

HOME FOR LUNCH

Characters

Steven Kingston – 63 years of age. Recently retired.

Heather Kingston – 62 years of age. Steven's wife.

Barry Simonson - mid 60s. Retired. (Well groomed.)

Margaret Clarke – 64 years of age. Heather's sister. Widow.

Roger Realtime – late night commercial radio talkback host - mid 50s.

Daytime Dave – commercial radio morning jock – early 30's

Quinton Quiz – commercial radio quiz show host

Dan – late night radio caller, early thirties

Evelyn – late night radio caller

Joan – quiz contestant

Jeff – quiz contestant

Possum – radio caller

Eric – radio host

Felix – radio caller

Time

Present.

Staging

Act One

1. Lounge/kitchen of the Kingston house.
2. Outside the house
3. Park bench
4. Funeral
5. Wake

Act Two

1. Lounge/kitchen of the Kingston house.
2. Outside the house.
3. Park

ACT ONE

Steven is cleaning and rearranging the kitchen cupboards.

Late night talk back host Roger Realtime.

ROGER: You're listening Radio HFL and you're with Roger Realtime, taking you through the wee hours of the morning and into a brand new day. We have a caller. Who am I speaking to?

DAN: Hey Rog, it's Dan.

ROGER: Dan from Gippsland! How are you mate?

DAN: I'm ace! Just knocked off from me shift at the airport.

ROGER: Good shift?

DAN: Aw, you know how it is, pays the bills.

ROGER: That's what it's about. It's good to have you on the show Dan.

DAN: No worries Rog. Thanks for asking us to call up.

ROGER: What would you like to share with us?

DAN: I just wanted to add me two bob's worth to this talk you're having about the meaning of life and all that.

ROGER: Go for it.

DAN: It's just something that me mum says. She reckons that at the end of the day, when you're dead and gone and everything, well your life just gets reduced down to one sentence.

ROGER: What do you mean?

DAN: Just say you had a family photo in front of you, and you were showing it to a friend, or to your grandchild, or to someone who didn't really know the people in the photo.

You'd point to a person in the photo and say, "That man there is me great uncle Colin, he was an alcoholic: that person there is me Aunty Mavis, she had seven kids, and that is my cousin Peter, he was a priest." And that's it. Everyone gets one sentence.

ROGER: One sentence! (*Excited*) Yes! I've done it myself. Exactly the same thing. Looked at a family photo and said, "That's my Aunty Susan. Apparently she didn't speak until she was about four and then didn't draw breath until the day she died!"

DAN: Classic!

ROGER: You're mum sounds like a wise lady Dan.

DAN: She's cool!

ROGER: Awesome! So, Dan, what would you want your sentence to be?

DAN: I don't know. I'd probably want people to say, "That's Dan, he was a good bloke".
That'd do. I'd be happy with that.

ROGER: I'd be happy with that too. Hey Dan, thanks for your call. Good stuff.

DAN: No worries. I really like your show mate. Gets me through the night.

ROGER: Many thanks. It's good to know I have a friend out there at 2.30 am! So Dan
from Gippsland reckons our life gets reduced down to one
sentence. What do you think your sentence might be? Do you
even care; after all, once you're dead and gone what does it
matter? You know the number. Give us a call.

Steven grabs the phone and dials.

ROGER: I've got a caller. It's Roger Realtime. Who am I speaking to?

STEVEN: Steven.

ROGER: Where are you calling from Steven?

STEVEN: Home.

ROGER: *laughs* Fair enough. So Steven from home, what do you think your sentence
might be?

STEVEN: Depends who was saying it.

ROGER: I'd agree with that.

STEVEN: Ten different people; ten different sentences.

ROGER: Absolutely. But would the sentences have anything in common?

STEVEN: They'd be about me.

ROGER: *laughs* That's right! But what would the common thing be about you?

STEVEN: I'm not sure.

ROGER: Would they all say, 'Steven was a good bloke'?

