Italo Calvino's Marcovaldo stories, dramatised in five instalments by the actor Toby Jones from William Weaver's translation, at first sounded cosy. Jones has a wonderfully unfruity voice.

Italo Calvino was not only a prolific master of fiction, he was also an uncanny reader of literature, a keen critic of astonishing range. Marcovaldo is an unskilled worker in a drab industrial city in northern Italy. He is an irrepressible dreamer and an inveterate schemer. Much to the puzzlement of his wife, his children, his boss, and his

Marcovaldo is a collection of 20 short stories written by Italo Calvino. It was initially published, in 1963, as Marcovaldo ovvero Le stagioni in città (Marcovaldo, or The Seasons in the City). The first stories were written in the early 1950s.

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