



TOMMY COOPER: NOT LIKE THAT, LIKE THIS

A new single drama for ITV

The information contained herein is strictly and wholly embargoed from all press, online and social media use, non-commercial publication, or syndication until 00.01 Thursday 10 April 2014.

Press Release.....	Pages 2-3
Foreword by Writer, Simon Nye	Page 4
Character Biographies	Pages 5-10
David Threlfall is Tommy Cooper	Pages 11-12
Amanda Redman is Dove Cooper.....	Pages 13-14
Helen McCrory is Mary Kay	Pages 15-16
Synopses.....	Pages 17-18
Cast and Production Credits.....	Page 19

Press contact: Julia Engleman – 020 715 73040 / julia.engleman@itv.com

Picture contact: Patrick Smith - 020 715 73044 / patrick.smith@itv.com

TOMMY COOPER: NOT LIKE THAT, LIKE THIS

Tommy Cooper: Not Like That, Like This is a single drama based on the life of the legendary comedian Tommy Cooper, written by Simon Nye and produced by multi award-winning production company, Left Bank Pictures.

Simon Nye's script focuses on the dilemma the much-loved comedian faced when he fell in love with assistant Mary Kay and embarked upon a relationship that would last 17 years. Tommy was married to Gwen, whom he adored and affectionately nicknamed Dove. Tommy was unable to choose between Dove and Mary, and his untimely death live on air in 1984 meant that he never did.

David Threlfall (*Shameless, Nowhere Boy*) will play the iconic comedian, Amanda Redman (*New Tricks, Little Dorrit*) takes the role of Dove and Helen McCrory (*Peaky Blinders, We'll Take Manhattan*) plays Mary. When Tommy's extensive touring started to affect their home life, Dove decided she couldn't go on the road with him any longer. Whilst Tommy travelled the length and breadth of the country with his own brand of visual humour and ingenious magic tricks she knew she had to remain at home to run the house. Their children, Tom Junior and Vicky, needed her and maternal Dove knew her own mind – "She's actually not much like a dove. She's strong. Kills first, asks questions later".

The late nights and post-show drinks were taking their toll on his health, and Dove tried to convince him that TV work was enough. But touring was where Tommy's heart lay: "A miner goes down a mine, a stand up comedian stands on a stage and looks the audience in the eye."

But Tommy found he couldn't tour alone and asked stage manager Mary Kay if she would join him. Mary was gentle, diligent and good at her job. She would arrange his props and tricks, flash a warm smile and reassure an often-tense Tommy before he took to the stage. He needed someone to bolster his confidence and it was Mary's loving support that made the difference to his performances. The pair fell in love, and *just like that*, Tommy became torn between two equally devoted women.

This one-off drama also reveals Tommy's working relationship with his agent, Miff Ferrie, who managed his career until Tommy's shocking death in front of millions of television viewers during Live From Her Majesty's on 15 April 1984. A dour Scot, Miff had an acrimonious working relationship with Tommy often trading insults in bitter but hilarious exchanges.

Former London Weekend Television Producer and award-winning magician, John Fisher, acted as a Consultant on the drama. John was a personal friend of Tommy Cooper's and is the author of "Always Leave Them Laughing", a definitive biography of the comedy legend's life.

Tommy Cooper: Not Like That, Like This has been executive produced by Left Bank Pictures Chief Executive Andy Harries (*Strike Back*, *DCI Banks*) and produced by Lucy Dyke (*The Ice Cream Girls*). The Director is Benjamin Caron (*Derren Brown: The Heist*, *My Mad Fat Diary*, *Scott & Bailey*). Writer Simon Nye's credits include *How Do You Want Me*, *Reggie Perrin* and the fabled comedy *Men Behaving Badly*.

Press Contact:

Julia Engleman

0207 157 3040 / Julia.engleman@itv.com

Picture Contact:

Patrick Smith

0207 157 3044 / Patrick.smith@itv.com

Foreword
By
Simon Nye

Tommy Cooper's most famous trick was to die live on stage in front of millions of TV viewers, his prone body bulging the curtain while Les Dennis staggered on with his act. It is hard to know whether to laugh or to cry, except we know that Tommy would have laughed, so I think we can too.

