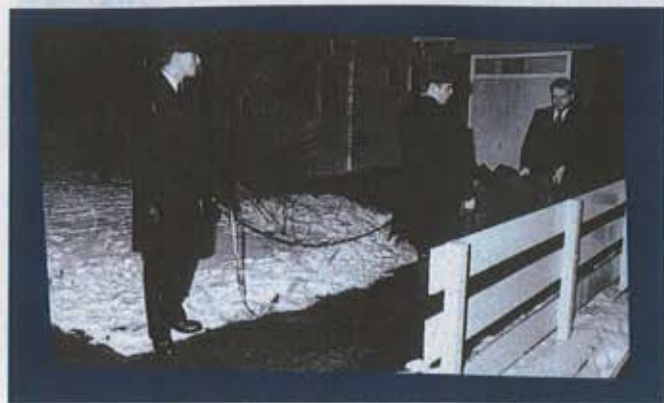


by David James Smith



# When Lain Met Tommy The Anatomy of a Suburban Murder





**Iain went to boarding school. Tommy went to Borstal. Iain and Tommy drank together on the back streets of Pinner. Then they stole together. And then one day they killed together...**

**T**HE PATHOLOGIST WAS already working on the post-mortem. In life, Christopher Jabelman had been an urbane, well-educated man who was drinking his way to oblivion. In death, the pathologist would report, he resembled somebody who had been hit full-on by a heavy lorry.

The police had found his body the previous afternoon, just before lunch, after an anonymous telephone call that had been passed on from Scotland Yard. He was lying sandwiched between two single mattresses in the bedroom of his first-floor flat on the Hazeldene Drive estate. He had been there at least a week, a stain of blood spreading out from his face across the bottom mattress, his shattered body preserved by the freezing February weather.

It was still bloody cold and getting colder. The three officers peered down the hill into the darkness of Wiltshire Lane and wished they could get in there and get it over with. Anyone

who said they liked observations must have a pretty high threshold of boredom. And what's the use of being on observation when you can't observe anything? Not even with binoculars.

The anonymous call had offered up two names for the Jabelman murder: Iain MacPherson and Tommy somebody. Tommy was easy. Tommy Cook had been plaguing Pinner for months. Thieving, fighting, hassling the locals. Petty stuff, really, though he was obviously trouble. Iain they didn't know. He was just a boy. But wherever Tommy went, Iain seemed to follow.

Crime Squad officers had quickly been on to the address in Wiltshire Lane. It was a ground-floor maisonette, part of a small council estate on the outer reaches of Eastcote, barely a mile

**Christopher Jabelman's body is taken away for examination, above. Iain and Tommy used to drink with Christopher. Tommy, inset left, killed him when they thought he owed them £25. Left: Lyneham Walk led to another murder scene**

from Pinner. There were fields opposite and an alleyway running down the side to Lyneham Walk. There was a car park round the back by the garages, facing another row of maisonettes.

It was a difficult place to watch because of the fields. They had someone out front in an old van, someone round the back by the car park, and PC Stephen Robinson up the hill with two other officers, Adrian Grater and Clive Strachan. They'd cruised past when they arrived that afternoon, just after four o'clock, and seen Tommy standing on the doorstep. But nobody was too sure what Iain looked like. They couldn't be certain he was inside.

Finally, at five past eight, the message comes over the radio from the van: "They're out." It's a positive identification of both men, as they head down Lyneham Walk, and are watched by the officer in the car park, all the way into one of the maisonettes.

Eleven minutes later, Iain is on his way back. He's carrying something — a hi-fi, an Alba MCH53 dual-cassette stereo system. Tommy

lingers at Lyneham Walk. Then he reappears, two minutes behind Iain. By twenty past eight, they're both together again inside Wiltshire Lane. They've been out for fifteen minutes. The police have heard nothing.

Finally, the decision is made to move in. They rendezvous in the car park and DI Eric Keene apportions the roles: "Robin, you take the door down; Sean, you take the back; you two arrest Cook; you two take MacPherson; Stephen, you do the exhibits."

DC Robin Lane leads them up the alleyway to the front door. Robinson pulls up behind him as Lane lifts his boot and crashes it against the door, in the middle, right by the lock. Once, twice, smash, in it goes on the third kick.

Then Robinson's in the door. He's not supposed to be first, he's only supposed to be the exhibits man, but suddenly he's there, running down the hallway. Behind him someone's shouting "Police, Police". In front of him, a figure looms in the doorway of the lounge. It's Tommy. Tommy raising his right arm. A shining chrome gun in his hand. Lane bellows, "Put that gun down, Tommy!" Jesus Christ, thinks Robinson. He's got nowhere to go but forward.

It's only three or four paces, but in that moment he sees Tommy tense his arm at full stretch and turn his head away. The gun is pointed directly at his chest. Now he's reached Tommy. He lunges at his right hand and the gun falls to the floor. Thank God. It was only a toy. Tommy is pressed face up against the wall, arms handcuffed behind his back.

An officer asks, "Who wants this?"

"Leave it there, it's only an imitation," says Robinson. "Tommy Cook, I'm arresting you for the murder of Christopher Jabelman..."

"Yeah, I know."

Iain's sitting quietly in an armchair in the lounge.

"Iain MacPherson, I'm arresting you for the..."

"I've been waiting for this," says Iain. "I knew I shouldn't have stayed here."

Three minutes, maybe less, and it's all over. Tommy's being taken out to the car. Everything's under control. Clive Strachan's driving and Tommy is squashed in the back between Grater and Robinson. He's shaking as he speaks.

"I've been fucking stupid here, I'm going to get life. Can you get me fifteen years for manslaughter?"

"Tommy, you've just been cautioned for the murder of..."

"I did the cunt in. I stoved his head in with a crowbar."

"Where's the crowbar?"

"I threw it over there." Tommy gestures out across the fields.

"Why did you kill Christopher?"

"He owed me and Iain £25. We were waiting on his giro and it didn't come."

The Maestro's pulling away when the night comes alive with a fresh wave of police cars and

ambulances. Flashing lights, officers everywhere in protective clothing. All hell has broken loose. Robinson recognizes a friend from Uxbridge Police Station.

"What's going on?" he asks.

The friend indicates back to Lyneham Walk.

"There's a man in there with a bullet hole in him. There's a woman with a hole in her throat."

"That was me," Tommy says suddenly. "I shot the cunts."

"Who have you shot, Tommy?" Robinson asks.



"Those two cunts around the corner. I shot the bitch in the throat because she screamed. I shot him in the arm."

Robinson feels sick in his stomach. The gun was real after all. He replays the scene in his head. The tensing of the arm, the flinch of Tommy's head as he turned away. Had he tried to shoot? Robinson prefers to think not.

"Tommy Cook, you are being arrested for the attempted murders of..."

"It's a good old fucking gun, that one," says Tommy.

It was a King Cobra .357 Magnum. Tommy and Iain had been out for fifteen minutes. The police had heard nothing. Not a single shot.

Tommy's going quiet now. He bows his head. "Someone put their arms around me for fuck's sake."

Robinson's left arm reaches out around Tommy's shoulders. As Robinson hugs him, Tommy begins sobbing: "I want to see my babies. I want to see my babies."

It's February 13, 1991. Day 28 of the war in

the Gulf. Day 10 of Tommy and Iain's terrible adventure in Pinner. The last day.

**S** EVEN STOPS NORTH-WEST of Baker Street on the Metropolitan Line, Pinner is the quintessence of a certain kind of Englishness, an embattled outpost of suburbia surrounded on all sides by the encroaching urban sprawl. What was once the tide of progress and aspiration embodied in John Betjeman's twee Metro-land verses has become the sediment of

middle-aged, middle-class insularity. Not so much dormitory as dormant. Nail-scissored lawns; hand-waxed cars and twitching net curtains in brilliant white. Pinner is very white. A monoculture in thrall to its own respectability.

It is only at Pinner Green that the warts begin to show. Here, at the top of Bridge Street, on the road to Rickmansworth, is where respectable Pinner finds itself in rude confrontation with the real world.

