THE BIG BOX

BY BRYAN CUTLER
The Big Box was first performed at Smith’s Hill High School on March 12, 2009, with the following cast:

Narrator            Patrick Davis
Soothsayer          Stephanie Carrigan
Little Sooth         Angela Di Giorgio
Mayor Jessica Belmont Grace Balbirnie
Shylock Belmont      Julian Nikolovski
Portia Belmont       Isabel Crawford
Buff Readyboy        Lachlan Walmsley
Monica Supré         Danika Wilkinson
Bill Brady            Mitchell Crouch
Whitney Brady        Jamaya Masters
Britney Brady        Jenna Owen
Georgie McCune       Caitlin Seymour-King
Hunk McCune          Tyler Heycott
Rock McCune          Jesse Martin-Allen
Digger Thompson      Brad Sorensen
Sherry Thompson      Shelley Yin
Schooner Boy         Callum Braithwaite
Terry Turnstile      Riley Boughton
Tricia Turnstile     Lisa Felgate
Tina Angst Turnstile Julia Salmon
Bluey Davidson       Adam Skorulis
Raylene Davidson     Anna Sands
Patricia Davidson    Lauren Bezzina
Agnes Davidson       Rosie McLean
Jenny Tofu           Lisa Deng
Maria Paella         Chelsea Murray
Bob Johnson, Worker 1 Nathan Johnston
Gaylene Johnson      Clara Bonin
Tom Stevens, Worker 2 Paul Stramare
Charlene Stevens     Solange Handley
Doobie Dude          Matt Kusi-Appauh
Paisley Om           Freya Shepherd

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# The Characters

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ACT ONE

The stage is the main street of Simpletown. There are shops on either side of the street and the vista disappears into a vanishing point. The space in front of the stage is divided by a wooden fence. There are two side stages; the café on the left and the pub on the right, next to which are two bins. Note: MARIA PAELLA speaks her lines in Spanish (except for the italicised words which are in English) unless otherwise indicated, JENNY speaks parts of her lines in German. All songs are suggestions, appropriate original songs may be substituted.

V/O Ladies and gentlemen, Ribbit Up Productions and Smith’s Hill High School would like to welcome you to tonight’s performance of The Big Box. Would you please take this opportunity to turn off all mobile phones, we’ll just give you a second. Now, before we start tonight’s play we’d like to advise that the Secret Word of the Night is in your program. The cast don’t know what the Secret Word is or when it will be spoken so when you hear the Secret Word shout it out and one of our lovely assistants will bring you down a prize.

The house lights start to fade to dark.

Oh look, the house lights are dimming; it must be night time.

Main Street

A small spotlight illuminates NARRATOR, peeking through the curtains, which slowly open throughout the following speech.

NARRATOR Listen, listen to the still, listen to the hush, when night is a blanket wrapped around the dreams of the residents of Simpletown, our simple town so unassuming as it marches through each day and watches the world salute and pass it by. Not a care in the world, our Simpletown, as the breeze through the trees alerts us to the ocean awaking from its deep slumber. Listen, it is only at this hour that you can hear the silence of souls connecting as they sleep walk through the sky. And then, the rooster crows-

Sound effect of a goat.

Announcing the day. The sun comes up.

All lights up harshly.

And then back down.
Lights to dim.

The dogs from the local pound begin their daily cry for freedom.

Sound effect of a rooster crowing.

And the distant sound of trucks-

Sound effect of horses trotting.

Awakes Simpletown from its slumber as two minute, pinprick headlights-

Lights to fast chaser mode. Sound effect of trucks, horns blaring.

Drag us back to the world-

Lights to dim and slowly raise to full wash during the course of the scene. The effect should be like daybreak.

-and remind us all that no town is an island, just a peninsula. Beat. (Looking carefully at the audience) Nobody wants to scream out the word peninsula? Because if peninsula is the Secret Word of the Night then you'd just yell it out like 'Peninsula!' and we'd give you a prize. Beat. Here come the bakers, owners of Hot Buns-

Enter TOM & CHARLENE.

Tom Stevens and his wife Charlene, happily married for three years and unhappily married for two, ready to accept their bags of grain to make their loaves of bread from the farmer Bill Brady and his daughters, Britney and Whitney.

Enter BILL, WHITNEY & BRITNEY carrying bags of grain. They throw them to TOM, who struggles with the weight and then stores them as CHARLENE begins making bread from dough and placing it in the oven.

And here are the greengrocers-

Enter BOB & GAYLENE.

Bob Johnson and his wife Gaylene, childhood sweethearts, but they soon grew up Beat. and started a business, Vegie Might, where they sell only the finest freshly-picked produce from Georgie McCune’s farm. Here’s Georgie with her boys, Hunk and Rock.
Enter GEORGIE, HUNK & ROCK carrying crates of vegetables. GAYLENE takes the crates from them. BOB picks out three oranges and begins juggling. GAYLENE catches the oranges one by one mid-flight and returns them to the crates.

You’re perhaps wondering about our farmers here. Georgie and Bill have been friends, well, just about ever since they can remember. They first met in primary school where they used to share milk at playtime and build sandcastle farms full of magic, dreams and cattle. Until one day Bill fell off his tricycle and his parents caught Georgie playing nurse and that was that. They were banished from one another; Georgie on one side of the school playing with dolls, Bill on the other playing footy. They both got older, got married, started their farms on adjacent land, but these things never last, their partners ran away with each other and started a sun tanning salon in Sydney. Yet every morning, just after they finish their deliveries, they silently share the sunrise. They’d like to talk to each other, but there’s no words to say, they’ve got responsibilities and their kids are growing up fast.

WHITNEY & BRITNEY begin flirting with HUNK & ROCK. As BILL & GEORGIE gaze out into the distance, their hands come close to touching. Just as they’re about to, HUNK & WHITNEY bump their respective parents, killing the reverie. Both BILL & GEORGIE snap apart and admonish their children. Exit farmers.

Some people will tell you that Simpletown is a strange town, but it’s a friendly town. We even warmly accepted Jenny Tofu and Maria Paella-

Enter MARIA & JENNY; they begin making sausages and burgers. JENNY tends to chop things, whilst MARIA shapes them.

They’re our local butchers, well they would be if they weren’t vegetarians. They run Soy Wonder. Nobody knows Jenny’s real name, she’s from back east, somewhere in Germany and Maria doesn’t even speak English. But they get on alright and you can get used to soy burgers and lentil sausages if you drink enough. They buy their beans, skins and legumes in bulk from Bluey Davidson at Bluey’s Corner Store, not that we have a corner on Main Street, but you get the picture. Here’s Bluey now.

Enter BLUEY, RAYLENE, PAT & AGNES, who begin setting up the shop for the day.

And that’s Raylene his wife and their two mothers, Patricia and Agnes. Salt of the Earth, Bluey, though I guess I shouldn’t be saying that with all the problems we’re having with salinity. Beat. (Looking carefully at audience) Salinity. That’s a good word, huh, salinity? Well don’t all shout at once. (To shopkeepers) You could say something.
BLUÉY Johnno.
BOB Davo.
TOM Davo.
BLUÉY Stevo.
BOB (Spiteful) Stevo.
TOM (Spiteful) Johnno.
GAYLENE (Spiteful) Charlene.
CHARLENE (Spiteful) Gaylene.
RAYLENE Charlene?
CHARLENE Raylene.
RAYLENE Gaylene?
GAYLENE Raylene.
RAYLENE Johnno? Stevo?
TOM Raylene. (Lovingly) Gaylene.
GAYLENE (Lovingly) Stevo. Davo.
BLUÉY Gaylene. Charlene.
CHARLENE Davo. (Lovingly) Johnno.
BOB (Lovingly) Charlene. Raylene.
RAYLENE, Maria?
GAYLENE & 
CHARLENE
BOB, Jenny?
TOM & 
BLUEY

JENNY chops violently. Miss Piggy Sound f/x plays.
MARIA  (In Spanish) You have been watching too much Neighbours and Home & Away.

JENNY You said it, Maria, and those boys should use their soap for more than opera. (Holding NOSE) Geruch der stinkt!

Enter JESSICA, SHYLOCK & PORTIA.

TOM & GAYLENE Look out, here comes Jessica Belmont.

CHARLENE I reckon it’s real nice having a female mayor, I reckon.

RAYLENE And Portia, isn’t she just so beautiful?

GAYLENE When she’s standing next to Charlene, I’d have to agree.

BLUEY And Shylock.

TOM Shrimp Shylock.

BLUEY Oh, it’s not his fault he’s small, if he was twice the size he’d still only be half the man. Figure that out.

JENNY You figure this out, he has lots of geld but he keeps putting the squeeze on me for my tofu.

BOB & CHARLENE Everyone, put up your prices-

CHARLENE Everyone.

BOB You said ‘everyone’ twice.

CHARLENE That second one was just for you.

They immediately mime putting up their prices.

SHYLOCK And how’s my adorable little Jenny today, come and give uncle Shylock a hug.

SHYLOCK leaps at JENNY and gives her a hug.

PORTIA Oh my god, Mumsy, Daddy’s groping the vegebutcher! Does that mean they’re in love? Are you two getting a divorce?
JESSICA Don’t be silly, Portia, Daddy’s not groping the vegebutcher, Belmonts do not grope. And if Daddy ever wanted to divorce me I’d sue him for every cent he’s got. Now give Daddy a handy-wipe.

MARIA (Pulling them apart) Hands off Tofu, you pathetic, weedy man. Why don’t you go back to Gaza Strip?

PORTIA Here you are, Daddy.

JESSICA (To MARIA) Have you received anything suspicious in your mail of late?

JENNY Just one of your how-to-vote cards for the last election.

MARIA It had a picture of your ugly face.

JESSICA Ugly face? But, my dear, you’re quite attractive in a Woonona kind of way. But I would keep an eye on your mailbox Beat. kaboom! Understand that.

JENNY chops violently. Miss Piggy Sound f/x plays.

JENNY Verstehen, dass?

JESSICA What a silly person. Portia? Quick sticks, I want to buy a newspaper.

PORTIA Oh Mumsy, do I have to talk to Granny Pat and Granny Agnes, they keep asking me to do volunteer work for the Country Women’s Association.

SHYLOCK I notice your prices seem to be a little inflated this morning, Miss Tofu. What is it you want, five dollars a kilo and a pound of my flesh?

JESSICA Really Portia, you do carry on for a young woman of eighteen years of age.

PORTIA Mumsy, I’m not eighteen until tomorrow.

JESSICA Yes yes, we shall have to organise a do; being eighteen’s very important for a young lady, it means you can do lots of wonderful things, like vote.

PORTIA And drink alcohol Beat. goody.
JESSICA Really, Portia, drinking is for the lower classes; it helps them forget. Now I will get the newspaper and you may purchase the bread and vegetables. You are wearing your safety gloves, aren’t you?

PORTIA Whatever for, Mumsy?

JESSICA Who knows where that food’s been? Farmers may have touched it. And you know that a Belmont never eats something that a farmer has touched until it’s been boiled, braised and broiled to the point that not even a mother would recognise it.

PORTIA You’ll always recognise me, won’t you Mumsy?

JESSICA A Belmont always knows a Belmont, it’s in the breeding.

SHYLOCK Tell me, why don’t you eat beef? You look like you could use a little meat.

JENNY Tell me, warum sie nicht essen pork!

MARIA A todos les llega su momento de Gloria.

SHYLOCK Hallelujah!

JENNY No, she said every dog has its day, dimwit.

MARIA Woof, woof.

BLUEY G’day Jessica-

JESSICA Mayor Belmont, thank you.

BLUEY Jessica, come on, you’re talking to Bluey Davidson here.

JESSICA I haven’t forgiven you for running against me in the last elections.

BLUEY Somebody had to.

JESSICA No they didn’t, think Zimbabwe. Besides you were never going to beat my platform of ‘family first’.

RAYLENE Is something the matter?

JESSICA Oh, it’s wifey, I thought she was still in hospital.

RAYLENE Is everything okay?
BLUEY Everything’s peachy keen, darl. Mayor Belmont and I were just having a chin wag about the last election.

RAYLENE The one where I sat on that car bomb?

BLUEY Yeah, the bomb that was probably meant for me? Lucky you were wearing that gingham skirt otherwise you could have done a real injury to your bot-bot.

RAYLENE You want to see my stitches?

BLUEY They’re not your stitches, sweetheart, they’re your veins.

JESSICA And here’s Granny Pat and Granny Agnes. Ooh, what’s that smell? Have you been bathing in your own effluent?

PAT I haven’t had a bath since Neville me husband died Beat. I want to keep his smell on me. It was a smell that used to make my goose bumps quiver.

JESSICA Well, that’s her excuse, (To AGNES) why do you stink so bad?

AGNES It’s the natural by-product of hard work, Belmont. I’d be surprised if you’d ever experienced the sensation.

JESSICA Oh I’ve got all the sensations I need, power, mansion, beautiful daughter, charming husband-

SHYLOCK Forty percent off, what’s wrong with that? You’re selling me a bunch of squished soy beans here, for half the price I could make ’em myself.

JENNY Off you go then-

SHYLOCK But then your haggling wouldn’t stimulate me so.

MARIA Holy Maria, mother of God.

JESSICA -and you two have walking sticks.

PAT We should use them to give the cold-hearted cow a good clip over the ear.
AGNES We have to be nice to Mayor Belmont, Patricia. Remember she gives us half price rent to have the CWA and bingo on Thursday nights up at the club.

JESSICA I suggest you enjoy it while you can.

AGNES What do you mean by that?

JESSICA I mean, nothing. May I have my paper now?

PAT reluctantly passes the paper to JESSICA.

PORTIA (Warning) Mumsy!

JESSICA It's alright, Portia, (Taking the newspaper) I don't go anywhere without my hand sanitiser.

JESSICA squirts her hands and then PAT & AGNES, Just to be sure.

SHYLOCK You're bleeding me dry here, at least take twenty percent off the top.

MARIA He doesn't have twenty percent to take off the top.

SHYLOCK What's that she said?

JENNY She said that if you take zwanzig prozent off the top you could qualify for the circus.

SHYLOCK Everyone's a comedian and I'm the big joke-

MARIA Not a big joke.

SHYLOCK Okay, I'm not tall, but a man's gotta eat. If a man don't eat, a man could get a medical condition like halitosis or tinea and a medical condition is something you most certainly do not want. Now whaddya say, Jenny, ten percent? It's my final offer.

JENNY I cannot say nicht to you, zehn prozent it is.

SHYLOCK Look at that, she smiles; now everybody's happy.

All characters hold up newspapers.
NARRATOR And that’s the way it’s been for over two hundred years in Simpletown, and that’s the way we thought it would always stay. Until one day…

A loud shriek is heard from offstage. Enter SOOTHSAYER & LITTLE SOOTH.

SOOTH I am The Soothsayer!

LITTLE (Lisping) She’s The Soothsayer.

SOOTH The Soothsayer says sooths.

LITTLE She says sooths.

SOOTH This is Little Sooth.

LITTLE Little Sooth.

SOOTH The Soothsayer’s little, lisping apprentice-

LITTLE Does that make you Donald Trump?

SOOTH I am The Soothsayer and I have heard voices from the spiritual world that tapped The Soothsayer’s shoulder and said-

LITTLE You’re fired!

SOOTH And said, ‘She sells seashells by the seashore’.

LITTLE What she said.

SOOTH And the voices whispered in The Soothsayer’s ear a prediction of an imminent danger facing Simpletown. A prediction so grave that The Soothsayer fears to say it. After all, this isn’t the fifth in the Dapto dogs we’re talking about here.

LITTLE The dogs are barking.

Sound effect of a cow.

SOOTH And the cows are mooing.

Sound effect of a chicken.

LITTLE And the chickens are clucking.
Sound effect of a dog.

SOOTH Yes, I think they get the idea now, Little Sooth. The natural order is in turmoil and an evil presence stalks us ready to hop into devastating action. And the name of that presence is…

LITTLE Skippy!

SOOTH Yes! No, Frogzilla!

Enter PAISLEY & DOOBIE.

DOOBIE That’s what I saw last night, man, it was a giant frog. Or it might have been the trees making weird shapes in the wind.

PAISLEY I’ve seen my face in the clouds, and my face was groovy.

DOOBIE Heavy, Om.

PAISLEY Did you bring the Krispy Kremes?

DOOBIE They’re in the Kombi, Om.

PAISLEY All this talk of frogs is making me hungry, dude.

SOOTH I don’t mean to be rude, dude, but I am The Soothsayer-

LITTLE Who are you?

DOOBIE Hey, Sooth.

PAISLEY That’s like Jesus in Spanish.

DOOBIE & PAISLEY Hey-sus.

LITTLE (Snapping) Answer The Soothsayer’s question!

PAISLEY Oh, chill out, your karma’s mixing my auras and chakras.

LITTLE What’s a chakra?

DUDE Um, let me see, I used to know what a chakra was, um-
PAISLEY Om, something to do with yoga and seven different energy centres in the brain, but it doesn't matter, I'm just along for the ride. I mean, look at him, he's a babe.

LITTLE Big Sooth, what's a chakra?

SOOTH Little Sooth, a chakra is a Latin American, MTV star who scored with her album Laundry Service and her worldwide Tour of the Mongoose.

LITTLE Mongoose.

DUDE That's Shakira, dude, and I'm Doobie Dude and this here's Paisley Om.

PAISLEY & DOOBIE (Prolonged) Om…

SOOTH Soothsayer-

LITTLE Mongoose…

SOOTH -And do you two share my vision of impending doom, of Frogzilla, a frog so large that it's going to destroy the quiet community of Simpletown?

LITTLE That's what's called getting back to the plot.

SOOTH Beware the food chain! Beware the eyes of Frogzilla!

Exit SOOTHSAYER & LITTLE SOOTH.

DOOBIE & I'll have what she's having.

PAISLEY Exit DOOBIE & PAISLEY.

NARRATOR But it's not Frogzilla that threatens to destroy Simpletown, although more of that later, it's a food chain itself. You see, our food chain relies on the triple pillars of business. Our farmers make the produce and then pass it on to the retailers, who provide it to you, the customers, all at a fair price. Everybody's fed, everybody makes a bit of money, a fair deal for all. But what happens when one of those pillars gets greedy, starts preying on the other two? That's what happens when a big box comes to town, that's what happens when-

RAYLENE (Looking at the paper) What does this mean?
PAT Have you got your glasses, Agnes?

AGNES (Reading) ‘A Big Box Comes Knocking’.

RAYLENE Yes but what does it mean?

JESSICA It means, Raylene, that My World’s opening a supercentre in Simpletown! Shylock’s even given me money to buy shares in the place. Food, fashion and fun for everyone all in one big mall.

PORTIA Oh goody, I’ll be able to shop without fear of infection, 24/7.

TOM A My World mall. I don’t like the sound of that. They probably have their own bakers. I’m feeling sick, might be gastritis.

GAYLENE They’re the fresh vege people!

BOB It could be an opening for us, Gaylene, a chance to expand.

GAYLENE I don’t want to expand, Jonno!

CHARLENE I reckon you should have thought about that before you opened a Vegie Might, I reckon.

GAYLENE What do you mean by that?

CHARLENE I mean, you look like a yeast extract.

TOM Charlene, I want you to apologise to Gaylene right now.

GAYLENE Thanks, Stevo.

TOM Call me Tommo.

GAYLENE Why?

TOM It’s me name.

GAYLENE You’re so cute.

BOB Yeast extract, that’s funny.

JENNY At least My World opening ein supercentre won’t affect Maria and I. keine Notwendigkeit für soy, tofu and lentils there.
MARIA But maybe people will start to eat beef, pork and lamb. Maybe they will become carnivores.

JENNY Meat eaters? We'll go out of business!

RAYLENE What do you think, darl? Is this the end of Bluey's Corner Store?

SHYLOCK What corner store? We don't even have a corner.

BLUEY Now hold on, love, no need to get your innards in a pickle.

PORTIA I can't wait to see the mall; corridors and aisles full of shops and clothes and boys.

JESSICA Portia, what do you need boys for when you've got your father?

PORTIA Oh Mumsy, it's not the same thing, I'm almost eighteen.

SHYLOCK I don't know what all this sad talk is about. It's market forces, it's the global economy. Wake up and smell the money, people.

BLUEY Did you know about this, Jessica?

JESSICA I may have heard a whisper, a stray passing remark at a cocktail party I was holding in Sydney for Buff Readyboy.

ALL Buff Readyboy!

JESSICA Yes, Buff Readyboy, CEO of My World and a man who might just be paying Simpletown a visit tomorrow. And boy, am I ready!

Exit all. Lights down.

The Farm

Lights up on front stage. Enter WHITNEY & BRITNEY from one side of the audience, HUNK & ROCK from the other.

ROCK Morning, Britney.

BRITNEY Hi, Rock.

WHITNEY Hi Hunk, like your flanno.

HUNK You're looking real good this morning.
BRITNEY  We both do, we’ve been mucking out the pig pooh from the pig sty.

WHITNEY  Britney…

BRITNEY  We’re both covered in pooh.

HUNK    Lucky you.

ROCK    Lucky pigs.

BRITNEY  Not much call for pigs any more since the butchers went vegetarian.

WHITNEY  What’s the deal with Tofu and Paella, anyway?

ROCK    Some people reckon it’s because they can’t handle being unkind to animals, but I think it’s because they’re not real Simpletown kinda people.

BRITNEY  They’ve been here longer than you or I, Rock.

ROCK    I know that, but these new Simpletown folk just have a way, that’s all I’m saying.

HUNK    Hey Whitney, I was wondering if I could have a moment with you alone?

WHITNEY  Why would you want to do that, Hunk?

HUNK    It’s just that I’ve got something I want to say to you.

WHITNEY  You can say anything you want to in front of my sister.

BRITNEY  We don’t keep secrets from one another.

WHITNEY  So what is it, Hunk?

HUNK    Can I whisper it in your ear?

WHITNEY  Oh for God’s sake, Hunk, just spit it out.

BRITNEY  Yeah, we all want to know what you want to whisper in her ear.

HUNK    It’s just that, well I don’t know…

ROCK    (Quickly) Hunk’s got a crush on Whitney.
HUNK Do not.

ROCK Do too. All he does during home school is write the word ‘Whitney’ in the back of his English book.

HUNK Shut your mouth, you freckle-faced fool.

ROCK He’s even learnt to spell your name right.

HUNK It’s got an ‘h’ in it, just like Hunk.

WHITNEY Can I see your English book?

HUNK Come over here and I’ll show you.

BRITNEY You carry it around?

HUNK Never leaves my side.

BRITNEY Hunk, you have issues.

_During this exchange, they all begin to move closer to the fence that separates the farms._

ROCK Hunk carries it everywhere; he even moans your name in his sleep some nights. _(Mocking) Oh, Whitney, Whitney will you marry me?_

HUNK Stop it, Rock.

ROCK You can’t stop the Rock. _(Mocking) Oh Whitney, I wanna be with you forever._

HUNK Yeah?

ROCK Yeah.

HUNK Yeah, well you should see the graffiti that Rock’s been writing in the outhouse.

ROCK I haven’t been writing any graffiti.

HUNK Oh yes you have, down in the corner behind the bog rolls. There’s this big heart with the words ‘Rock loves Britney’ inside it.

ROCK _(Mocking) Hunk loves Whitney._
HUNK  *(Mocking)* Rock loves Britney.

*Enter BILL from one side of the audience.*

BILL  And I love my daughters and I don’t love the two of you hanging around them like a pair of thirsty scarecrows. Whitney, Britney, get over here.

WHITNEY & BRITNEY *move to BILL.*

   And if I ever see you boys within five metres of my fence again I’m going to rip off your doodads and feed ‘em to the dingoes.

*Enter GEORGIE from the other side of the audience.*

GEORGIE  And exactly how do you propose to do that, Bill Brady? Nobody touches my boys without my say so. Not you and certainly not those little tramps over there.

BILL  Just whose daughters are you calling tramps, Georgie McCune?

GEORGIE  If the pooh fits wear it.

WHITNEY  We’ve just been mucking out the sty.

GEORGIE  I could smell it from a mile off, and I’ve seen those girls of yours making goo-goo eyes at my boys, flirting with them down on Main Street. I’ve never seen anything good coming from flirting like that-

BILL  You used to be a good flirt, Georgie.

GEORGIE  And you’re still a stringy bean pole. *Beat.* *(To the boys)* Run along boys and get cleaned up for dinner.

ROCK  *(Mocking)* Hunk loves Whitney.

HUNK  *(Mocking)* Rock loves Britney.

BILL  *(To his girls)* You too, girls, hop it back to the house.

WHITNEY  I knew he loved me.

BRITNEY  Boys are so random.
WHITNEY &  And random is cool.

BRITNEY

Exit WHITNEY, BRITNEY, HUNK & ROCK. The lights slowly fade throughout the remainder of this scene to indicate sunset.

BILL To be that age again, huh?

GEORGIE Yeah, when we all made mistakes that would affect our futures. 
Beat. Call a truce, Bill?

BILL Sounds good.

GEORGIE I need to talk to you anyway.

BILL Yeah?

GEORGIE You’ve heard about the new My World opening up?

BILL Can’t keep something like that quiet around these parts.

GEORGIE No, news travels faster than a rabbit with the runs. Anyway, I was kinda thinking that this My World could be the best thing to happen for a long time. For us, I mean.

BILL For us? All we ever do is argue.

GEORGIE That’s why we’re having a truce, stupid. It’s time to put what’s passed in the past. It’s time for the two of us to get together.

BILL You mean it?

GEORGIE Of course I mean it, Bill. A big supercentre like that has got to get its produce from somewhere and I figure that if we combine our two farms as one then we’ll just have a license to print money.

BILL (Deflated) Money.

