

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO TEA

A one-act comedy

by

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ISBN: 978-1-910028-01-8
The Playwrights Publishing Company

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(Set..... Room with two easy chairs and sofa. Table with telephone)

Cast: Marcia: Fifties/Sixties
Geraldine: Fifties/Sixties
Sally: Twenties/Thirties
Gloria: Fifties/Sixties
Greg: Twenties/Thirties

(Geraldine is sitting on sofa, reading a magazine)

Marcia: (Enters right) Are you just going to sit there? (Sits right chair takes up knitting)

Geraldine: Apparently.... I'm reading their serial. It's one of those American private eye things...It's very good....Listen to this, "*....He poured himself a finger of red-eye, and swung it back. The warm liquid slid down his throat, soothing and caressing it. He heard a noise, and looked up...She was standing, framed in the doorway. Her hair was like spun gold, and her eyes, blue, like shards of ice. She had a body that would make the owner of a two-headed coin call tails, and in his mind, he had already removed the red gown, which clung to her curves like another layer of skin. She moved toward him, with the grace of a panther, then after moistening her crimson lips seductively with her tongue, she said...*"

Marcia: Put that thing away.

Geraldine: Pardon?... No, she didn't say that. Though come to think of it, she might have.

Marcia: I mean the magazine... This is serious... I still don't know what could have possessed her... At her age.

Geraldine: For heavens sake, Marcia, Gloria's only sixty-four years old.

Marcia: But he's only thirty.

Geraldine: You make that sound positively disgusting. Thirty... How could he?

Marcia: You know what I mean.

Geraldine: (Picks up banana from bowl stares at it as if contemplating then, starts to peel it) I wonder if they...

Marcia: If they what?

Geraldine: (Eating banana) You know... If they...

Marcia: What...

Geraldine: You know.

Marcia: Honestly Geraldine, is that the only thing you ever think about.

Geraldine: It is very fortunate for me that it's most definitely not the only thing I ever think about. In case it's escaped your notice Marcia, you and I have reached this age without either of us ever having as much as a sniff at marriage, whilst Gloria has three behind her. And now possibly number four, with this Greg.

Marcia: (Stands) Sally will be here in a minute.

Geraldine: And why did you invite her?

Marcia: I think as Gloria's daughter, she has a say in all this.

Geraldine: But she's so boring.

Marcia: She's not that bad.

Geraldine: Not that bad?... She couldn't be more boring if she'd attended Oxford University and achieved a first class honours degree in being boring.

.
(Doorbell sounds)

Marcia: Aah, that'll be her.

Geraldine: Oh God.

(Marcia exits left, returns with Sally)

Geraldine: (Stands greets) Hello Sally... How wonderful to see you again.

Sally: Hello Auntie Geraldine:

Geraldine: Have a good drive over?

Sally: (Sits left chair) There were road works on the A37... I said to Auntie Marcia by the door, didn't I Auntie Marcia, I told you about the road works on the A3. It was the inside lane which was blocked, the one that takes you on to the ring road. They're there till Friday, did you know Auntie Geraldine, that they're there till Friday... Or is it next Monday?

Marcia: Now then Sally... Cup of tea?

Sally: Yes please.

Marcia: I'll make us all one. Entertain Sally would you, Geraldine.

Geraldine: (Quietly to Marcia) Entertain Sally? You make it sound as easy as discovering atomic fusion.

Marcia: (Quietly) Just get on with it.

(Marcia exits right)

Geraldine: Entertain Sally... Hey Sally, I heard a great joke this morning.

Sally: What's that?

Geraldine: Well there were two cows in a field, and one says to the other, "*I heard the farmer talking the other day about this mad cow's disease. It's a bit of a worry, isn't it?*" And the other cow says, "*doesn't worry me... I'm a helicopter.*" (Starts laughing. Sally unmoved) Do you get it? Mad cow... Helicop... Never mind.

Sally: Actually, Auntie Geraldine, you should have said Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, not mad cow's disease, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, BSE you see, means Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy...

Geraldine: Alright Sally. Don't you go suffering with Mad Sally's Disease.

(Uneasy silence)

Sally: I'm expecting a call from Dudley later. He said he'd call, he said to me, "I'll call you this afternoon, Sally," and I said, "You'll have to call me at my Auntie Marcia and Auntie Geraldine's because I'm visiting there." "Auntie Marcia and Auntie Geraldine's?" he said, and I said, "Yes." So he said, "I'll call you there", and I said...

Geraldine: Yes?

Sally: Yes.

Geraldine: So, the redoubtable Dudley. Tell me Sally, does he still wear that woolly hat?

Sally: Oh yes, he always wears it. Why do you ask?

Geraldine: No reason... And how is he, still spotting those trains.

Sally: Well we did something really exciting last weekend, it was really exciting.

Geraldine: The mind boggles.

Sally: We went to see an air display. It was really exciting. I said to Dudley, "This is really exciting, isn't it Dudley?" and he said, "Yes Sally it's really exciting."

Geraldine: Yes, I'm sure it was... really exciting. It's not really something you'd think a woman would find that fascinating, would you... Aircraft.

Sally: Well I didn't, till I met Dudley. He made it all sound so exciting... And it is.

Geraldine: Yes... I remember him taking an hour to tell me all about Diesel Multiple Units on the South Eastern Line between 1960 and 1966.... Exciting wasn't quite the word I would use, but then again, it takes all sorts.

Sally: They had a fly past of World War Two planes. There was a Handley Page Halifax, and a De Havilland Mosquito...

Geraldine: (As Sally speaks) (Quietly) Oh my God, I'm trapped. (Looks at magazine on sofa, obviously not listening as Sally's speech continues)

Sally: (As Geraldine reads) I like the De Havilland Mosquito, that's my favourite. Dudley's favourite is the P-47 Thunderbolt, but that's an American aircraft, and it wasn't part of the flypast. He said, "I'm really disappointed about there being no P-47 Thunderbolt," and I said, "But that's an American fighter, Dudley, it wouldn't be part of the flypast", and he said, "I know, but I'm still disappointed." They didn't have an Avro Lancaster as part of it either, we were both disappointed about that. But at least they had a De Havilland Mosquito, that's my favourite. It was made of balsa wood and was powered by two Rolls Royce Merlin engines. It was really exciting to see the De Havilland Mosquito... Anyway, Auntie Geraldine, I'm looking forward to tea today. Isn't it worrying about Mummy and this man? Auntie Marcia thinks he's after her for her money, I think he is as well, I said to Auntie Marcia on the phone yesterday, I said, "I agree with you Auntie Marcia, I think he's after Mummy's money", I said.... What do you think, Auntie Geraldine?

Geraldine: (Out of trance) Mmmm?... What?

Sally: I said, what do you think?

Geraldine: (Falteringly) What do I think?... Aah... What do I think ... Well... That's a difficult one Sally... Not easy to answer.

Sally: What's difficult about it? The answer's easy... Yes or no.

Geraldine: (Falteringly) Yes... Or no... As you say.... Well... I... Errr... I should say... The answer is... No.

Sally: No? But why do you say that?

Geraldine: What?

Sally: Why no?

Geraldine: (Falteringly) Why No?.. Well... Of course I said no, but it might be... Yes... Or no.... Either really... I... Err

(Marcia enters. Carrying tray)

Geraldine: Oh thank God... I mean... Here's Marcia with the tea.

Marcia: Here we are, a nice cup of Earl Grey. What were you two talking about?