

# HTML DOG

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**TALKING ANIMAL**

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INT. CONFERENCE VENUE LOBBY. AFTERNOON

A 20-something man sits at a table in the lobby of a conference venue, dressed in a t-shirt and tracksuit bottoms. He stares, somewhat confused and frustrated, at the person sitting opposite him, who is unseen.

TOM  
OK. Fine. You just sit there.  
I'll tell you about my average  
day, shall I? My oh-so,  
absolutely averagely average  
\*fucking\* day.

INT. BEDROOM. MORNING

Tom, lying in bed, opens his eyes as he awakes, reaches for a clock to the side of the bed, and holds it in front of his face. It doesn't show him what he wants to see. Groaning, he drops his arm to his side.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
My very average day started  
bright and early.

He slowly sits up and begrudgingly pushes the covers away.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
Jumped out of bed...

Adorned in boxer shorts and t-shirt, he rises from his bed and slips on a pair of flip-flops.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
...got dressed...

Tom yawns and scratches his balls.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
...generally got prepared for  
work.

He walks over to a nearby desk on which his computer sits, and takes a seat. He switches on the computer and reaches over to a large packet of crisps, already opened, with the opening rolled up.

Slouching in his chair, staring in to the computer monitor, he munches on the crisps.

(CONTINUED)

TOM  
(voice-over)  
I had a fine, delightful, very  
tasty traditional breakfast...

He starts to type something. On the monitor screen, a window shows an email composition reading "Hi Lynne. Sorry I can't make it in today;". Tom pauses to think and adds "I got totally shit-faced last night." After another pause Tom deletes the last part replacing it with "I've been feeling a little ill."

TOM  
(voice-over, sarcastic)  
...and as I was working from home  
again, I emailed work.  
  
I was as pumped, motivated, and  
raring to go as ever.

INT. CONFERENCE VENUE LOBBY. AFTERNOON

Tom looks for some kind of reaction from his unseen partner.

TOM  
You're riveted. I can tell.  
Overwhelmingly, really bloody  
interesting, right?  
  
It gets better, if you think you  
can contain yourself.

INT. BEDROOM. AFTERNOON

Tom sits hunched at his computer, frantically typing.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
OK. Well, I was working on a web  
page for the latest wizzbangcool  
micro-site upper management  
thought would work as a really  
good marketing initiative.

A window on his computer monitor shows some basic HTML being put together.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
Pretty straightforward stuff;  
taking text, marking it up with  
HTML; an opening tag there, a  
closing tag there, p for a  
paragraph, h1 for the heading,  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOM (cont'd)  
links, lists, forms, blah, blah,  
blah.

A similar window shows Tom working on some examples of CSS code.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
And then making it look right  
with the help of CSS. This bit  
this colour, that bit that size,  
the other bit placed over there,  
what have you.

Diverse examples of impressive web pages cycle rapidly on the monitor.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
Simple but powerful tools, HTML  
and CSS; you can make things look  
and work pretty much how you damn  
well please.

Tom stops to look at his work, not wholly satisfied.

TOM  
(voice-over)  
As far as I'm concerned, the only  
limit is my project manager's  
imagination.

INT. CONFERENCE VENUE LOBBY. AFTERNOON

Tom continues to talk to his "conversation" partner, who remains unseen.

TOM  
The basics are easy, right? Any  
half-witted ape can cobble  
together a web page. But it's the  
highly optimised code, for search  
engines or people with  
disabilities, forward, backward,  
and cross-browser compatibility,  
and stuff, that I'm employed for.

I do the same thing day after  
day. After day. And I've been  
doing it since before dinosaurs  
were invented.

But I was telling you about my  
most average day, wasn't I?

INT. BEDROOM. AFTERNOON

Tom sits at his computer, visibly frustrated with his work, bashing at the keyboard.

TOM

(voice-over, extremely  
sarcastic)

So there I was, delicately fine-tuning the code on this latest extremely interesting, incredibly motivating, undeniably ground-breaking web site. Tweaking the HTML, finessing the CSS, caressing the design and making her tingle at my man touch. There must have been so much unadulterated, grade-A love seeping from my pores, errupting from my very being that the universe just couldn't cope. Because that's when things went pop.

INT. CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM. AFTERNOON

Tom suddenly finds himself sitting in the audience of an auditorium.

With considerable surprise, he looks around to find himself surrounded by around 300 casually dressed, predominantly male 20-30 somethings who remain firmly in their seats, unperturbed, as if Tom had always been there.

VOICE, OVER SPEAKERS

...he's a well renowned member of the web community, a best-selling author, and a highly sought-after speaker, so we're very pleased he agreed to join us here today; please put your hands together for Thomas Griffiths!

Tom turns to face forward, focusing on the stage (off-screen), and his mouth drops and his eyes open even wider with disbelief. The audience clap.

On stage, smartly dressed in shirt and trousers, leading a presentation from behind a lectern, is an individual identical to Tom in every physical characteristic.

TOM II

Thank you, Ross. It's great to be here... well, hello! The presentation I'm going to be giving today will look at the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOM II (cont'd)  
relationship between HTML and  
CSS... We're going to see how to  
push them to their limits and  
extract their full potential - to  
build the most highly optimised  
web pages we can.

INT. CONFERENCE VENUE LOBBY. AFTERNOON

Tom sits at the table, as before.

TOM  
Oh, did I mention this is where  
my really fucking average day  
wasn't so fucking average  
anymore?

Tom and his doppelganger are revealed, sitting opposite  
each other, in a sparse, open space dotted with tables and  
chairs. The doppelganger is visibly nervous and tries to  
avoid eye contact with Tom, but he doesn't appear  
surprised.

TOM  
So, I'm... You're... speaking. At  
a web design conference. How the  
hell did that happen?

Awkwardly shifting his position, Tom II quietly responds  
to the question.

TOM II  
It just happened.

TOM  
Yeah... okay. You see, that  
wouldn't "just happen" to \*me\*.  
Is this the future or something?

Tom II looks at Tom like he's an idiot.

TOM  
Oh, yeah, right, because that's a  
really dumb question to ask in  
this really normal situation,  
isn't it?

Tom attempts to deal with the hundreds of questions and  
utter confusion in his head.

TOM  
Aren't you at all surprised at  
all of this?

Again, there is no response as Tom II continues to sit  
awkwardly.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

I mean, it's interesting... even kinda cool in a really messed up way, but it's freaky more than anything else... scary... you know what I mean?... And if there's one thing that sure as hell can't be avoided it's surprise. I didn't have this on the what-will-my-day-possibly-have-in-store-for-me list this morning.

Do you want to help me out a little here?

TOM II

What... do you want?

TOM

I want to know what's going on! And I want to know why, or how, I'm sitting in front of another me who, I would have thought, y'know, being \*more than\* related to, if that is at all makes sense, might want to help me out a little.

TOM II

I don't know what's going on, and I wish this hadn't happened. Life is good right now. The speaking gigs are going down well, the book's selling...

TOM

A book! That's right. The guy who introduced you said you had written a book. About web design?

TOM II

(nodding)

"The best-practice guide to HTML and CSS." It was published at the end of last year.

TOM

(slightly sarcastically)

Man. That's impressive. So what do we do with ourselves now? Now that we've written the book?

TOM II

Professionally?

(CONTINUED)

TOM

Sure. OK. Writing another book?

TOM II

(relaxing a little)

Heh. No. Freelancing, mostly.

TOM

HTML-ing? Like me? Pushing code around at the command of sadistic child-eating project managers?

TOM II

Not so much anymore. I've moved on to mostly bigger-picture stuff; consulting, project planning, training, that sort of thing.

TOM

(a little disgruntled)

Sounds important. Pays well, I assume.

TOM II

Yeah. I do pretty well.

TOM

I don't know where you... I... you find the time... all that work, a book, speaking at conferences... You \*must\* either spend less time in bed or less time in the pub...

TOM II

(looking down, slightly embarrassed)

Well, I don't go out as much as I used to... My wife...