STEVEN: Some might.

ROGER: and others?

Pause

ROGER: Steven was what?.....a great worker?.....a good dad?

Pause

ROGER: Stevenwas

Steven hangs up. (SFX)

ROGER: Steven was gone!

But not to fear we have Evelyn on the line. You there Evelyn?
What do you think your sentence might be..... *(fades out)*

Steven turns off the radio.

He puts on one of the suits coats (over his clothes) and stands(as if to make a speech).

STEVEN: Steven was.....

Steven....

Was.....

9am

Lounge/kitchen.

Heather enters. She is dressed in yoga gear. She places a yoga mat on the table and turns on the radio - classical station. She turns on the kettle.

She opens and closes various cupboard doors.

HEATHER: *(yells)* Steven!

Steven enters. He is wearing a dressing gown.

STEVEN: What?

She finds the cups.

HEATHER: Nothing.

She slams the cupboard door shut. She exits.

Steven changes the radio station to Daytime Dave. He makes the coffee.

DAYTIME DAVE: You're listening to Daytime Dave taking you through the morning, and let's take a look at the traffic.

The Westgate Bridge is a car park, nothing is flowing; traffic out of Frankston is creeping along and there's been an accident on the eastern Freeway just near the Hoddle Street exit. It's slow out there, slow, slow slow. Hope you've got your latte in the car coz it's gonna be a long drive into the city this morning

.....

Heather returns with the newspaper. She changes the radio back to her classical station.

STEVEN: I was listening to that!

HEATHER: Are you planning on leaving the house?

Steven does not reply.

He hands Heather a cup.

He takes the newspaper.

HEATHER: Don't touch the crossword!

STEVEN: I wasn't going to!

HEATHER: You did yesterday.

STEVEN: I only did the ones you couldn't get.

HEATHER: I've told you, a million times, to leave it alone.

STEVEN: But you leave so many blanks.

HEATHER: I come back to them!

Steven folds the section with the crossword and places it on the end of the table.

STEVEN: It's all yours!

Heather snatches the paper.

HEATHER: Thank you.

She drinks her coffee

HEATHER: Did you put sugar in this?

STEVEN: Yes.

HEATHER: Doesn't taste like it.

STEVEN: Well I did.

Heather adds more sugar.

Steven reads another section of the paper.

STEVEN: It's Isaac Fielding's funeral today.

HEATHER: Did he die?

STEVEN: It's his funeral!

HEATHER: I didn't know he died!

STEVEN: I told you.

HEATHER: No you didn't!

STEVEN: Yes I did. I sat at this table less than a week ago and said, 'Isaac Fielding has died.'

Heather shrugs

Steven goes back to the paper.

HEATHER: You going to go?

Steven shrugs.

HEATHER: You'd have fun.

STEVEN: It's a funeral Heather!

HEATHER: At the wake. You'd see a few people, have some drinks, have a laugh.

Heather collects her yoga mat.

STEVEN: Where're you going?

HEATHER: It's Tuesday!

Steven looks blank

STEVEN: So

HEATHER: Yoga!

STEVEN: Right.

When will you be home?

HEATHER: I'm not sure. I might go for a coffee.

STEVEN: But you're having coffee now.

HEATHER: I might have a second one.

STEVEN: What about your headaches?

HEATHER: I don't think it's the coffee.

Pause

STEVEN: Who will you have coffee with?

HEATHER: Someone from yoga probably.

STEVEN: Who?

HEATHER: I don't know.

STEVEN: Before or after the shopping?

HEATHER: I don't know!

STEVEN: If you go after the shopping the cold items will get hot.

So, it would be better if you went before the shopping.

That is, after yoga.

HEATHER: Steven!

STEVEN: It's up to you of course!

I've made you a list.

Steven tries to hand Heather the shopping list but she does not take it.

He places the list on the table.

HEATHER: Do you want to meet me for coffee?

STEVEN: But you don't know what time you're going for coffee! I can't just hang around in a café waiting for you.

