spend a day in the other spouse's body. Neither of them suspected that this wish would come true. However, this morning when Todd rolled out of bed and used the bathroom, he discovered that he had turned into Helen, physically, during the night.

*(Special note: The "Helen" character should be played by a female, though "Helen" is really Todd inside. The "Todd" character should be played by a male, though "Todd" is really Helen inside.)*

*Lights up on Todd who is sleeping soundly. Suddenly a loud crash is heard coming from the bathroom stage right. Todd's nose twitches slightly.*

HELEN

*(From the bathroom.)* It can't be. I, I, I can't be. This. Can't. Be. Helen? Helen?  
*(Yelling.)* Heleeeen!

TODD

*(Stirring, still very much asleep.)* What, what? What's going on? *(Eyes barely open.)*

HELEN

*(From the bathroom.)* Wake up, Helen. I need your help. This is crazy! I'm going crazy!

TODD

*(Turning over.)* I think I am too. Because somebody keeps yelling and yelling.

HELEN

*(Yelling from the bathroom.)* Helen, wake up!! Something is very wrong when I look in the mirror.

TODD

*(Still half-asleep.)* Oh, honey, it's not that bad. Trust me, I look at you every day.

HELEN

No, not bad. Wrong. It's wrong. It's all wrong! It's completely, utterly...

TODD

Wrong? You like that word, don't you? *(Looks at the clock.)* I'll tell you wrong. Small hand on five—now that's wrong. *(Looking around.)* Where are you, Todd?

HELEN

Bathroom.

TODD

Your voice sounds funny.

HELEN

Yours too. Yours too! Isn't that odd to you, Helen?

TODD

No, it's because I'm still half-asleep, thanks to you. Wishing at this point to be *all* asleep.

HELEN

You don't understand. This is big. Huge.

TODD

What is? What's huge? You? Honey, you're not fat. Go to sleep. Or rather, I'll go to sleep.

HELEN

No, you don't understand. This is an emergency!

TODD

Emergency? (*Sitting up.*) Emergency?! Oh God! Are the kids okay?!

HELEN

Yes. Yes. The kids are fine.

TODD

Is the house on fire?

HELEN

No.

TODD

Did you kill someone?

HELEN

No.

TODD

Did I kill someone?

HELEN

No.

TODD

Then I'm gonna I kill you! For waking me up at this god-awful hour! So what is it?!

HELEN

I'm coming in, Helen. I'm coming in the bedroom now.

TODD

There's no reason to announce your appearance. I'm your wife. I see you everyday.

HELEN

I have to warn you. I don't want you in shock. I thought I was dreaming myself.

TODD

What the hell are you talking about?

HELEN

There is no way to ease you into this. Let's just say you will be shocked.

TODD

All right. All right. I'll be shocked. What's it this time? A pimple?

HELEN

No. I have a perfect complexion—a lot like yours. Actually, exactly like yours.

TODD

Oh. Thank you, honey.

HELEN

I'm coming in now, Helen. Very slowly. Very, very slowly. I hope you're sitting.

TODD

I swear, Todd, I will never forget that you were a *drama* major. Come in.

HELEN

*(Entering.)* Okay, here I am.

TODD

I swear you make a huge deal of everything! Every single, little, tiny...*(Looking. Gasping at first.)* Ahhhhhhhhh! Ohhhhh! *(Giving voice to it.)* Ohhh. Ahhh. Ohhh. This is...I...You. Not. That. Can't. You're. How'd you?...Did you?...Are you?...Listen to my voice...I sound...Very low. Oh God, Todd, you're, you're, you look like—

HELEN

Uh-huh.

TODD

And I'm afraid my...I'm not sure how I look...I'm afraid to...my voice is...I'm, I'm—

HELEN

Uh-huh.

TODD

Oh God. This is wrong. This is very wrong! This is completely, utterly—

HELEN

That's what I said! I told you it was huge.

TODD

Yes, but you didn't happen to mention that you turned into me and I turned into—I mean, that's big. You just kept going on about how flabby you look in the mirror.

HELEN

It wasn't that, Helen.

TODD

Oh my God! You think I'm flabby?

HELEN

Not at all.

TODD

So why were you upset when you looked in the mirror?

HELEN

Are you telling me you wouldn't be upset if you suddenly changed into your wife?

TODD

I don't have a wife, idiot. Or at least I didn't used to.

HELEN

I think if you look in the mirror, you'll understand why I was so upset.

TODD

I don't want to look into the mirror. I get the gist of things. I don't want to look.

HELEN

I'm that unattractive?

TODD

No. I just, I don't want to look because, because I just don't. I think we're drugged.

HELEN

What? We're not. Who would have drugged us?

TODD

I don't know. Obviously. But I'm going to have Becky run a blood test when I get into the office this morn... Oh no! My patients. I have patients scheduled all day today, Todd. What am I going to do? This getting drugged is incredibly inconvenient.

HELEN

Well, it's not exactly a picnic for me either. Besides, we are not drugged, Helen.

TODD

How do you know?

HELEN

Because I can tell. I know what it's like to be buzzed.