There isn't much to Pinner Green, just a parade of shops—a couple of off-licences, a garage—flanked by two pubs, The Bell and The Starling. But behind the bland frontages are the small estates such as Mill Farm Close and Hazeldene Drive where Pinner hides its share of the dispossessed and the fallen: some making the most of the little they have, others burdened by the weight of broken families, unemployment, problems with drink and drugs, and plain old-fashioned poverty.

The sons of Pinner, the true sons, are groomed in the local prep schools and dis-

patched to Merchant Taylors in Northwood for their private education. Iain MacPherson was spared this when he failed the common entrance examination for Merchant Taylors. It was disappointing for the family. Later, his parents would look back and see this moment as an early warning of the nightmare that was to consume them.

Ann and Peter MacPherson had worked hard to enhance their lives and create opportunities for their children. Peter, born into a working-class family in Edinburgh, had barely known his mother, who died when he was still a baby.

she was already showing signs of disruptive, disturbed behaviour. And it just got worse and worse. Jacqueline would later say she had been an alcoholic since she was fourteen. At the very least, she started drinking then. Drinking, smoking, doing mild drugs. She was already sexually active.

There were spells in hospital, attempts at treatment. It was beyond Peter and Ann's comprehension and best efforts. Their daughter was aggressive, violent, accusing. Her parents, she felt, were snobs. They had never loved her. Ann thought her daughter would one day emerge from all this. Marry, perhaps, and settle down.

Jacqueline married when she was 21. Billy Norfolk was a nice enough bloke, but it wasn't much of a marriage. He went back to his parents' council house on the wedding night.

Jacqueline was already pregnant, and her first child, was born soon after, defying medical concerns about her robustness for giving birth. Jacqueline was evidently tougher than she looked: a slight, waifish creature with spiky hair and swollen, arthritic knuckles.

Peter and Ann despaired of Jacqueline, but feared her destructive urges. Karen was safe, immune to her sister's advances. Iain, like any impressionable adolescent, was always going to find the bad sister more exciting.

When he failed to get in to Merchant Taylors, Iain was sent off to boarding school

in Bishop's Stortford. It was an expensive, well-regarded establishment, buried in the Home Counties. Iain called it The Prison, and he began breaking out at weekends, finding his way back to Pinner, and Jacqueline's flat.

The family believes that Jacqueline used to pave the way for Iain's escapes by writing to the school, explaining that he was needed at home. It is also said that Jacqueline had begun writing to a young Glaswegian who really was in prison. She suggested he write to her brother, Iain, at Bishops Stortford College. It was probably in this way that Iain first met Tommy Cook.

In 1986, when he was fifteen, Iain was caught smoking and was expelled. He went back to Pinner and saw out his last year of education at a local comprehensive. He left before sitting any exams and started work as a trainee butcher at Pinner Green.

Living back at home, Iain engaged in the time-honoured frictions between parents and their teenage offspring. His mother nagged him. Iain was quiet – "deep, sensitive", people

would say – invariably gentle, never aggressive.

He spent more time hanging out at Jacqueline's flat. She had tapped into the rich vein of local "undesirables", as her parents would call them. There were liberal quantities of drink and dope, and Iain enjoyed his share. When his parents tackled him Iain would say he was in control. "It's alright. I know what I'm doing."

Peter MacPherson was sceptical. He feared the direction his son's life was taking. He sought help from the police and other agencies. But there seemed to be nothing anybody could do.

Jacqueline married again in 1988. Her new husband, Andrew Leach, made some attempt to wean her from alcohol. But within a year Tommy Cook was appearing on the doorstep first thing in the morning with a bottle of vodka. When Leach discovered Jacqueline was sleeping with Tommy he moved back to his mother's house in Slough, and at Easter, 1989, Tommy moved into Jacqueline's flat.

**T**OMMY WAS NOT TALL, but he was stocky. He was given to drunken displays of macho prowess. Piercing his nipple with a nail was a favourite. He was tattooed, scarred and had cold, piercing eyes. "Don't-mess-with-me eyes," somebody called them. He had blackened, gapped teeth and a wild head of dark, curly hair. He had eighteen previous convictions when he was finally arrested for murder, including assault and bodily harm, and three charges pending.


He had been born in Coatbridge, Glasgow in 1962 and been inside periodically from the age of seventeen. In a kind of parody of Peter MacPherson's southwards journey, Tommy had made his way from Glasgow to London at a young age, and ended up in Borstal. He had been drifting back and forth between the two ever since.

Jacqueline and Tommy lived together and drank and fought. Jacqueline became pregnant, her flat was repossessed, she sought refuge from Tommy's violence. She also introduced Iain to Karen Farnan who was living in Wiltshire Lane. Karen was twelve years older than Iain. Her husband was serving a life sentence for murder. Iain lived with Karen for a while. They drank heavily.

By January 1991, Iain's parents were hoping this chapter of his life was closed. He had split up with Karen and moved home, vowing to organize his life, and start a business doing gardening and roofing work. He was nineteen years old.

Jacqueline had given birth to Tommy's daughter and moved in with a man called Steve Branch, who was living on Mill Farm Close. Tommy was in prison in Scotland. But only for 60 days.

It was Peter MacPherson who answered the phone to Tommy. He was out of prison, down



Christopher's  
semi-conscious  
on the floor,  
mumbling his rank  
and serial number  
from his days in  
National Service

**Christopher Jabelman, above left, was haunted by anxiety and depression, which he attempted to quell with sweet sherry. His front door, above, was always open**

Raised in London by his grandparents, he had studied hard to become an oil industry engineer. In the late Seventies, the couple had bought a Tudor farmhouse in Pinner which they extended and refurbished to create a luxurious five-bedroomed home.

Iain was their youngest child, and only boy. He had two older sisters, Karen and Jacqueline. It would be trite, but not entirely inaccurate to say that they were, respectively, the good sister and the bad sister.

Karen, six years older than Iain, had held an even keel through adolescence. She had studied, worked, travelled some and blossomed into an attractive, intelligent, perhaps slightly too conventional, young woman.

Jacqueline, the eldest, was Iain's senior by eight years. When she was thirteen years old

from Glasgow and looking for Iain. It was no use pretending Iain wasn't there.

Tommy was back with a vengeance. There was a new intensity to his drinking and his drunken anger.

ONE DAY, TOMMY'S round at Hazeldene Drive, trying to get into Ann Nalson's second-floor flat. He tears down the hardboard panel next to the front door and clambers in, with Iain behind him. Ann's boyfriend hits Tommy around the head with a bamboo cane spiked with nails. There's a rare old ruck before the police arrive. The walls are splashed with blood, Ann's pot plants strewn everywhere.

Ann Nalson has known Iain for years. Seen him sitting in his spot on the bench at Pinner Green shops. Smoked his dope. But Tommy is a whole new experience. Now her boyfriend vanishes, and Tommy and Iain just kind of move in, take over, rearrange the furniture, and sit in her front room drinking litre bottles of Old English Cider.

Ann is over her heroin addiction and working on her compulsion to go shoplifting. She's in her early forties, she doesn't drink and, frankly, could do with a bit of peace and quiet. Instead, she's got Tommy and Iain dancing round her flat to UB40 at full volume, heavy on the bass, psyching themselves up for another night of action on the by-ways of Pinner Green. Ann senses Iain's reluctance. She can see that Tommy is hyping him up.

THEY'RE FIGHTING in The Bell, fighting outside The Bell. Tommy's demanding money from people in the streets. A pound. A fiver... He's in The Wine Cellar Off-Licence, demanding cider on credit, and taking it anyway when it's refused. He's on the loose with Ann's crowbar, which is long and heavy and has a split end with two pointed prongs.

Over at The Wine Cellar, Keith Meerza, the joint owner, has sat a customer down in the corner and is trying to persuade him to go to the police. Christopher Jabelman often stops by for a chat during the day, but this is different. He has bruises on his face and shows Keith the bruises on his legs. Christopher shakes his head. He doesn't want to go to the police. "It's my own fault. If you mix with shit it will stick to you."

A few days later Keith Meerza sees Christopher for the last time. His face is badly beaten and he has two black eyes. Christopher says he surprised intruders in his flat and fought them off. He grins. "That's my story, and I'm keeping to it." Keith does not believe him. A short while

later Tommy and Iain are in the off-licence.

"Have you seen Chris?"