GEORGIE Yeah, bucket loads. There’ll be more people shopping at My World than just the locals. There’ll be tourists, backpackers and fat kids on skateboards.

BILL You want a business partnership?

GEORGIE Think about it, Bill. You and me together, nothing could stop us.
BILL That’s what I always thought.

*Pause.*

GEORGIE Just look at that sunset. You don’t get that sort of sunset in the city. The future’s whatever we want it to be, who would have ever thought it?

BILL I would have.

*Lights to black.*

**Digger’s Rest**

SHERRY & SCHOONER BOY are *cleaning the pub for the evening’s trade.* Enter DIGGER *reading a newspaper.*

DIGGER They’ll be coming to get us next, Sherry, you mark my words.

SHERRY Who’ll be coming to get us?

DIGGER Those bloody cretins from that big box, that My World supercentre.

SHERRY What makes you think that, Digger?

DIGGER When they open that supercentre it’ll take care of every shop on Main Street; bakery, vegebutcher, greengrocer and the corner store-

SCHOONER *(Interrupting)* We don’t have any corners.

DIGGER How would you know, Schooner Boy, you haven’t left the pub in sixteen years.

SCHOONER *(Petulant)* Sorry.

DIGGER And they won’t stop there, they’ll open a Paddy O’Shea’s liquor warehouse that will have prices so cheap that people will drink at home, killing off the social, sanctimonial and ceremonial functions that Digger’s Rest plays in a local community.

SCHOONER Ceremonial?

DIGGER You were baptised in this pub, Schooner Boy. If I hadn’t spilled my beer that night I never would have found you under that tray of schooner glasses when you were just a little bitty baby; that’s how you got your name, Schooner Boy.
SCHOONER Very funny, ha ha.

DIGGER I never joke about spilt beer, Schooner Boy.

SHERRY And you never found out what happened to your real parents either.

Suspense sound effect is played.

DIGGER (To SHERRY) But it's the rough end of the pineapple, Sherry, the short end of the stick that My World and Paddy O'Shea's can waltz into Simpletown and take over something that my daddy and his daddy spent their whole lives building.

SCHOONER Didn't you say it was the Asians, Dad, divide and conquer?

SHERRY Excuse me, Asians?

DIGGER Don't speak that way to your mother, Schooner Boy.

SCHOONER She's not even my mother, she's my stepmother.

DIGGER That's right and, if you don't apologise this instant, my boot will be one step away from your B.O.T. TOM!

SCHOONER (Petulant) Sorry. But I don't feel complete without knowing who my real father and mother are.

SHERRY Excuse me, Asians? Asia is not a country, you idiot, it's a continent.

SCHOONER (To DIGGER) You told me that Asia was where they built that big wall to keep all the rabbits out.

SHERRY Schooner, your father is part of the most stupid race ever known; dumb, white Australian men-

DIGGER Bloody oath!

SHERRY He was so hard up that he became a mail order husband.

SCHOONER Were you a mail order husband, Dad? What a loser!

SHERRY Don't call your father a loser.

DIGGER I was a loser 'til I met you, Sherry.
SCHOONER I’m going to puke. Why did you pick him, Stepmum?

SHERRY Because he lied on his mail order application, said he was twenty-five year old successful Japanese businessman with buns of steel. Now I find him to be washed-up Australian racist running a crappy hotel with saggy buns, not buns of steel, saggy buns. Beat. Nobody likes a saggy bun.

DIGGER Listen love, you know I don’t know what the hell comes out of my mouth sometimes.

SHERRY Then maybe you should stay dumb.

DIGGER Hold on a second, Sherry, I maybe stupid, but I’m not dumb, and when Buff Readyboy arrives in Simptown tomorrow, I’ll be waiting for him with a welcoming he won’t soon forget.

SHERRY Whatever you say, Beat. saggy buns.

Lights down.

Coffee Time

Lights up. Enter TERRY in a frazzle.

TERRY Jesus, my beads, where is everybody? Only half an hour to open up the café and yours truly is left all alone to do the work. And today of all days, the day Buff Readyboy comes to Simptown. A man likes to make a good impression and if Buff Readyboy doesn’t think that Coffee Time is the greatest thing since spandex bodysuits then my name’s not Terry Turnstile. Beat. (Calling off) Tricia Turnstile? Tina Angst? A man needs a little help if he’s to turn this mess into a success.

Enter TRICIA.

TRICIA G’day, sweetheart, what’s making you so stressy?

TERRY Just look at this place, these tables won’t clean themselves and I’m just about out of elbow grease.

TRICIA Drop the decibels, darling, I’ve got a brute of a headache and you’re just being a big drag. Now where did you put the Panadeine Forte?

TERRY There’s no time for Panadeine Forte, you’ll just have to live on strain street for a while.
TRICIA I'm not straining my brain when I could go from hell to swell in a trice. That's the problem with you men, you just don't understand women's issues.

TERRY Here's an issue for you, Buff Readyboy's coming today and the hills are alive with the sound of bad taste.

TRICIA Where's Tina Angst?

TERRY That child of ours still hasn't come down. I hear the two of you went out dancing last night.

TRICIA The blue light disco at the Country Women's Association was absolutely humming. They were so impressed with the way I shook my shimmy that they asked me to pose for their calendar next year.

TERRY Ooh!

TRICIA I'll draw more attention than a beached whale at Byron Bay.

Enter TINA.

TINA Or a beached whale at a blue light disco.

TERRY There you are Tina Angst, better late than never. I hope you didn't play kiss-kiss with any boy-boys last night.

TINA Not with mother there. As soon as she hit the dance floor she had every spunk doing the hokey pokey.

TRICIA You know how I love to stick my left foot in.

TINA It's just not fair, Mother. Here I am, sixteen and gorgeous with a nice deep voice and my biggest competition is my mother. Beat. Sometimes I just don't know how I carry on. Maybe I should end it all right now. I'm going to my room.

TERRY Oh no you're not, miss hissy-missy. I know you've never been the same since we misplaced your twin brother-

Suspense sound effect is played.

-but I need Coffee Time polished to within an inch of its life.

TINA What's so important about Buff Readyboy coming to town?
TRICIA  Is there something you’re not telling me, Terry Turnstile?

TERRY  No, yes, no, no, yes, no Beat. yes.

TRICIA  Sweetheart, you’re sweating like a sinner at a confessional.

TERRY  Tricia, I should have given you the big scoop on this earlier but my whole hoi-polloi’s been hurly burly of late and Coffee Time’s in trouble.

TRICIA  What kind of trouble?

