

# Somers Town

Cert 12A UK 70 mins

## Crew

Director	Shane Meadows
Writer	Paul Fraser
Cinematography	Natasha Braier
Editor	Richard Graham
Original Music	Gavin Clarke

## Cast

Tommo	Thomas Turgoose
Jane	Kate Dickie
Marek	Piotr Jagiello
Mariusz	Ireneusz Czop
Graham	Perry Benson
Maria	Elisa Lasowski

## Synopsis

*London, the present. Tommo is a runaway arrived from Nottingham, Robbed and beaten, with nowhere to stay, he meets young Polish photographer Marek, whose guest-worker father Mariusz is working on the massive King's Cross rebuild. The two spend their time earning money on neighbour Graham's scams and courting waitress Maria. Unknown to Mariusz, Tommo sleeps in Marek's bedroom. When Maria leaves for Paris, a drunken Tommo and Marek party miserably in the flat. Mariusz returns unexpectedly, rages at Marek and throws Tommo out. Tommo sleeps at Graham's; next morning, Marek and Manusz make up. The boys dream of visiting Maria in Paris, and perhaps do so.*  
*Sight & Sound, September 2008*



## Reviews

Somers Town is slight, gentle, sweet-natured comedy shot in black and white, and blessed with a lovely performance from Meadows' great find, Thomas Turgoose, the teenage star of his previous film *This Is England*. Turgoose here develops his gift for comedy playing Tomo, a cheeky, open-faced lad from Nottingham. Running away from a broken home, Tomo gets off the train in London without the foggiest clue about what to do or where to stay. After a hair-raising introduction to London street crime, Tomo befriends dreamy, lonely Marek (Piotr Jagiello), a Polish boy whose dad Mariusz (Ireneusz Czop) is a construction worker working on the Eurostar terminal. Marek has a crush on local French waitress Maria (Elisa Lasowski) and soon Tomo decides he too is in love with her, and Elisa gets into an affectionate, Jules-et-Jim-type friendship with her two unthreatening courtiers. But when she vanishes, heartbreakingly, back to Paris, our two heroes vow to track her down. On Eurostar of course.

Some may sniff at Shane Meadows' decision to take the Eurostar shilling. But so what? Meadows appears to have accepted their help in the same cheerful spirit that novelist Fay Weldon took sponsorship from the jeweller Bulgari. There's plenty of pro-Eurostar stuff here, and Meadows obviously doesn't feel any great need to put balancing material in the screenplay about the advantages of an easyJet flight to Charles De Gaulle. The plugs are noticeable, but they never get in the way. Alex Cox says the true independent film-maker is the truest entrepreneur, never too proud to investigate any source of funding to get his film made, and I can't for the life of me think of any commercial concern I'd rather see promoted in a British feature film than Eurostar.

Turgoose has a natural flair for laughs: especially when he starts telling Marek, with an air of spurious authority, that he, Tomo, is Maria's rightful boyfriend. With his insolent, unreliable smirk, combined with heartbreaking vulnerability and innocence, Turgoose looks like a cross between Ronnie Barker and Richard Beckinsale in *Porridge*; he's a true likely lad, like a young James Bolam, or perhaps the standup comics Ken Loach recruited to star in his excellent, underrated rail privatisation drama *The Navigators*, from 2001. Remarkably, he is still only 16: I could easily imagine Turgoose being a stand-up comedy star in his own right.

Despite its serious moments, it's a happy, sunny film and this is attractive. It has long been a bee in my bonnet that Meadows' film-making is more accessible, more human and more convincing when he isn't playing the tough guy.

*Peter Bradshaw The Guardian (abridged) 22 August 2008.*