HEATHER: We could make a time.

Steven does not respond.

HEATHER: We could go somewhere different. Where we don't know anyone.

Steven shakes his head.

HEATHER: Do you want to come to yoga with me?

Steven shakes his head.

HEATHER: It would help you to relax.

STEVEN: I'm relaxed!

HEATHER: You could meet some of my yoga friends.

STEVEN: We'd have nothing in common.

HEATHER: How do you know that?

STEVEN: They do yoga, I don't do yoga; ipso facto, nothing in common.

HEATHER: That's ridiculous.

STEVEN: Anyway, I've got plans!

HEATHER: What?

STEVEN: I'm going to work on my book.

HEATHER: That's fantastic!

Steven opens the laptop and sits at the table.

HEATHER: And you might go to the funeral.

STEVEN: Might.

Heather tries to kiss Steven on the cheek but Steven is awkward.

HEATHER: I'll see you later.

STEVEN: Yep.

Heather gets the shopping bags and yoga mat and exits.

10 am

(Three scenes happen simultaneously)

Barry arrives at the park. He is pushing Holden (imaginary) in the stroller. He unclips Holden from the stroller. Takes a bucket and a spade from his bag and places them on the ground.

Heather and Margaret roll out their yoga mats and do 'salute to the sun'. (fade out when appropriate)

Steven sits at his computer and writes nothing. (fade out when appropriate)

Park

BARRY: Share your toys Holden, that's a good boy. Poppy Baz is just going to sit here and make his phone calls and drink his coffee.

Barry looks at messages on his phone.

BARRY: Eight phone calls, four emails, three texts and no appointments.

Not doing too well am I Holdie?

Right. Who else is there?

Scrolls through his phone.

BARRY: Steven Kingston?

Maybe.

Last time I saw him he was a bit of a

Pause

Holdie! You can't call someone a dickhead mate!

Pause

Mummy called daddy a dickhead?

But sometimes mummy is wrong.

She shouldn't call your daddy a dickhead

Even though I do think she might be onto something.

Goes back to his phone.

Steven?

Thinks

What would I say?

Laughs

'Howoe Stevum'.

You're right Holdie. That would be a good start.

All I have to say is 'howoe Stevum' and the conversation will go from there. You're a smart boy Holdie, a very smart boy

(fade out when necessary)

Yes and strong!

Strongman Holden!

Barry strikes 'strongman' pose.

House

Steven is sitting at the kitchen bench doing nothing.

He is listening to the radio.

'Quizzes with Quinton'

JINGLE:

(advertising jingle)

"Chunky Chooker,

Cause it needs no cookin'!

Bwaak, bwaak, waak, waak, waak!"

QUINTON: Chunky Chooker coz it needs no cookin, proud sponsor of Quizzes with Quinton. Okay, we've got Joan from Pakenham on the line and she's about to win one hundred dollars courtesy of our sponsors Chunky Chooker

You ready Joan?

JOAN: I'm a bit nervous Quinton.

QUINTON: Deep breathing Joan. Here we go. Chicken Maryland is often served with a) a deep fried banana; b) a deep fried pineapple ring or c) both the pineapple ring and the banana?

STEVEN: 'C', the answer is 'c'.

QUINTON: What do you think Joan? Fried banana or fried pineapple ring or both the ring and the nana?

JOAN: Well I think 'c' sounds the most delicious so I'm going to go with 'c'.

STEVEN: Yes!

QUINTON: Is that your final answer?

JOAN: Yes it is. Lock it in Quinton.

QUINTON: Congratulations Joan, you're absolutely correct!

Jingle - Chunky Chooker

Park

Barry dials Steven's number

BARRY: Here goes

Steven's phone rings.

Steven stares at it. He turns off the radio.

STEVEN: Steven Kingston.

Kingston Engineering

BARRY: Oh!

STEVEN: Hello?

BARRY: Steven?

STEVEN: Yes.

