

"You're Buried Alive? Let's Fix That!"

A Short Audio Play

NOTE: FICTION. NOT TO BE TAKEN FOR ACTUAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE
ADVICE

FADE IN:

INT. COFFIN - NIGHT

SOUND: PERCUSSIVE HITS ON THICK WOOD. SLIGHT ECHO
TO SUGGEST UNDERGROUND, NOTHING NEARBY,
DARKNESS.

NARRATOR: (EVEN TEMPER, ALMOST BORED) The last time
I was buried alive, they were nice enough
to leave an iPod for me to listen to.

SOUND: THROUGHOUT THE NEXT LINES, NARRATOR
WIGGLES - HIS HEAD, HIS SHOULDERS, TWISTS
HIS TORSO, RAISES AND LOWERS HIS ARMS,
STRETCHES HIS LEGS.

NARRATOR: And after a while, "The Best of Polka" got
kind of old. But now, everything's part of
a cellphone, and no one's stupid enough to
give me a cellphone when they're burying
me alive. I can call for help. Not like I
need it, but why give me the advantage? I
can entertain myself some. The coffin
can't hold a tune worth a damn.

SOUND: NARRATOR SOFTLY BUMPS AGAINST THE SIDES
AND LID OF THE COFFIN.

NARRATOR: The first, most important thing to do is
breathe. Slow, deep breaths. You will
panic, but let it pass through and away
from you. If you stay panicked, everything
after this point is more difficult.

SOUND: BEAT. DEEP BREATH - IN AND OUT.

NARRATOR: The second thing you want to do is... nothing. Get comfortable. You are either lucky and your burier has already left - or you're a guy like me with a reputation for not staying dead, so someone's keeping an eye out for you. Not in the fun and cuddly way.

SOUND: NARRATOR CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES.

NARRATOR: They'll be tired after digging the hole, putting you in it, and then filling the hole back up. Digging a hole looks easy when the shovel is in someone else's hands. If they tried to hit you in the head to knock you out, you might have a bad headache to get over before you can do anything useful. And they probably kept you knocked out with something else.

SOUND: BEAT.

NARRATOR: All this to say - protect your head. You have some air in here. You're going to take advantage of it.

SOUND: BEAT. DEEP BREATH - IN AND OUT. ANOTHER DEEP BREATH - IN AND OUT.

NARRATOR: I'm also going to assume you're buried in a coffin and not a professional casket. Caskets are too heavy and too expensive for someone to use just for burying you in the middle of nowhere. And they're also too heavy for you to crack from the inside.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS OVERHEAD FADING OUT.

NARRATOR: (MILDLY GROSSED OUT) Smells like musty dirt. It'll get worse the longer you're in here. Next thing to check after you're

NARRATOR (CONT.): sure you're alone - can you move your hands and feet? With friends like mine, I would assume your wrists and ankles are tied to... *discourage* you from getting out.

SOUND: ROPE TWISTING AND SCRATCHING AGAINST WOOD.

NARRATOR: Which is usually overkill, but that's the point. If you can move your hands, you don't have to rely entirely on your head and body weight for the next steps. You'll be less sore and have less of a headache.

SOUND: BEAT.

NARRATOR: If you are in a heavy coffin instead of a casket, you're just not going to break out on your own. They're too thick. Tap hard and often SOS in Morse code and don't move around much. You might be in there for a while.

SOUND: MORSE CODE - TAPTAPTAP. TAP TAP TAP. TAPTAPTAP.

NARRATOR: I definitely hope your burier is gone by now. This next part is kind of loud. If you can move your legs at all, you'll next want to take off your pants. You'll want some protection for your hands when you break the nice, thin coffin in a minute or two. You can deal with scratches on your legs if you get them. Hurting your hands too much will ruin your progress.

SOUND: CLOTHES RUSTLING, THROUGHOUT.

NARRATOR: Your shirt will probably get caught around your head in a way that you can't remove it. Which is a funny way to die, but no one is even around to see it. Not worth the effort. But you will want to cover

NARRATOR (CONT.): your face so you can still breathe and
 react even when there's dirt all over.
 There will be dirt all over.

SOUND: CLOTHES RUSTLING ENDS.

NARRATOR: (SLIGHTLY MUFFLED) If at all possible,
 keep your shoes on. That will help the
 next part. It's funny - when you get
 dropped in the middle of the ocean, shoes
 are usually the first thing to go. Here,
 we'll keep them.

SOUND: BEAT.

NARRATOR: (SLIGHTLY MUFFLED) Once you're ready to
 go, you'll want to hit the lid. Focus on
 the lid itself and the seams between the
 lid and the sides. Hit them hard. Until
 they break. Put your whole body weight
 into it. You are going to break this and
 get out. *You are going to break this and*
 get out. Repeat this to yourself to build
 confidence.

SOUND: HARD THUD.

SOUND, CONT.: GRUNT.
 HARD THUD.
 GRUNT.
 HARD THUD.
 GRUNT.
 AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN FOR SEVERAL
 SECONDS.

 THEN, A SLIGHT CRACKING SOUND.

 HARD THUD.
 GRUNT.
 HARD THUD.
 GRUNT.

THEN, A LOUDER CRACKING SOUND. WOOD
BREAKING.
DIRT FILLS THE COFFIN THROUGH NEXT LINE.

NARRATOR: When dirt starts filling up the coffin,
keep breathing and keep pushing. The dirt
will fall down to fill the gap you left
behind. Go in the opposite direction, and
you're headed towards the surface. Crawl
up. Crawl out.

SOUND: DIRT FALLING.

NARRATOR: If you were just recently buried, even
within the past few hours, the dirt will
be loose and easier to move through. But
you are digging up.

SOUND: PUSHING THROUGH DIRT, THROUGH NEXT LINES.

NARRATOR: Digging a hole looks easy when the shovel
is in someone else's hands. Most graves
are less than six feet deep. That's a lot
of digging, and the hole will start to
collapse in on itself. You're probably
closer to four feet or one shovel length
deep. Another benefit is your gravedigger
is probably not worried about keeping you
flat and level more than they are about
getting you in the ground away from them.
Even if you're unlucky and have your feet
higher than your head, you're tilted up
somehow. It's already a bit of progress.
Keep going! *You are going to get out.*

SOUND: BREAKING THROUGH TO THE SURFACE.

NARRATOR: Push through and take your first free
breaths of air. You've done it! I'm so
proud of you.

SOUND: LONG, TRIUMPHANT BEAT.

NARRATOR: You're going to get dirt up your nose, but
 that's okay as long as you don't sneeze
 and bring attention to yourself-

SOUND: CUT OFF BY SHOVEL HIT TO HEAD. HARD.

FADE OUT: