



# Tom & Gerry

**A comedy in one act**  
**by Dave Buchanan**



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## ***OH CALCUTTA!***

### ***CAST***

**Tom Findlay**, an ex-serviceman, retired

**Gerry Cameron**, an ex-serviceman, retired

**Molly Brownlee**, Gerry's friend

**Wilhelmina Paterson**, Tom's friend

**Fergus Kelly**, a friend of Tom's

*(Author's note: Tom & Gerry are Falklands veterans, so can be any age from 50 to 65; the other characters may be slightly younger)*

**Time:** the action takes place in the present day, the days before, during and after a Calcutta Cup match between Scotland and England at Murrayfield

**Place:** a flat in Park Grove Apartments, Leith

*(Sporting note: a Calcutta cup match with the result as described on pages 22 and 23 actually occurred in 2008, and any similarity between the two matches is entirely intentional)*

## Scene 1

*February 13th, daytime*

*The scene is a modern flat, tastefully furnished and decorated. Stage right is a table with a laptop on it and two chairs; left of centre is a leather settee, and left of it an armchair. Beside this is a small table, on it a TV remote. The TV and CD player are assumed to be downstage in the fourth wall. Up right of centre is an impressive drinks cabinet with a good selection of bottles and glasses etc. and a decanter of sherry, full. Up right is an exit to bedrooms. There are patio doors upstage just right of centre with beyond them, a balcony; beyond this is a sky view. Downstage left is a small kitchen area that will be mainly used for conversations out of the hearing of other characters. The main door is up left*

*On the back wall left of centre is a large painting that dominates the room. It is a Picasso print depicting a distorted female figure*

*As the curtain opens Tom is visible on the balcony looking through a telescope on a tripod. Gerry is at the table doing the Times crossword; he is wearing a smart shirt and trousers, while Tom is more casually dressed in a check shirt and jeans*

*Tom and Gerry are retired veterans, but are complete opposites, a sort of 'Odd Couple'. Gerry is pompous, and a bit of a snob; Tom on the other hand is streetwise, and more down-to-earth.. While they went to the same school, Gerry has a more 'Morningside' accent than Tom.*

**Tom** This is a great telescope, Gerry.

*Pause*

This is a great vantage-point.

*Pause. No reaction from Gerry*

It was a great idea taking a sixth floor flat.

*Pause*

I can see the Bridge.

*Tom exits the balcony and creeps towards Gerry. He stops just behind Gerry, who is still intent on his crossword, then shouts in his ear*

Boo!

*Gerry leaps a foot in the air*

**Gerry** Tom, don't do that. You could have given me a seizure!

**Tom** You weren't listening.

**Gerry** No I was ...

**Tom** I know, trying to engage with the Times crossword.

*He pauses for dramatic effect*

And I was trying to engage with *you*, Gerry.

**Gerry** Of course you were, Tom, and I heard every word you said. I was ... multi-tasking, a thing my grandma Isabella used to do. She could knit, play a penny whistle and hold a conversation simultaneously.

*Tom looks at him sceptically, then mimes knitting and then playing a whistle*

No, well, I suppose, on reflection, that that's not ... erm, even remotely possible.

*Tom shakes his head*

**Tom** So while you were doing the crossword you heard me talking about the Bridge.

**Gerry** Ah, *The Bridge*—grimly realistic Scandi cop drama featuring weirdo female cop named after oldie magazine.

*Tom looks puzzled*

Saga, get it?

*There is an uneasy pause, then Gerry realises he has put his foot in it*

Ah, that wasn't the bridge you were talking about?

**Tom** I was talking about the Forth Bridge—124 year-old iconic cantilever structure spanning the Firth. I was viewing it with my new purchase.

**Gerry** Ah, the telescope.

**Tom** Telescope—optical magnifying instrument with cylindrical shape ...

**Gerry** Alright alright, Tom, *touché*.

**Tom** I'll just go back to it now, Gerry. You can go back to your multi-tasking.

*Tom returns to the balcony and resumes viewing. Gerry sits down at the table with his newspaper, but can't concentrate. He goes to the drinks cabinet, and pours himself a glass of sherry from the decanter. Just as he sits down on the armchair ...*

**Tom** I'll have a beer.

*Gerry smiles, puts down his glass and walks offstage to the kitchen where he gets a can of beer. This he takes to Tom, who, intent on his telescope, holds out his hand. Gerry sits in the armchair*

*A further pause as they both sip their drinks*

**Tom** Gerry, come and see this, come and see this—vision.

**Gerry** Och ...

**Tom** Come on.

*Gerry gets up reluctantly and goes over to the balcony. Tom gives him the telescope*

**Gerry** (*peering*) What am I looking at?

**Tom** (*adjusting the mechanism*) There, what do you see now?

**Gerry** A vision? It's a petro-chemical works. Urgh, not nice.

**Tom** Not that. (*Adjusting*) There.

**Gerry** A gas platform? No, wait, a caravan park.

**Tom** No. (*Adjusting again*) There.

**Gerry** Just a wall. A sea wall.

**Tom** That's not just a sea wall. That's the promenade of my home town. Kirkcaldy! The Lang Toon.

**Gerry** (*still looking*) It's hardly Brighton.

**Tom** When I was a wee boy growing up you could smell its distinctive odour from miles away.

**Gerry** You mean the seaweed?

**Tom** No. The linoleum.

**Gerry** Linoleum?

**Tom** Linseed oil. It's almost gone now.

**Gerry** Thank goodness. (*Turning away*) I'll leave you to your vision.

*Gerry returns to his armchair and sits down. After a while ...*

**Tom** What a pity, there's a mist rolling in from the sea.

**Gerry** Please, Tom, don't sing *Mull of Kintyre*.

**Tom** I wasn't going to. —Oh no, I can't see the promenade. Can't see any of the towns or villages.

*There is a pause, then he sings softly, (to the tune of the Proclaimers' Letter from America)*

Methil no more—  
 Kirkcaldy no more—  
 Kinghorn no more—  
**Gerry** (*in tune, fortissimo*) Proclaimers no more!