He was that rare comedy performer: as funny offstage as on. Which, for anyone writing a biographical film, is good and bad news. Good because it's a nice change, frankly, from more tears of a clown; bad because where's the contrast? The fact is that rich dramatic and comic contrasts abound in Tommy's life, above all in the two women he shared his life with.

Andy Harries, everyone's favourite executive producer, approached me to write the screenplay, with the help of John Fisher's indispensable biography "Tommy Cooper: Always Leave Them Laughing." No comedy writer, surely, is going to say no. For a start, you arrive at your desk with several hundred fantastic Tommy Cooper jokes already written. I tried them out on my kids and found to my cost that they're much, *much* less funny if Mr Cooper isn't doing them.

Tommy famously only had to come on stage to make people laugh. That's not what you want to hear, I suspect, if you work hard at your act and suffer for your craft. Tommy's suffering took the form of chronic insecurity about being funny and a need for an epic alcohol-fuelled unwind into the small hours.

And his addiction to performing live created the riveting triangle at the heart of his life: he had an affair for the last 17 years of his life with his assistant Mary which tore him apart. He was with Mary on the road, and with his wife Dove at home. I met Mary before she died, in her 80s - still pretty and utterly devoted to Tommy, although we both knew that Tommy could be aggressive after a few - or let's face it, a load of - drinks.

Being able to shoot in Tommy's family home in Chiswick was an incredible privilege and made us feel closer to the man. We filmed at Teddington Studios too (get in quick, they're pulling it down), where Tommy worked so much.

Proof, incidentally, that you don't get much better than David Threlfall, Helen McCrory and Amanda Redman is all over the screen.

The showbiz biopic, for want of a more dignified term, has its problems. Much as we love Tommy, hagiography is boring, and clearly he was no saint. So I hope we have captured some of his complexity, and his pressurised world, while giving a sense of his exuberance and genius. Because we will not see the like of him again...

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

TOMMY COOPER (David Threlfall)



Thomas Frederick Cooper was born in Caerphilly on 19th March 1921. The family moved to Exeter before eventually settling in Fawley, near Southampton in 1933, after Tommy's father lost their home to gambling. Tommy's mother went on to run a haberdashery shop in Southampton. She was described as a stern, strong-willed woman who was stringent with money, a trait that she passed on to Tommy. Aged eight, Tommy was given a box of magic tricks by his Aunt Lucy, who he would thank during a performance in 1958: 'Auntie, if you're watching, thank you very much for that magic set, but I still can't do the tricks'.

In January 1935, a 14 year old Tommy left school to take up an apprenticeship at the British Power Boat Company in nearby Hythe. However, work would often be distracted by recently purchased magic tricks, a growing obsession of Tommy's. It was in the canteen of the boatyard one Christmas that Tommy first performed a 'magic set'. Stage fright overwhelmed Tommy as his props and table went flying in all directions. All his meticulously planned magic tricks went drastically wrong.... BUT the audience laughed. His comic agenda was established that Christmas.

During the Second World War, Tommy served in the Royal Horse Guards regiment with which he travelled to the Middle East. It was in Cairo that Tommy, about to perform to his comrades, forgot the pith helmet he usually wore on stage so pinched a fez from a passing waiter as a replacement. This new headwear went down a storm. Tommy and the fez were united.

The Middle East also provided a milestone in Tommy's personal life as it was there that he met future wife, Gwen. As a civilian entertainer attached to CSE, Gwen had to accompany Tommy on the piano at a concert in Alexandria. She played 'The Sheik of Araby'. They fell in love and Tommy proposed two weeks later. They married in Nicosia, Cyprus on 24 February 1947. Tommy gave Gwen the nickname 'Dove'. Tommy and Dove moved to London as Tommy endeavoured to break into the entertainment industry.