"Yes, he was here a little while ago."

"What did he tell you?"

Keith tells them what Christopher told him. They grin too.

Christopher Jabelman was a familiar figure on the walkways of Hazeldene Drive. Smartly dressed, wearing a hat, carrying a shopping bag laden with sherry. He drank Old England Cream Sherry. He liked the sweetness of the cream. If it was unavailable he took the dry and mixed that with sugar to achieve the same effect. He drank his sherry from long glasses,



The flats in Hazeldene Drive where Christopher Jabelman and, for a time, Iain and Tommy lived

**'It's the death rattle,' Tommy says. He'd heard the same sound when his Auntie Margaret died**

diluted with water. Two, three, or four bottles a day, starting early and finishing late.

He was 59 years old and lonely, in search of company, preferably drinking company and conversation. He was living in what would traditionally be described as reduced circumstances.

Jabelman was privately educated, and had nurtured his talent as a painter at art school. But he was haunted from an early age by anxiety and depression, which he attempted to quell with sherry. It had destroyed his promise and left him unable to sustain a relationship.

After his mother died in 1987, he had spent eight months in hospital, diagnosed as having Koirsakoff's Psychosis — short-term memory loss resulting from long-term alcohol abuse. On his release he had moved to a flat in Hazeldene Drive. The front door was painted purple, and it was always open.

He dressed from the Pinner charity shops, and was widely regarded as a gentleman, who

wittered on rather too much about himself and could be a bit of a nuisance when he was drunk. He could be volatile and aggressive too. He lived on an invalidity pension which came as a weekly giro: £52.10.

Iain had met Chris on the bench at Pinner Green, two years previously. They had shared a drink and a chat, and started a casual friendship, mostly revolving around drinking at Chris's flat. People noticed Chris's appearance had deteriorated in recent weeks. He was letting himself go. It coincided with the arrival of Tommy.

Just as he had with Ann, Tommy had taken over at Christopher's. He would have stayed there more regularly, but Chris's meagre income and drinking habits allowed little scope for the financing of electricity. There was rarely any light and not much heat.

ON SUNDAY, February 3, United are playing Liverpool in a league fixture at Old Trafford. It's *The Match* on ITV, and Tommy and Iain decide to watch it at Ann's. They head for The Wine Cellar, where the co-owner refuses their request for credit. Tommy is agitated and annoyed. "Come on, come on, the game's about to start." They leave with £11 of cider and sherry.

The football is disappointing. A one-all draw and minimum drama. Tommy and Iain head over to Christopher's. They're back in the off-licence when it re-opens at seven o'clock, running up another £16.76 on credit, including the cost of a bottle of Old England Cream Sherry.

They send Christopher round to Ann's to borrow some butter and a set of batteries for the cassette player.

"I don't know what's wrong with them today," says Christopher. "They're in a foul mood."

Tommy and Iain have been supplying Christopher with drink. Now they don't have any money, and they believe he owes them £25. Christopher's £52.10 giro is due. It should have been there by now and its non-appearance is a real wind-up. Tommy and Iain do not know that the cheque will never come. Christopher has not renewed his invalidity claim, and it has just expired.

By the early hours of Monday, February 4, they are all swimming in alcohol. Then Iain starts to get wound up with Chris.

"If your money doesn't come we'll do you in."

"You'll put me out of my misery then," says Chris.

"Don't, Iain," says Tommy. "You'll end up winding me up. We'll end up killing him."

Iain knows Tommy will flip out, but killing? It's not within his comprehension. Iain's got his shoes and socks off. He delivers a karate kick to Christopher's face.

Tommy's gone stupid. Turning up the music to drown the noise; old Sixties hits playing as he beats Christopher with his fists, and with the crowbar, which he liked to keep at Christopher's flat, dangling from a nail in the wall.

Christopher's on the floor.

"Stop, or I'll collapse or something," he says. Tommy's over him, leaning forward with his palms flat against the wall, jumping up and down on Christopher's chest, breaking every rib in his body. You can hear them cracking. Christopher's semi-conscious, mumbling — his rank and serial number from his days in National Service.