TOM

(gibing)

Wife? Are you serious? Since when did you want to settle down?

TOM II

(a little annoyed)

My \*wife\* and I...

TOM

Wait... wait... who, dare I ask, is your... wife? Anyone I might know?

(CONTINUED)

TOM II  
Lynne. Wilson.

TOM  
Lynne Wilson?! As in Lynne  
Wilson, my project manager at  
Bango? Project Manager Lynne  
Wilson?!

Tom II ignores Tom and nervously twiddles his fingers. Tom is amused.

TOM  
You married Lynne... Wilson.

Tom II stands up and puts his laptop bag over his shoulder.

TOM II  
Look, I can't do this. I've got  
to go.

Tom II starts to walk away from the table. Tom remains seated.

TOM  
Who \*are\* you?

Tom II, angry, turns back to Tom and speaks through gritted teeth.

TOM II  
You said it! I'm \*you\*. But a  
more successful you. A more  
sensible, successful, generally  
\*better\*, more \*worthy\* version  
of \*you\*.

Tom II walks away towards the exit door of the venue.

TOM  
(to himself)  
Oh, man. I'm a dick!

After a pause, staring in to space, Tom shakes his head, gets up and chases after Tom II.

EXT. STREET. AFTERNOON.

Tom, exiting the venue, chases after Tom II, who is heading towards a nearby quiet street.

TOM  
Hey, look, I'm sorry!... Come on!  
Help me out, here... Put yourself  
in my place... or something...

(CONTINUED)

Tom II starts to pick up a little speed and his nervousness clearly increases.

TOM II  
Stop talking!

TOM  
You've got to appreciate how confusing this is!

The two Toms walk into the relative dark, under a bridge. Tom II, on the brink of tears, stops as Tom catches up.

TOM II  
(mumbling quietly)  
You can't be here.

Tom II turns to face Tom and reveals a penknife, blade open.

TOM  
Whoa! What? Aren't you overreacting a little?

TOM II  
You can't be here!

TOM  
I didn't choose to be here, you know! But fine, I'll go.

Tom edges backwards but Tom II, distressed, matches his pace.

TOM II  
You just don't get it! There can't be two of us...

Tom II lunges at Tom but in an awkward struggle Tom II stumbles and unintentionally draws the blade back and in to his gut. The knife drops to the floor and rolls behind Tom. Tom II also drops to the floor where he falls unconscious. Tom starts to panic.

TOM  
Oh crap... what the hell did you do that for?! Oh crap. Ohhh crap...

Tom grabs the hair on either side of his head, stares down at the still body and considers what to do next.

In a sudden, fast movement, a figure appears behind him and slits his throat, sending him to the ground in a heap alongside Tom II. The knife falls to the ground beside them.

Tom III, breathing heavily, his heart pounding, momentarily stares at the two bodies before quickly walking away from the alley.

EXT. LONDON STREETS. AFTERNOON.

The new doppelganger frequently looks around nervously as he briskly walks through the streets, under bridges and across roads. He thinks he recognises someone walking towards him, but as a stranger walks by, Tom lets out a sigh of relief.

He approaches a set of traffic lights and again believes he recognises someone. This time, perhaps he isn't as mistaken as an individual who looks remarkably like himself walks past the traffic lights on the other side of the road, oblivious to Tom's presence. He crosses at the traffic lights and continues to walk towards an underground station, once more spotting another apparent doppelganger.

INT. LONDON UNDERGROUND STATION. AFTERNOON.

He enters the station and glances over to see another Tom traveling up an escalator as he travels down. He remains unnoticed, and does so once again as another walks very close by in the opposite direction in one of the underground walkway tunnels.

Having reached the platform, Tom senses his escape is near, but as he walks down its length, he spots another doppelganger sat at the far end of the platform, reading a newspaper.

He turns to walk back the way he came but as he does so yet another double walks on to the platform in front of him and stands, waiting for a train.

Tom stands, his back pressed against the wall, doing what little he can to be inconspicuous. A train soon arrives. Tom stands forward as the automatic door opens. In front of him sits another Tom who looks up at the beligered murderer and smiles.