Soon after, a 'Miff Ferrie' watched Tommy and saw potential. Miff was to become Tommy's agent. This was the beginning of a long and turbulent relationship. Tommy toured the variety theatres over the next few years, the smaller clubs allowing an intimacy between Tommy and his audience to develop. On 22 May 1950 he was given his first bona fide West End theatre engagement – *Sauce Piquante* – which featured many of the rising young comedians including Norman Wisdom and Bob Monkhouse.

Television soon beckoned and Tommy was awarded his own BBC series 'It's Magic' in 1952. Tommy subsequently developed a strong relationship with ABC television and continued to carve out his television career on ITV. Tommy Cooper's television series included: 'Cooper, or Life with Cooper' (1957), 'Cooperama' (1965), 'Life with Cooper' (1967). By the second series of 'Life with Cooper', in the early part of 1969, the show was watched in around 8,450,000 homes and by the end of the 1960's, Tommy was a household name.

As Tommy's star rose, so did his alcohol intake. His relationship with Dove became increasingly volatile and in 1967 Tommy started a relationship with Stage Manager Mary Kay. Mary would become Tommy's mistress as she accompanied Tommy on tour, making his props and fezzes.

Tommy's relationship with agent, Miff, also became increasingly tempestuous and by 1974 they were barely on speaking terms. In 1975, Tommy's series 'Cooper' transmitted on ITV but the effects of Tommy's alcoholism were starting to show and by the end of the 1970's Tommy's glory days were coming to a close. Despite Tommy's addictions and troubles, he never lost his 'Cooper magic'. An appearance on Eric Sykes 'This is Your Life' in 1979 and a speech at Prince Philip's 60th birthday party in 1981 both brought the house down.

Tommy suffered his first heart attack in Italy in 1977 but it was not until 15th April 1984 that a second heart attack took his life, whilst he performed live to millions of viewers during Live From Her Majesty's. As paramedics tried to revive Tommy behind the front cloth, the show continued....

He left behind his wife and their two children, Thomas and Vicky.

DOVE (Amanda Redman)



Gwen Henty was born in Eastbourne on 14 October 1920, the daughter of Thomas William Henty, a blacksmith's assistant. Gwen grew up playing the piano, after receiving the musical instrument as a gift from her parents at the age of eleven.

Gwen met Tommy Cooper on a troopship travelling from Port Said just after the end of the Second World War. On Christmas Eve 1946, on attachment to CSE, Gwen was asked to accompany Tommy on the piano at a concert in Alexandria. She played 'The Sheik of Araby' and the two quickly fell in love. Tommy proposed two weeks later and they were married in Nicosia, Cyprus on 24 February 1947.

Gwen (nicknamed 'Dove' by Tommy) was five months older than her husband. Many say she could have had her own personal stardom as, before she met Tommy, Gwen was a performer. She was gaining a reputation as an entertainer as well as a pianist.

Tommy obviously appreciated Dove's talents as he was keen for them to develop a comedy duo after their marriage. However, Dove saw Tommy as a single performer and a potential star so she stepped back. Many say that it was Dove's cheerful, forceful but grounded personality that helped keep Tommy on track. She brought a smart editorial and modest sense to the act.

At a time when newly married wives were not necessarily expected to go out to work, Dove found regular employment putting the eyes in dolls at a toy factory. Dove was not proud or ostentatious and she remained that way even when Tommy became famous. The solid red-brick suburban house in Chiswick, to which they moved towards the end of 1955, remained the principal family home until Dove's own death in 2002.

Dove took care of all financial matters. As well as Dove's carefully-judged hospitality, she also helped Tommy with his work. Dove liked a drink and as Tommy's alcoholism developed, the couple often entered into domestic rows, which sometimes turned physical.

Whether Dove knew about Tommy's affair with Mary Kay is uncertain. One Monday in March 1973 she made an anguished call to Miff at one o'clock in the morning to advise that he had not been home that Sunday, 'the first time in twenty-six years'.

After Tommy died, Dove was devastated. A further tragedy hit on 13 August 1988 when her son, Thomas, died of haemophilia following complications caused by liver failure. He was only thirty-two years old.