*Pause, then slow blackout*

*The lights come on again to the same scene, but outside the balcony there is darkness. Tom is still sat there at his telescope, beer can in hand. Gerry is on the armchair with his sherry glass, looking casually at the newspaper*

*It is half an hour later*

**Gerry** You know, Tom, I think I'm going to form a new society.

*No reaction from Tom*

It's called SALM. The Society for the Abolition of Like and Massive. Which are the most overused words currently in the English.

**Tom** (*turning round*) What about 'twerk'? Or 'selfie'?

**Gerry** (*ignoring him*) 'Massive' is all over the media. Massive this, massive that, massively widespread. I'm fed up of 'massive'.

*Tom shrugs his shoulders*

And 'like'.

**Tom** Gerry, how can you possibly abolish 'like'?

**Gerry** I was visiting my daughter Eilish this morning, who, as you know, is unemployed, nineteen and has the erm— you know, (*he points to his nose*)

**Tom** —metal thingies in her nose?

**Gerry** Yes.

**Tom** And holes in her jeans.

**Gerry** And pink hair. That's the one. Anyway, Eilish was on the phone to her boyfriend who apparently is called Tarmac—

*Tom looks at him. He shrugs*

She spoke to him for ten minutes, and I guarantee that in that time she used the word 'like' fifty seven times.

**Tom** You counted them?

**Gerry** Yes. She doesn't use it in a normal sense, such as 'I like ice cream', but in the phrase 'I'm like', which means 'I said'. So the conversation goes something *like* this. "I'm like, No! and she's like, Yeah, and I'm like, Really? And she's like, Like yeah, man, like—"

**Tom** You added that last 'like' for fun, Gerry.

**Gerry** Alright, yes, but do you see what I mean?

**Tom** Like yeah. But why not have other societies for the abolition of—I mean, you could abolish hoodies, or people who throw down chewing gum, or don't pick up their doggy's poo, the list is endless. (*Pause*) Or who've got metal thingies in their nose, or pink hair?

**Gerry** Alright, I can see you're taking this very seriously. Go back to your telescope. (*Pause*) I fail to see how you can see anything now, Tom. Unless of course your machine has a night-light—

**Tom** Gerry!

**Gerry** Yes, Tom?

**Tom** D'you know who I feel like?

**Gerry** There must be a witty riposte to that!

**Tom** I feel like Jimmy Stewart.

**Gerry** Would that be Jimmy 'Lurch' Stewart in fourth year who bore a passing resemblance to the butler of the Addams Family?

**Tom** No.

**Gerry** Not Sergeant Jimmy 'Robocop' Stewart who booked me for doing twenty five miles an hour in a 'Twenty's plenty' zone last June?

**Tom** No.

**Gerry** I give up.

**Tom** Jimmy Stewart the actor, you berk!

**Gerry** Pardon me?

**Tom** James Stewart, the big movie star of the 40s, 50s and 60s.

**Gerry** Oh *James* Stewart, that's different. I would have known *James* Stewart.

**Tom** Oh yes? Anyway, Gerry, I felt just like James Stewart in *Rear Window*.

**Gerry** The Hitchcock movie.

**Tom** Yes.

**Gerry** Number fourteen in the box set you persuaded me to watch last summer.

**Tom** You enjoyed them, didn't you?

**Gerry** Yes, but twenty four movies, Tom, twenty four!

**Tom** He played a photographer with a busted leg called Jeff.

**Gerry** What did he call his other leg—Mutt?

**Tom** What?

**Gerry** Mutt and Jeff.

**Tom** What?

**Gerry** Mutt and Jeff!

**Tom** No, I'm not Mutt and Jeff, I heard you!

**Gerry** Forget it.

**Tom** Alfred Hitchcock himself— a little fat bald man winding a clock—

**Gerry** Right. And most of all, you had Raymond Burr disposing of his wife's body. But people don't do that, do they? If you were going to kill me in broad daylight, you wouldn't do it with the curtains open, would you, Tom?

**Tom** No, I'd do it with a gun, Gerry! A sawn-off shotgun, maybe. Yeah, definitely a sawn-off shotgun. Both barrels. (*Gestures*) Boom boom! They say that shotguns can blast a man fifty feet. Fifty feet, Gerry! That's awesome.

**Gerry** You're enjoying this, aren't you?

**Tom** (*after a pause, grinning*) Yep.

## ***OH CALCUTTA!***

A sequel to *Tom & Gerry*, with the background of a Calcutta Cup match between Scotland and England at Murrayfield.

### **Plot Summary**

Tom Findlay and Gerry Cameron, who share a flat in Park Grove Apartments, look forward to two big matches. Gerry supports the Scottish rugby team, while Tom is a Hibernian supporter. But Molly, Gerry's friend, has other plans for Match Day, and they involve Gerry ...

Running time: 50 minutes approx.