TODD

How? Do you have some drug habits I'm unaware of? Because this might not be the best time to bring it up, considering you have my body. And you better not return it with any foreign substances, buddy!

HELEN

I'm just saying there's probably a reasonable explanation for all of this.

TODD

Oh yes, I'm sure there is. I'm sure people come in with this problem every day, Todd.

HELEN

I'm just saying we need to go over things.

TODD

Oh my God. I just realized what it is. We're dead.

HELEN

We're not dead. We're talking.

TODD

What difference does that make? You think conversation ceases when you die? Those souls in hell have to be tortured by something. Why not their husbands talking at them? *(Beat.)* Oh God, we're dead.

HELEN

No. That's not it. How would we have died?

TODD

Well, I don't know. You must have kicked-the-bucket first, since you were the first to wake up. You should know better than me.

HELEN

*(Gasps.)* Haaaaa! Remember the fortune teller at the Hanson's? The New Year's Eve party? We wished that we were each other, remember?

TODD

Oh. And this is the reasonable explanation I suppose?

HELEN

Don't you remember her asking us to make a wish for a day?

TODD

I guess. Yes. I remember. I thought it was ludicrous.

HELEN

I thought it was kinda sweet. Me asking to be you.

TODD

It was. That's not the point, Todd! If this is true, the point is it's entirely your fault!

HELEN

Mine?! You asked to be me too!

TODD

Well! That was only after you brought it up. How would it have looked if I asked for a million bucks after you're being all sweet, wanting to understand the female experience?

HELEN

Come to think of it, a million bucks wouldn't have been a bad idea.

TODD

Oh great! *Now* you tell me. (*Remembering.*) Hey? Hey? Did she tell us how long this wish would last?

HELEN

Oh yeah. She said it would last 24 hours. Do you think she was right?

TODD

Well, gee, Todd, how do I know? Medical school doesn't exactly cover this kind of thing. (*Beat.*) Ooh, I'm getting hot. I wonder if this causes a fever. (*Touching her forehead and then her face.*) Huhh! No!

HELEN

What, what, what?! What's wrong?

TODD

(*Still touching face.*) It's so weird. It's so, so weird. I have scruff.

HELEN

Oh, Sweetie, it's not that bad. Sometimes it's even fun to shave.

TODD

Oh yeah. It's fun to wear pantyhose too, hon. (*Touching her chin.*) Oh God. All those years of making fun of Aunt Millie for her chin hairs. This is the payback.

HELEN

What are we going to do? We have to think fast. I have appointments all day. We have to wake up the kids. Do you think we should tell the kids?

TODD

Are you kidding? Do you want them to be in therapy for the rest of their lives?

HELEN

What about our jobs? Should we call in sick?

TODD

I can't call in sick. I have a completely booked day.

HELEN

Maybe we should put in a call to Matt...maybe we can be up-front with him. He's a great doctor. He'll take us to the hospital and run a whole battery of tests.

TODD

Are you out of your mind? He will put us straight into an institution.

HELEN

He respects your work.

TODD

Yes. As a gyno. But that doesn't mean if I go to him and tell him I now have my husband's exterior, he's going to say, "Hum. Gee Dr., I've seen this before. Let's run a battery of tests and see how you're both doing since you became each other."

HELEN

*(Touching belly.)* Owwww. God. That hurts.

TODD

Oh great. I'm getting my period. I mean, *you're* getting my period. *(Happiness.)* You're getting my period!

HELEN

No! I don't know how to...I can't...you can't expect me to...

TODD

Oh, I'm loving this.

HELEN

Don't you ever tell anyone this. You hear? Swear you won't.

TODD

Geez, I swear, Todd. It's not like something that I really want to share with all my friends—you having my period. On second thought, that might be kinda fun. *(Beat.)* Ooh. I think I have to go to the bathroom.

HELEN

Oh. Well put the seat down, okay? Because I practically fell in this morning.

TODD

*(Laughing.)* You did? I know. Not funny. *(Walking.)* I'll be right out. *(Beat.)* Wow. I get to do this upright. Ya know, this is kinda fun.

HELEN

Fun? How in any way is this fun?!

TODD

It's just fascinating. Everything. I mean, I've never felt what it was like to be a man.

HELEN

What about our jobs?

TODD

*(Beat.)* I'll go to school today. It might be fun. I'd like to play you.

HELEN

But you don't know what I do.

TODD

Come on, you're a school counselor. I'd love to hear all the juicy stuff about teenagers and their parents and their love angst. It would be fun.

HELEN

That's not all it is.

TODD

I know. I know. You're very sympathetic. I know you're good. How much damage can I do in one day?

HELEN

Well, if you get to do that, then I get to go give a bunch of gynecological exams. I'm sure your assistant can help me through it.

TODD

I know what you're thinking, but it's not like that, Todd. You're imaging a bunch of twenty-year-old knockouts that you might like to see a little more fully. Trust me, my day is half-full of middle-aged women with sagging everything.

HELEN

I'm not that shallow. I don't mind sagging women.

**Darn – the ending is cut off – I better buy the book! 😊**