Dove died from bronchopneumonia on 27 October 2002. She is survived by her daughter, Vicky.

MARY (Helen McCrory)



Tommy met Mary Kay in January 1967 at the readthrough for one of Tommy's television series. Mary was part of the production team.

Whilst Tommy was becoming increasingly successful in his television career, the structure of British show business had changed with the club boom. Tommy had found himself travelling more and more but his wife, Gwen, had decided not to accompany him, torn between her husband and the attention parental duty demanded she pay their two teenage children at home.

Mary was married to a composer named Norman Kay with whom she had three sons. She had a respected background in stage management for both theatre and television and became an obvious candidate to take Gwen's place as Tommy's assistant on tour. Together they toured the UK, Mary making his props and fezzes and generally being a much-needed support for Tommy during his gruelling time on the road. Before long, Tommy found himself falling in love with Mary.

Their affair would last seventeen years, right up until Tommy's death. Those who saw Tommy together with Mary will testify to the fact that they were a devoted couple. The more he travelled with Mary in tow, the more he came to appreciate the home away from home she provided for him on the road. Mary was the pillar of support during some of the emptiest times of Tommy's life.

Whether Gwen knew about Tommy's affair with Mary is unconfirmed. There had been a loud tabloid whisper in 1975 when the *Daily Express* ran a story about Tommy Copper having a mistress. Of course, it was categorically denied.

Unfortunately, Mary struggled when it came to pulling Tommy back from the abyss of alcohol as his fame grew. Sadly she too failed to interpret the signs of his schizoid rages, like the time in a Derby restaurant where he flung her to the floor when she laughed at his complaint that the crackling with his roast pork was soggy. The most telling line in Mary Kay's memoir reads, 'Brandy, I noticed, didn't bring out the best in people.'

On the night of Tommy's death in 1984, it was Mary Kay and Thomas Jnr that joined Tommy as he was transported to the hospital. Mary spoke out about her affair with Tommy after his death and published a book *For The Love Of Tommy* before her own death in 2010.

DAVID THREFALL IS TOMMY COOPER

Were you nervous about playing Tommy Cooper?

“Of course I was. My first thought was, “Can I do it and how am I going to do it?” But then I had to park all that insecurity about trying to embody such a man and just get on with it. “

How did you prepare for the part?

“I watched and watched and watched old footage of Tommy. It was very full on – it was four weeks of preparation followed by four weeks’ shooting. But it was extremely rewarding. It’s probably the most fulfilling job I’ve had since Nicholas Nickleby.”

How did you get into the character of Tommy?

“I needed to find the delicate balance between impersonating and embodying this human being. I had to assimilate his build, his height and his shoe size, as well as trying to find his voice. At a practical level, I needed padding to fill me out. Everything was tailor-made, from the suit to the padding. It was about trying to get inside that and make that feel a part of me. So it was a way of literally being able to put him on and take him off again. The more I did that, the more he got a grip on me.”

What was it like re-enacting Tommy’s death scene?

“People ask, “Does it have to be there?” Well, that’s what happened. It was not pleasant to do. But we wanted to honour it and portray it in the best way possible.”

How would you describe his dual relationship with both Dove and Mary?

“From what I could pick up, he truly believed that he could love two women at the same time, but in a different way. Dove was the one who made him the man he was by putting him on stage in the first place. With Mary, it was a more physical relationship. They met and fell in love, and then she did everything for him. “

What did the two women see in him?

“I don’t know if he inspired great loyalty, but Mary said they fell for each other the first time they met. For her part, Dove said she met this big bloke with blue eyes and that was it – they were married within six weeks. “

What did Dove offer him?

"Dove gave him stability and a sense of home and of being grounded. She felt that Tommy should be on the road and she should stay at home with the children. She was also a performer and provided him with very good input about his act. Yes, it was sometimes a fiery relationship, but they really got on. It wasn't antagonistic. They were a terrific double act."

Do you think Dove knew about Mary's relationship with Tommy?