BARRY: It's Barry. Barry Simonson.

Pause

BARRY: Simonson Architectural Engineering Designs!

STEVEN: Barry!

BARRY: Yeah.

STEVEN: You still working?

BARRY: Consulting. You?

STEVEN: Consulting.

BARRY: Busy?

STEVEN: Flat out, mate, flat out.

BARRY: I want to talk to you about a project I'm working on.

STEVEN: I'm all ears!

BARRY: I'm starting a group; a men's group.

STEVEN: What, like a networking club?

BARRY: Yeah. Like a networking club for talking.

STEVEN: Will there be a bar?

BARRY: No!

STEVEN: Well no-one will talk if you don't have a bar.

BARRY: I suppose I could organise a bar.

STEVEN: When do you want to meet?

BARRY: Well I was wondering if you might want to catch up for a coffee?

STEVEN: A coffee?

BARRY: *laughs* Yeah, you know, warm milky caffeinated drink usually consumed in the morning.

STEVEN: I've already had a coffee today and if I have too much coffee I can't sleep and it upsets my stomach.

BARRY: Right.

STEVEN: But I could meet you for lunch.

BARRY: Lunch?

STEVEN: Yeah, you know, the meal that people usually have in the middle of the day.

BARRY: *laughs* Very good.

STEVEN: Is that a yes?

BARRY: When?

STEVEN: Today.

BARRY: What time?

STEVEN: 1pm.

BARRY: Until when?

STEVEN: No later than 3. I'm going to a funeral.

BARRY: Isaac Fielding?

STEVEN: Yeah.

BARRY: Me too! So, where do you want to meet for lunch?

STEVEN: Come to my place. Do you know where I live?

BARRY: Yep. I google earthed you.

STEVEN: Good. See you at 1pm

Steven hangs up.

BARRY: Right.

Barry puts away his phone.

BARRY: Poppy Baz has an appointment!

With a friend.

Yes Holdie, that's right. Poppy Baz has no friends, not since Nanna Sue cracked the shits and moved out, so this is all very exciting isn't it.

Kitchen

Steven is listening to the radio

DAYTIME DAVE: Have you had a look out there this morning? Wow! It's beautiful, absolutely beautiful! You gotta love these perfect spring days. Makes you want to shout!

Song

(Steven joins in on 'shout' - as does Barry)

You know you make me want to **shout**
Kick my heels up and **shout**
Throw my hands up and **shout**
Throw my head back and **shout!**
Come on now; come on now!

Steven sings and dances.

Fade out

11 am

Doing the shopping

Margaret and Heather are doing the shopping. Margaret carries the basket; Heather writes things in the notebook.

HEATHER: How much was the vegemite?

MARGARET: Six dollars.

Heather writes in the notebook

MARGARET: Why are you doing that?

HEATHER: Don't ask.

MARGARET: What else do you need?

HEATHER: I think that's it.

MARGARET: Check your list.

HEATHER: I didn't bring it.

MARGARET: Didn't bring the list? You're gonna be in big trouble when you get home!

HEATHER: I've shopped my entire life without a list.

MARGARET: That's it! Break out not down!

HEATHER: *laughs* Yeah, 'Heather Kingston, shopping renegade, went where no retired man dreamed she could go'!

MARGARET: Coffee?

HEATHER: I need to get this lot home.

MARGARET: Okay. Coffee at yours?

HEATHER: Perfect.

12 midday

Lounge/kitchen

Steven is rearranging the cups again in the cupboard.

He is still listening to 'Quizzes with Quinton'.

QUINTON: You're listening to Quizzes with Quinton, proudly brought to you by Chunky Chookin. Chunky chookin coz it needs no cookin! So the question this hour: Chicken Cacciatore is a dish from which country?

STEVEN: Italy

QUINTON: a) England b)Greece c) Italy.

Give us a call if you know the answer.

Remember there's one hundred dollars up for grabs! Here's the jingle.