TERRY  The kind of trouble that puts two mortgages on the house, the Yaris up for sale and something else, I’ve even had to put my collection of Shirley Bassey LPs on eBay.

TRICIA  Oh, Terry, you didn’t.

TERRY  I know it’s a drastic measure but we’re in drastic times. But if Coffee Time doesn’t become the new café in My World then we’ll be in as much trouble as an American tourist on the Great Barrier Reef. The boat will have sailed and we won’t be on it. There’s only one person that can save us and that’s Buff Readyboy.

Lights down. Exit all.

Main Street

Lights up. A town meeting. On stage are BUFF, JESSICA, SHYLOCK, PORTIA, BOB, GAYLENE, TOM, CHARLENE, BLUEY, RAYLENE, PAT, AGNES, JENNY & MARIA.

JESSICA  Excuse me everybody, but this is Buff Readyboy, the man from My World (Under her breath) I wish-

PORTIA  Mumsy, you’re embarrassing me.

JESSICA  And I hope he’s going to part of our world too. Buff?

BUFF  Thanks, Mayor Belmont. Friends, My World is your world and My World is our world. My World is the world of today and My World is the world of the future.

Enter SOOTHSAYER & LITTLE SOOTH, who begins fawning over BUFF.
SOOTH Beware, people, beware the eyes of Frogzilla! Avert your gaze, this creature means nothing but evil!

BUFF Hello there, I don't believe we've met.

SOOTH I am The Soothsayer.

LITTLE She's The Soothsayer.

SOOTH The Soothsayer, and you are the winds of change, blowing bitterly throughout the land, horses will eat themselves and lions will roam the streets, answering the call of Frogzilla.

BUFF I'm not Frogzilla, I'm Buff Readyboy, CEO of the new My World supercentre that's opening up. Look, here's my driver's license.

BUFF produces his driver's license and shows it to LITTLE.

LITTLE It says Buff Readyboy. Hot picture.

SOOTH Not Frogzilla? Let me see that.

SOOTH reads the driver's license and matches the photo to BUFF.

Right. Not Frogzilla, but more about that later.

LITTLE I told you he wasn't Frogzilla, but you had to make a scene anyway.

SOOTH That's the problem with you Little Sooths, you think you know it all. (Gushingly to BUFF) Sorry to have wasted your time, exit Soothsayer.

Exit SOOTH.

(off) And Little Sooth.

LITTLE Bye, Buffy.

Exit LITTLE SOOTH.

BUFF What comic book did she drop out of? It was a woman, wasn't it? Anyway, people, good simple people I want to assure you that My World is not looking to change your wonderful, simple town community. We're not going to get in your hair or interfere with your day to day business. That's why we're building My World two kilometres away, right next to the freeway, so your wonderful, simple town lifestyle can be preserved just the way it is for years to come, a symbol of the dark ages. Of course, some of
you shopkeepers might want to come and be a part of My World and that’s okay too. And just think of it, free parking for all of your customers.

BLUEY But we already have free parking.

BUFF Sorry I didn’t get your name.

BLUEY Bluey.

BUFF Bluey. How are you, Bluey, nice to meet you, mate. But what about the new parking laws and the No Stopping signs on either side of Main Street to ease traffic congestion?

TOM But there aren’t any cars on Main Street.

BUFF Sorry, you are?

TOM Stevo, I run Hot Buns with me wife Charlene.

BUFF Not the Hot Buns, Stevo, your hot buns are world famous, I’m-

CHARLENE But Main Street? What about the cars on Main Street, but?

BUFF You must be Charlene, I can see what Stevo sees in you.

TOM Wish I could.

BOB Try opening your eyes, baker-boy.

GAYLENE Don’t call Tom ‘boy’-

BOB (Giggling) Tom boy!

GAYLENE -and anyway, there’s no traffic congestion.

BUFF There will be as soon as My World opens, Gaylene. We’re expecting as many as two thousand cars a day coming down Main Street Beat. not stopping on their way to My World and we’ll have a parking space for each one.

PAT And where do you expect to put this car park, not by the river, that’s where all the kiddies go to neck.

BUFF I see age shall not weary them. I bet you used to go parking too.

AGNES Granny Pat still does Beat. on her own.
BUFF That’s hard to believe.

PAT It’s not the same without Neville, but.

AGNES Don’t think you can get around Granny Pat with your charm, Mister Readyboy.

PAT Let the man speak, Agnes.

BUFF Heaven forbid, Granny Agnes, (To PAT) but if I was just a few years older I’d…

PAT (Charmed) You’re wicked, you are.

AGNES Where are you building the car park?

PAT That old bag’s Granny Agnes.

AGNES Old bag?

BUFF You must be her younger sister and there’s this property your good Mayor Belmont was telling me about that’s in need of new tenants just out there on Antonio Street.

AGNES But that’s our club!

BUFF She never told me. Beat. I suppose we’ll just have to find a space in My World for the club. How would you like that Granny Agnes, the CWA and Bingo Hall all in air-conditioned comfort?

TOM Why do you need to condition the air? Is it for all the germs and little nasties?

BUFF Yes, you put two thousand people in one space and it’s like having a Year 7 class after lunch in the middle of summer.

CHARLENE That’s funny, that is.

BUFF It is Charlene. Love that name, don’t change it.

CHARLENE I won’t, Buff, I won’t.

BOB Hey, what about the air-conditioning?

CHARLENE Oh, Bob, right. (Mouthing ‘sorry’)
BUFF  Sure Johnno, I'm trying to empathise with Tommo, 'cause we don't want any freaks at My World, you start working with freaks and you end up in a freak show.

TOM  Tell me about it, I feel like I've got a split personality multiple eating attention deficit disorder or something.

BUFF  Gaylene can put you back together. You can be her Humpty Dumpty.

GAYLENE  I'm not his mistress!

BUFF  (Laughing, then) Of course not. (To himself) Come on, Buff, small town, think about it. Anyway to answer your question about the air-conditioning, Bob, at My World we like to blow the hot air out-

BOB  Too bloody right.

BUFF  And keep the cool air in. And there's the wall to wall security cameras to keep the undesirables out.

JENNY  Are you talking about me?

JENNY  chops violently. Miss Piggy Sound f/x plays.

BUFF  No, not at all-

JENNY  Jenny, and you look like that red-headed dwarf Rumpelstiltskin I used to read about in fairytales.

BUFF  I assure you, Jenny, we let in anybody who speaks English.

MARIA  This man is a good-for-nothing crazy moron.

BUFF  And Spanish, yes we like our Spanish-speaking friends, too. And your name?

MARIA  My name is Maria Paella.

BUFF  That's a mouthful.

