

My palm tree is  
alive! (and so are  
my dreams)

I have just closed the curtains a few minutes after five p.m. and that makes me ridiculously happy. The days are finally getting noticeably longer and there are visible and audible signs of spring to accompany me on my regular walks now. Snowdrops, catkins and even the odd crocus are defying the current cold snap as if to say, bring it on Winter, your days are numbered and our time has come. Birds are visibly

busier laying down fat both to combat the cold but also to ensure they are in tip top condition for breeding. Robins are sparring over territory and potential mates and buds are fattening on the tips of branches. Nature is stirring impatiently and my palm tree is alive!

I have renewed my on-line notifications for boats of a certain criteria and I am allowing myself to get excited once more. Everybody I speak to assures me that Spring is the best possible time to sell a property, so I am

refusing to let the lack of enquiries dampen my optimism. Like the tightly packed new leaves developing in the sticky buds on the trees there is an inevitability in the air that tells me our plans will unfurl this summer and they will be as vibrant and vivid as any newly emerged young leaf. I am determined to remain positive and to learn from the lesson of a twenty year old house plant; where there is a will there is a way.

The house plant in question is a potted palm. How I acquired it is

one of my oft repeated tales that I like to narrate to any captive audience whenever I get the opportunity. The story goes back two decades but the memory is still crystal clear in my mind. I was attending a folk night in a local hotel and I had bought a couple of tickets for the interval raffle. To my surprise my number was called out and I was invited to select a prize from the selection on display. A low table at the front of the room sported various bottles of alcohol and a couple of boxes of chocolates. Alongside it was an elegant potted

palm tree that I assumed was a part of the hotel's fixtures and fitting so I thought I would be terribly witty and announce that I would like the plant.

Unfortunately for me it didn't belong to the hotel and whilst all the other lucky raffle winners went home with a bottle of scotch or a box of Black Magic I had to wrestle a teenage tree into my car. Over the subsequent years that plant has moved house with me at least ten times and has been sufficiently neglected and traumatised on so many occasions that it has been reduced to

nothing more than a collection of bare branches several times. It's never given up on me though. Just recently it's been thriving in our new home and last week I decided drastic action was required before it took over the entire lounge like some rampant Trifid, mainlining on Baby Bio. I chopped it down in a moment of extreme pruning hysteria and now it looks like the picture below.



## Sorry Palm

It was one of those 'do or die' decisions. We wouldn't have been able to keep the beast if it had continued to grow and it certainly wouldn't have fitted on a narrow boat. I didn't really want to part with it because it has been such a part of my life so I trusted to

nature and its enviable ability to teach us lessons in survival. It's about a week now since I took the pruners to it and today I noticed something wonderful. A new bud is forming on the main trunk and it has become a metaphor for my current state of limbo whilst waiting to sell the bungalow.