"There may have been some denial from her. There is a sense that what you don't see, you don't know about. Tommy would talk to his son, Young Tommy, and tell him, "We've got to get Mary on the road with me. I can't do it without her." Young Tommy was pulled into it in that way. That must've been tricky for him."

What was it like filming in Tommy's real house in West London?

"When the director said to me, "We're actually filming in his house," that was quite a moment. His daughter Vicky had sold the house three years previously. But on the recce, the new owners said to the producers, "You might be interested in this box we found in the attic." It was very musty, but it contained lots of his magic tricks. That was extraordinary."

Why was Tommy so popular?

"Why does someone like a Picasso? It all started with the fact that he was incredibly funny. He couldn't walk anywhere – wherever he went, he was completely mobbed. Whatever else was going on in his life, people didn't bother about that – they just loved him. There is still a tremendous amount of goodwill towards Tommy, despite his difficulties. People forget all those problems and simply adore him. Rather than a tortured soul, he was what he was. He had funny bones – he merely had to walk into a room and people would start laughing. You could say the same about Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton. Tommy was right up there. He had a phenomenal gift. And he was totally unique."

AMANDA REDMAN IS DOVE

What appealed to you about this project?

“It’s just a terrific script. The dialogue is beautifully executed. When I get sent the script, if I stop halfway through and make a cup of tea, I know something is not quite right with the script. That’s what happens most of the time. But this was different. “

Tell us more.

“The script arrived by bike, and I texted my agent to tell her that I’d got it. Only 40 minutes later, I phoned her and said, “I really want to do it!” I’d only finished filming two days before, and I was going to take the summer off. But when this great script came along, I thought, “No, I’ve got to do this.” And Dove is a great part to play. She’s a very ballsy, gutsy woman, a real larger-than-life character. “

Please describe the relationship between Dove and Tommy.

“They adored each other. She really understood him, and he genuinely loved her, which is why he never left her. He needed to have his cake and eat it. For 17 years, he claimed that nothing was going on with Mary, and Dove wanted to believe him. Tommy’s daughter Vicky says that Dove didn’t know about Mary. I believe she didn’t want to know.”

Did Dove and Mary ever meet?

“No, and that was deliberate on Tommy’s part. He strove incredibly hard to keep the two women apart. I read Mary’s book and found myself so much on Dove’s side. Helen and I kept making jokes about it – “Oh, the other woman has arrived!”

Why is Tommy still remembered so fondly?

“He was a national treasure. He was adored by everyone. As well as being a really funny comedian, he was a very clever magician. He would walk into a room and everybody would start laughing. Throughout my childhood, I remember my mother and I roaring with laughter at his act. I grew up with everyone doing impressions of Tommy. It was really sad that he died so young - he could have achieved so much more.”

How did you find it filming in Dove and Tommy’s real house in West London?

“It was extraordinary. I was surrounded by memories and echoes of their lives. Being in that environment really helped us get into the spirit of the piece. For instance, when we were in the kitchen, I thought, “Oh my gosh, all those terrible fights took place right here.”

Did you do a lot of research?

“Yes. I watched everything, read loads of books and spoke to people who knew them. That gave me a great sense of who Dove was. Their daughter Vicky was totally on board, but she was nervous about meeting David and me, which I completely understand. We were very honoured that she agreed to meet us. We got on very well. She was very helpful and told us all sorts of things about them which meant I could fill in the jigsaw. As a performer, it was really interesting to get Vicky’s perspective.”

What is David Threlfall like as Tommy?

“He’s sensational. When they told me David was playing Tommy, initially I couldn’t see it. But the moment I first saw him as Tommy, I couldn’t believe it. He was extraordinary, the whole kit and caboodle. He’s got it down to a tee. He is terribly funny, but also incredibly moving, heartbreaking and vulnerable. It’s a wonderful performance.”

What do you think viewers will take away from this film?

“The film will remind us what a fantastic comedian Tommy was. And a whole new generation will be introduced to him and see why he was one of our greatest comedians.”