RAYLENE  But security cameras, Buff? Why do we need security cameras?

BLUEY  This is Raylene, me wife.
BUFF Raylene, Gaylene, Charlene. When are the banjos going to start playing?

PAT & AGNES pull out a banjo and a guitar, ‘Dueling banjos’ plays briefly and all, except BUFF, dance. Music cuts.

RAYLENE Who’d ever have thought that we’d live in a town where we’d need security cameras?

BUFF You won’t need ‘em here, this will become a ghost town- No, security cameras are great, Raylene, you can leave your kids in the car while you shop.

RAYLENE (Crying) Bluey?

BUFF Stepping on shaky ground?

BLUEY We lost our only child in a bizarre jumping castle accident-

BUFF Don’t worry Billy-

BLUEY Bluey.

BUFF Bluey, ‘cause if there’s one thing that Buff knows, Bluey, it’s how to be sensitive, and for those of you who can’t seem to look after your kids, the cameras will keep an eye on them while you get the right advice on that plasma television that you know you deserve.

SHYLOCK Plasma television? What does that do, take blood from you while you watch?

BUFF Some call it blood, we like to call it fifty months free interest.

BLUEY But isn’t My World just a big box?

Chorus of sceptical yeahs.

BUFF I’ve heard that saying before, Bluey, and I like to think of it like this. You remember when you were young how your parents told you that big things come in little packages? I bought that line for a while until I worked out that my parents were just selling me a world of empty dreams and I realised that if I wanted something big then I had to start looking for the big packages. And doesn’t everybody here want to go back to when we were children and we still had our dreams? I’m offering you a dream and it comes in a big box. Every thing you ever wanted is inside that big box and
all you have to do is untie the ribbon and reach inside. Now who wants to join with me and reach inside?

Chorus of enthusiastic yeaehs.

That’s what I’m talking about, people, and that’s what My World is offering to you.

JESSICA Well I think we can wrap it up there, Buff. I take it you’ll be staying with us tonight?

BUFF Thanks for the offer, Jess, but when I’m in a new town I like to stay at the local pub before it closes Beat. for the night. Besides there’s a couple of people that I want to see before I head in. And people, if you’ve got any other questions, don’t hesitate to ask, ’cause I’ve got all the answers you want to hear. Welcome to My World.

Lights down on main stage. Exit all. Light up on NARRATOR.

NARRATOR It’s said that you can sell anything to a person if you tell them what they want to hear. Buff Readyboy knows this and he’s in the business of selling change. It’s also said that you can make anybody believe you if you tell them what they already believe to be true. Buff Readyboy knows this also and that’s why he’s heading off down to the farm.

Light down on NARRATOR. Exit NARRATOR.

The Farm

Lights up on front stage. BILL & GEORGIE met at the fence.

BILL Hey.

GEORGIE Hay’s what horses eat, Bill.

BILL Fancy seeing you in the front paddock two days in a row.

GEORGIE Have you thought about what I said yesterday?

BILL Thought about nothing else.

GEORGIE And?

BILL And, well, and I just can’t seem to make up my mind.
GEORGIE  This is going to be great for both of us-

BILL   Georgie, I need to talk to you about something else.

GEORGIE  I'm all ears.

BILL   Well, the thing is, it's kinda personal.

GEORGIE  Bill Brady, are you blushing?

BILL   Don't laugh at me. Georgie, you know I've never been too good
with words, so I'm just going say this out straight. (Stumbling) Georgie,
remember when we were kids?

GEORGIE  Yes.

BILL   I need to let you know that I still, I mean that, I…

Enter BUFF.

BUFF    You just don't get air like this in the city. (Breathing in) Country air
makes you feel good to be alive.

BILL   Excuse me, mate, but we were just having a conversation here.

BUFF    It takes me back to when I was brought up on a farm meself. My
mum and dad loved Meadow Lea, that's what they called it, and I can still
recall riding on that tractor back to the homestead on my daddy's knee as
the sun went down and the smell of my mother's freshly baked bread
wafted across the meadow Beat. lea after she'd taken it out of the oven.

BILL   Fine, good, yes, that's a fantastic story. Now I don't mean to be
rude but-

BUFF    They weren't wealthy, they had to scrimp and save just as I'm sure
you people do, but they put away every last cent just to send me to the
same school in Sydney that Malcolm Turnbull went to. Buff Readyboy's
my name.

BUFF extends his hand to shake.

BILL   Bill Brady.

GEORGIE  Georgie McCune and it's a pleasure, Mister Readyboy.

BUFF    Call me Buff, 'cause I am.
GEORGIE That’s a firm grip you’ve got there, Buff.

BUFF Different surnames?

BILL Yeah, so what of it?

BUFF Oh nothing, just must be some long lonely nights out here.

BILL We’ve got our kids to keep us company.

BUFF So you were married?

GEORGIE (A little too quickly) No, Beat. Buff.

BILL So what brings you out back, Mister Readyboy?

BUFF Buff.

BILL Mister Readyboy will be fine.

BUFF See, the thing is that I’m in Simpletown on behalf of-

GEORGIE The My World supercentre, that’s exciting. I was just saying to Bill yesterday how exciting it is, wasn’t I, Bill?

BILL You did mention it.

GEORGIE I mean, it’s exciting, a chance for us to expand our farms, grow our businesses and make lots of-

BUFF & GEORGIE Money.

BUFF We’re on the same page, Georgie.

GEORGIE Oh, I didn’t really-

BUFF Don’t be ashamed of money. It’s hard living on the land what with the prices of fertiliser, fuel, packaging, the drought, I figure that if you can make a little money while being at one with God’s own backyard then that’s not such a bad thing.

BILL We get by.

BUFF Right, so you have separate farms or you’re in business together?
BILL    *(In unison) Separate.    GEORGIE    Together.

BILL    We’re still in the process of working that out, Buff.

GEORGIE    I thought we’d settled it, Bill?

BUFF    That’s alright, my business proposition can work either way.

BILL    What business proposition?

BUFF    Now Georgie, I gather that you do all the local produce for Simpletown?

GEORGIE    Best fruit and veg this side of the river, Buff.

BUFF    And Bill, you’d be running cattle?

BILL    And pigs-

*Sound effect of a sheep.*

And sheep-

*Sound effect of a horse.*

And poultry-

*Sound effect of a pig.*

BUFF    *(Hearing the sound f/x)* You’re not into any other that genetic engineering, are you, Bill?

BILL    No.

BUFF    I shouldn’t start calling you Dolly?

GEORGIE    *(Laughing)* Dolly, that’s a good one, Beat. Buff.

BILL    Hey, don’t laugh at me.