Ann's dragged out of bed at five in the morning, for the second time that night. Earlier, Tommy and Iain had said they were fighting up the road. Now they're back, Tommy splashed with blood, Iain with a bloodstain on the leg of his denims. They haven't been fighting, they've been beating Chris. They're worried, and they want Ann to see if he's alright.

They shine the torch on Christopher's face. His eyes are bulging, he is wheezing, making awful sounds. Ann is afraid; she just wants to get away, there is nothing she can do.

Later, when Ann has gone, and Christopher is lying on his side in his bed, Tommy lifts his head. Christopher gurgles.

"It's the death rattle," says Tommy. He had been there when his Auntie Margaret died and heard the same sound.

**O**N MONDAY MORNING, Tommy and Iain return to Ann's flat, and Tommy cracks up. Iain just sits there, impassive, ashen, not speaking, barely moving. Tommy's got his head in his hands, sobbing uncontrollably. "Chris is dead. Chris is dead. I knew this would happen. My brothers told me I'd end up killing someone. Poor bloke, never did any harm to anyone. I didn't mean to do it. I didn't mean to."

Later, Tommy warns Ann not to go to the police, or tell anyone what has happened.

"We've done one, another one won't make much difference."

They describe to her in detail how Christopher died. When they leave, Ann is violently sick.

In the evening, Iain goes home to his parents on Cuckoo Hill. His father, and sister, Karen,

are away. He tells his mother he has cut himself, to explain the blood on his jeans. She puts them in the washing machine, on long soak, and removes every trace. Ann Macpherson knows that her son is troubled, and he tells her that he is under pressure from Jacqueline. She is making life difficult for Tommy and himself.

Meanwhile Jacqueline, accompanied by her children, and a friend, Caroline, has gone looking for a reunion with Tommy. They meet up on Hazeldene Drive where Caroline overhears them arguing, and catches Tommy's pleading tones.

"Jackie, you don't understand, I'm going

away. Ann thinks he wants to be top dog in Pinner. It seems an odd ambition to her.

Tommy and Iain walk into Pinner Green Petrol Station. Tommy picks up a battery charger and a booster cable, worth £21.99 and £34.99 respectively, and walks right out with them. He is filmed by a video surveillance camera.

They take the things to Glynn Reynolds, a friend who buys stolen goods. Tommy tells Glynn he needs a gun. Glynn has a brother-in-law who belongs to a gun club.

That evening, Philip, an ex-Merchant Taylors boy who has known Iain since prep school, is at home in his room when his mum calls him to the phone. Iain is on the line and wants Philip to meet him. Philip doesn't want to go out, but there is an urgency in Iain's voice: "What's the worst crime you can imagine?" he asks.

Philip and Iain meet after ten or fifteen minutes. They walk together now, Philip listening, in horror and disbelief, as Iain unburdens himself of the story. Iain saying he has been back to the body, and looked into Christopher's eyes. He and Tommy, drunk, laughing as they offer the body a glass of cider.

"Here, have a drink, Chris. Oh, no, you can't can you?"

When he leaves Iain, Philip's mind is in turmoil. He walks round to see his girlfriend, Tanya. They talk and talk through the night, trying to decide what to do.

For Philip, the encounter has been a bizarre and disturbing diversion from his ordinary world. But for Iain there is no way back to ordinariness. He has crossed the line and is locked into a sequence of events that are by now way out

of his control. His parents had feared something dreadful would happen if he continued to spend time with Tommy — they had feared he would get involved in stealing. But for Iain such everyday adolescent misadventures have already been left far behind.

At lunchtime the following day, Tuesday, February 12, the police are breaking down the new lock which Tommy has attached to Christopher's purple front door. Iain and Tommy are in a red Talbot Sunbeam on the road to Hayes. Glynn Reynolds drops them outside his brother-in-law's home, and parks his Sunbeam outside the nearest pub, The Crane. He orders a half-pint glass of white wine, and waits.

Tommy and Iain throw a slab of concrete through the back window of Glynn Reynolds' brother-in-law's home. In next to no time, they're walking down the road to the pub. Iain's carrying a Harrod's bag with a CD Walkman inside. Tommy's got the video. They've also got two watches, a ring, a Barclay- ▶ 175



Pauline and Chris Russell were given a hi-fi for Christmas. When they wouldn't let Tommy take it, he shot them

**Pauline starts to scream.**

**Tommy turns and fires again.**

**The bullet hits her throat**

down for the big one."