HELEN MCCRORY IS MARY

Please describe the character of Mary to us.

“She’s someone in the background, an observer, a nurturer and a supporter. Some people might also say she was an enabler – she certainly sustained Tommy’s alcoholism. But I met people who knew Mary, and they all said she was very kind and quick to please and to encourage others.”

Have you enjoyed playing the part?

“Absolutely. As an actress, you don’t always want to play these roles. You want conflict and complexity. But this is Tommy’s drama, not Mary’s, and I was fascinated to use another side of myself. “

How would you characterise Mary’s relationship with Tommy?

“She really loved him. In no way was she an opportunist preying on a vulnerable alcoholic who was looking for more excitement. Mary and Tommy were simply two people who fell in love. He would repeatedly rehearse his tricks with a fastidiousness that was crippling him and those around him. Then all of a sudden, he found someone who was equally fascinated by that process and they fell for each other on the spot. She was hugely respectful of his marriage. She was with him for seventeen years, and she never asked him to leave Dove. She knew he was a man who loved two women at the same time. “

Can you expand on what drew Mary to Tommy?

“She described him as a child delighted by life. He was someone who was constantly creating and seeing magic around him. She found that infectious and fell in love with that. However much distraction was around him, he always tried to find those elements. He was on a very noble quest to discover the magic in life.”

Did you relate to Mary?

“Absolutely. I’d feel David’s nerves when he had to stand up in front of 50 supporting artists in a theatre and do his act as Tommy. As a performer, all you need is one person to yawn at the wrong moment and your confidence goes to the floor. Watching David perform as Tommy, I felt similar nerves to Mary.”

Why did audiences love Tommy so much?

“Spike Milligan called him a true drole, and he was. Tommy had that sadness and that clown like quality. He seemed to twinkle all the time, and his act always appeared effortless. But of course we now know that he was actually in agony with crippling back pain and was up to his eyeballs in gin. But he had a lightness of touch that was contagious. He still makes us laugh today. Watching his act now, it’s still absolutely hilarious.”

What was it like working with David Threlfall?

“I’ve always really admired him as an actor. He is a perfectionist and has great attention to detail. That’s very important as an actor, and I mean it as a compliment. He has that in common with Tommy. David also has brilliant comic timing. There is a right and a wrong way to say a comic line. If you don’t get a laugh in comedy, you’ve said it wrongly. It’s not like drama where if the audience is quiet, you hope they’re listening intently and not asleep! You have to be absolutely at the top of your game in comedy - and playing Tommy, David is absolutely at the top of his game.”

SYNOPSIS

Tommy is at the height of his career. The audiences love him and with Dove, Tommy's wife, supporting him in the wings, he's having the time of his life. However, Dove's starting to feel the strain of the touring lifestyle and decides it's time for her to stay at home with the kids, and for Tommy to concentrate on television. If he still needs to tour, Dove suggests Tommy have his manager, Miff, accompany him.

Meanwhile, Tommy is gearing up for his new television series where he meets Mary, part of the production team on the show. Mary is a huge fan of Tommy's and they hit it off immediately. Following a disastrous stint on tour with Miff, Tommy asks Mary if she'd like to join him on the road. She accepts.

Mary is a steady, organised assistant and a vitally calming influence on Tommy's pre-show nerves. They grow closer and Tommy comes to rely on Mary, just as he previously relied on his wife. After one particularly successful show, high on adrenaline, Tommy and Mary fall into bed together.

Back home, Tommy's guilt starts to surface when Dove supports him at a performance on the Royal Variety. It is clear that living two lives isn't going to be easy for Tommy. When a hotel telephones the Cooper house to inform them that a bra has been left in Tommy's hotel room, Dove is furious – it doesn't belong to her. Tommy, in turn, is furious that Mary's negligence has threatened his family life and he loses his temper with her, demanding that she fix the situation. Rattled, Mary cleverly posts a three-cupped prop bra that Tommy uses as a gag to the Cooper house, as though from the hotel. Domesticity in the Cooper house is restored.

We move through the years to 1976. Tommy's career continues to thrive. His affair with Mary also continues but the strain of living a double life is starting to show. Tommy is increasingly impatient and aggressive with Mary and following an alcohol-fuelled evening, Tommy loses his temper and takes it a step too far...

We see Mary travelling home from tour, a bruise on her cheek. Back home, she writes to Tommy to say she can no longer work for him. Tommy is heartbroken and, consumed with guilt, turns to the bottle, falling into a deep depression. This is exacerbated when a newspaper exposes Tommy's affair with Mary resulting in Dove throwing Tommy out of the family home. Tommy confides in Miff, saying he feels utterly alone. Miff suggests he take a break and books Tommy a gig in Rome. The plan backfires when Tommy suffers his first heart attack. Dove rushes to Tommy's bedside and they make up. Tommy moves back home but asks Dove if he can go back on tour. It's what makes him happiest. Dove eventually concedes but requests that their son, Tom Jnr, accompany him.

Back on tour, Tom Jnr is the opposite to Mary's calmness. Tommy's anxiety grows without Mary and it's not long before he hits the bottle again. He telephones Mary to tell her he misses her and it's clear that Mary also misses him. Tommy realises that he needs Mary back with him if he is to succeed on tour again. He consequently confesses to Tom Jnr about his affair with Mary. He also admits that it was more than a fling, that he loves Mary and can only tour with her by his side. Tom Jnr is torn, angry over the betrayal to his mother but also concerned about his father's health. He eventually concedes and calls Mary to join them. Tommy and Mary are finally reunited. Tom Jnr is now an accessory to their affair but he understands that Mary is vital to Tommy's success and health.

We re-join Tommy in 1984 as he leaves for a live performance on 'Live From her majesty's'. At 63, he is particularly anxious about the evening's performance – he doesn't like live TV. As he says a tender goodbye to his wife, we follow him as he joins Mary in the car to the theatre. As the rehearsals for the performance get underway, Tommy reflects on his life and the decisions he has made. Mary questions whether his relationship with her has put too much strain on him. Tommy realises that at some point he will have to choose between the two women in his life.

We watch Tommy's performance on stage, the nation's favourite comedian bringing the house down. It is mid-performance that Tommy collapses on stage. Whilst the audience think the collapse is part of the act, the crew question whether something far more serious is at play. As they cut to the commercial break, they drag Tommy behind the curtains. Tommy has suffered a second heart attack.

At the hospital, Tom Jnr and Mary await the news they dread: their beloved Tommy Cooper has died. As Tom Jnr calls his mother with the devastating news, Mary realises that this section of her life has been closed and that her secret affair will stay just that – secret. She collects together her belongings and leaves the hospital, passing Dove as she walks in. This is the first time the two women have been in the same room.

We leave the film with Dove and her two children watching one of Tommy's greatest performances on television. They laugh through their tears.

Cast

Tommy Cooper.....	David Threlfall
Dove Cooper.....	Amanda Redman
Mary Kay	Helen McCrory
Miff Ferrie	Gregor Fisher
Tom Jnr (Adult).....	Andy Rush
Ken Brooke	Jason Manford
Eric Morecambe	Bob Golding
Eric Sykes.....	Paul Ritter
Les Dennis	Jordan Metcalfe
Dustin Gee.....	James Carcaterra
Vicky Cooper	Charlotte Beaumont

Production Credits

Chief Executive/Executive Producer	Andy Harries
Producer.....	Lucy Dyke
Director	Benjamin Caron
Writer	Simon Nye
Line Producer	Christine Healy
Consultant	John Fisher
Production Designer.....	Candida Otton
Make-Up Designer	Christine Walmesley-Cotham
Costume Designer	Dinah Collin
Editor.....	Iain Erskine
Composer	Jake Walker
Casting Director.....	Laura Scott CDG
Location Manager	Richard May
Director of Photography	Martin Fuhrer BSC
Senior Production Executive	Sue Calverley
Head of Production	Marigo Kehoe