Jacqueline will subsequently deny knowing that Christopher had been killed, though she and Tommy spend that Monday night alone at Christopher's flat. They lie on a mattress in the living room and make love by candlelight. Christopher's dead body is in the next room.

With Jacqueline and the two children now in tow, Tommy and Iain need somewhere else to stay. They all decamp to Karen Farnan's in Wiltshire Lane.

Tommy and Iain journey back and forth between Wiltshire Lane and Hazeldene Drive, wondering what to do with Christopher's body, and hoping it will not be discovered. They try to hide it in a wardrobe, but it will not fit. So they cover it with a mattress, and disguise the mound with piles of old clothes.

They are still drinking, and Tommy is still excitable. At Ann's he goes into a rant about the people of Pinner Green who are annoying him. He'd like to get hold of a gun and blow them all

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card, two bottles of spirits, 100 rounds of ammunition, a Smith & Wesson 9mm semi-automatic pistol, and a King Cobra .357 Magnum handgun.

It has made Tommy's day. He's got a gun. Back at Wiltshire Lane he admires the Magnum. He brandishes it wildly in the air, telling everyone they are safe now. He will protect them.

"Silly bastard," says Glynn Reynolds. "Thinks he's Clint Eastwood or something."

The three men set off again in the Sunbeam, touring the stores of Ruislip and Eastcote, making purchases with their newly acquired Barclaycard. In 90 minutes, they use the card eight times in eight different shops. They buy chicken breasts, frozen prawns, toilet rolls, plants, flowers, cigarettes and large quantities of alcohol – spirits, cider, and cream sherry.

ON WEDNESDAY, February 13, 1991, Tommy, Iain, Jacqueline and Karen are drinking various individual cocktails of cider, sherry and vodka. Tommy starts firing the gun. Only a couple of shots out into the fields from the front door. It must be just before four o'clock. Just before the police observation team moves in. Iain wants a go too, and fires into the kitchen.

By about six, they're cranking the music up loud again. There's a twin cassette deck in the living room and Iain's monopolizing it with the song 'Everything I Own'. After the third play, Tommy's heard enough. He puts on Gene Pitney. Iain hates Gene Pitney so he stops it and puts on 'Everything I Own' again. Tommy picks up the Magnum and fires it twice at the stereo, one bullet in each cassette deck.

By 7.30, Tommy and Iain are missing their sounds. They're trying to think of someone who will lend them a stereo. Somebody remembers Chris Russell on Lyneham Walk. Iain's on his way out of the door, and Tommy's right behind him, tucking the Magnum into the waistband of his jogging pants.

Chris and Pauline Russell are familiar to all at Wiltshire Lane. They like to see people for a cup of tea, and they like popping round to Karen's for company. Though not when Tommy is in residence. The Russells are widely regarded as kind, trusting people, entirely without malice.

Chris and Pauline met while being treated at the same psychiatric unit of a local hospital. Pauline was a few years older than Chris, who was 31, but they had found mutual support and love, and together created the opportunity to live on their own. They married, on April 1, 1986, and made their home at Lyneham Walk.

They spend much of their time in the bedroom, especially at this time of year when it's so cold. They keep the television at the foot of the bed, and receive friends there when they call for tea.

Chris likes music, and has a large collection of albums and cassettes. His family have bought him a new hi-fi for Christmas. An Alba MCH53 dual-cassette stereo system.

Chris and Pauline are in bed when they hear the knock at the door. Chris is taping albums – The Stylistics. He gets up, opens the door, and his heart sinks, seeing Tommy standing there with Iain.

"Hello." Chris always thinks it wise to be polite to Tommy. "Do you want a cup of tea?"

Chris leads them down the hallway to the bedroom, and gets back on the bed next to Pauline. Tommy says: "I've come to take your stereo."

"No, you can't take it," says Chris.

Tommy pulls a shining chrome gun from the waist of his trousers. It looks like a toy cowboy gun to Chris. He thinks Tommy is joking.

"I've got one like that," says Chris, who keeps a toy revolver under the bed, with which he fires red caps at the television. He turns to get his gun out. Tommy fires. Chris sees a flash, hears a bang, and his left arm goes numb. His elbow is shattered. There is a lot of blood. Iain is standing there with his fingers in his ears.

Pauline starts to rise and screams. Tommy turns towards her and fires again. The bullet hits Pauline's throat. It travels down her neck and hits the top of her left lung, which collapses. It bounces off a back rib and exits through Pauline's back.

"Stop it, stop it! Are you mad?" Chris shouts. Tommy turns back to face him and fires once more, hitting Chris in the left arm again. Iain is still standing there with his fingers in his ears. Pauline has got up and walked to the bathroom. She is staring at her throat in the bathroom mirror.

Chris is unplugging the stereo: "Go on, take it, take it."

Tommy turns to Iain and says, "OK, you can take it now." Iain picks up the stereo and walks out.

Tommy stands over Chris. "If you call the police or the ambulance I'm going to put this gun in your mouth and blow your fucking head off."

Tommy follows Iain. They have been out for fifteen minutes. The police have heard nothing. Not a single shot.

Pauline and Chris wait. They decide to go out through the back door. They climb over the fence, and knock at the next-door maisonette. John's there with his mate, Paul, who's just got back from work. John leads Pauline into the front room while his mate Paul dials 999. Pauline sits on the settee, and asks for a cup of tea.

At Wiltshire Lane, Iain's got the Alba stereo on the floor in the living room, trying to get it going. Tommy's back, brandishing the gun.

"I've shot Chris. Shot her in the neck. She's gone."

"Might as well go back and finish him off," says Iain.

Then the stereo's going and Iain's sitting in the chair. Crash. Tommy's running in the living room.

"They're here. The police are here."

Crash. Tommy's picking up the gun from the

living room floor. Crash.

"POLICE... POLICE... PUT THAT GUN DOWN TOMMY."

CHRIS AND PAULINE RUSSELL were taken to Mount Vernon Hospital. Pauline developed complications and was transferred to Harefield Hospital. She lapsed into a coma and was on a life support machine. On February 20, one week after the shooting, the couple's local vicar took the decision, on Chris's behalf, to switch off the machine.

Christopher Jabelman was cremated at Ruislip Crematorium on April 9, 1991. There was a collection for a wreath on the estate where he had lived. They raised £35 – "from friends and neighbours of Hazeldene".

Jacqueline MacPherson faced a charge of handling stolen goods. The charges were not proceeded with when Jacqueline agreed to enter a long-stay residential clinic for the treatment of alcoholism. She was awarded £60 travelling expenses by the court.

Glynn Reynolds received three-and-a-half years for burglary and possession of a gun.

Tommy Cook pleaded guilty to two murders, one attempted murder and related charges. He received two life sentences, with a recommendation he serve a minimum of eighteen years.

Peter and Ann MacPherson were devastated by the news of their son's involvement in the killings. They supported him throughout his year on remand, and worked hard to prepare his defence.

Iain MacPherson pleaded not guilty to two charges of murder, one attempted murder and related charges. He had not delivered the fatal blows, he had not pulled the trigger. He had been swept along by Tommy's drunken madness. Surely, the court would see that.

"When I'm with Tommy I just try to be like him," Iain had told the police. "I use the mouth, but I can't hack all the violence. I thought someone might get a couple of black eyes or something. I didn't think anyone was going to die or anything." He said he had admired Tommy "because of his great strength".

On February 11 this year, after a two-week trial, Iain was found guilty on all counts and sentenced to detention for life. His parents wept as the judge delivered the mandatory sentence. Iain stood impassive, ashen.

It was the law of joint enterprise in homicide which had done for him, the same law which had hanged Derek Bentley. The accused must have been party to the act which caused death, the law states. His state of mind will help to determine whether he is guilty of murder or the lesser offence of manslaughter. Iain's impassivity must have made it difficult to determine his state of mind.

It will take Iain a long time to come to terms with his conviction. He does not believe himself to be guilty of murder, and yet he now faces between ten and fifteen years' imprisonment. He will be 21 this month. **E**