BUFF    I wasn’t laughing at you, Bill, that was Georgie. But it must be awfully hard running all this meat and poultry when there’s no butcher in Simpletown.

BILL    I make do.
BUFF Yeah, but having to transport it down to the city markets three days a week, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, must take a lot out of you.

BILL You seem to know an awful lot about my business, Readyboy.

BUFF It’s my business to know, Bill, research is my middle name.

Enter WHITNEY, BRITNEY, HUNK & ROCK.

ROCK Who’s the suit, Mum?

HUNK Is he rich?

WHITNEY I think I’ve seen you on TV.

BRITNEY Are you a movie star?

BUFF No, I just look like one. (To HUNK) And I am rich, son, we can all be rich.

HUNK How?

BUFF Well, if your mother and your father decide to start selling all of their produce to My World.

BRITNEY You’re from My World? (To WHITNEY) They have malls.

WHITNEY Finally a place to hang out.

ROCK Oh, say you will, Mum, say you’ll sell everything to Mister Readyboy.

GEORGIE I’m thinking I might, Rock.

ROCK You do rock, Mum.

WHITNEY You will, won’t you, Dad? I wanna be a mallrat. (To BRITNEY) We could get tattoos.

BRITNEY And tongue studs.

WHITNEY & (To BILL) Pretty please.

BRITNEY
BILL I’m thinking on it, girls, I’m just wondering how much of myself I’ll have to sell. Now you head back to the house, it’s nearly dinner time.

GEORGIE You too, boys.

*The boys and girls begin to exit.*

BRITNEY Oh, he’s so hot.

WHITNEY A real TV star.

BRITNEY A real hot TV star.

HUNK Oh, he’s not that hot.

ROCK How can you be hot if you’ve got red hair?

BRITNEY Boys, boys, boys.

WHITNEY Why don’t you just grow up?

HUNK See you tomorrow?

BRITNEY Nah, we’ve got plans.

WHITNEY Like, maybe some other day.

BRITNEY & WHITNEY In your dreams.

*Exit WHITNEY, BRITNEY, HUNK & ROCK.*

BUFF It must be really hard leaving those girls alone on the farm while you go to the markets, Bill. But if you come to My World, the nights of long hauls in the truck are over.

BILL Don’t know, I’ve just heard a lot of stories about how My World puts farmers out of business.

BUFF Now where would that get either of us, Bill? My World needs your food, straight from the farm gate to the shelf. I'll be around for a few days, give it some thought, I hope to be hearing from you.

GEORGIE You saying in town long, Buff?

BILL He said a few days.
BUFF    Hold your horses there, Bill. *(To GEORGIE)* It might be a few days, it might be more. Hell, with the beautiful things I've seen in Simpletown, I might just wanna stay. Call me, Bill *(To GEORGIE)* and I'll call you.

*Exit BUFF.*

BILL    I can’t put my finger on it, Georgie, but I just don’t trust that man.

GEORGIE Oh, Bill Brady, you should take some advice from your daughters.

BILL    Huh?

GEORGIE    Grow up!

*Exit GEORGIE. After lingering for a moment, BILL also exits.*

**Digger’s Rest**

*Lights up.* DIGGER, SHERRY & SCHOONER BOY are behind the bar. Enter BUFF carrying an overnight bag.

DIGGER    Evening to you, matey, and welcome to Digger’s Rest, I’m Digger. This is my wife Sherry and our son, Schooner Boy.

SHERRY    Very nice to meet you, Mister-

BUFF     That’s what I love about country Aussie pubs, you always get a warm, friendly welcome.

DIGGER    And the coldest beer this side of the river.

SHERRY    Would you like a beer, Mister-

BUFF     That’d be right true blue of ya, Shezza.

DIGGER    Pour the man a schooner, boy.

BUFF     Oh, I thought was his name, what a joke.

SCHOONER It is my name, mister.

BUFF     And a top Aussie name it is too.

SHERRY    Can I tell from your bag that you want a room for the night?
BUFF: Spot on, Shez.

DIGGER: Take his bag upstairs, Schooner Boy.

SCHOONER BOY exits with the bag.

SHERRY: Here’s your beer, mister-

BUFF: Cheers, how much do I owe you?

DIGGER: First one’s always on the house at Digger’s Rest.

BUFF: God I love country people. Now just excuse me for a sec., I’ve got to make a quick call.

BUFF moves to one side with his beer to make a phone call.

DIGGER: Seems like a great bloke, eh Sherry?

SHERRY: (Dreamily) Young, successful businessman with buns of Beat. Why didn’t I get him in the mail?

BUFF: (On the phone) Yeah, g’day, Monica? Yeah, Buff Readyboy,

DIGGER: Buff Readyboy!

SHERRY: Stop listening to his conversation, Dig.

BUFF: Yeah, good. Listen, I need a favour, baby.

DIGGER: But he’s from bloody My World.

SHERRY: What about my world?

BUFF: I know I promised to call but I’m calling now. Here. Just give us sec, yeah?

BUFF moves out of earshot.

BUFF *hangs up and returns to the bar.*

DIGGER Did I hear you say that your name was Buff Readyboy?

BUFF Didn’t I mention it before, Digger?

DIGGER No you most certainly did not mention it before and if I had have known that you were Buff Readyboy from My World then I wouldn’t have served you in the first place! *(Calling off)* Schooner Boy!

BUFF Don’t blow a gasket, Digby-do, I’m just looking for a nice meal and place to put me swag for the night. I don’t see how my being from My World affects you.

DIGGER You don’t, eh?

*Enter Schooner Boy.*

Schooner Boy? Go and get Mister Readyboy’s bag, he’s leaving.

SCHOONER Oh, what a shame. How are we ever going to get on without you?

*Exit Schooner Boy.*

BUFF This is ridiculous, My World’s a supercentre not a pub.

DIGGER But you own Paddy O’Shea’s, who own more than half of all the bottle-os in Australia, right?

BUFF Yeah, it’s good business.

*Enter Schooner Boy with Buff’s bag.*

SCHOONER Here’s your bag, Mister Readybog.

SHERRY Schooner Boy, please take Mister Readybog’s bag back upstairs.

SCHOONER But you’re just my step-

SHERRY Up the steps now! You know who wears the pants around here.

*Exit Schooner Boy.*

BUFF And very well might I add.
DIGGER What are you doing, checking out my wife?

BUFF When you’re married to such a beautiful woman, Digger, you’ve got to expect her to receive the odd compliment.

SHERRY I get lots of odd compliments from him, *Beat*. Buff.

DIGGER Oh, I see what’s happening, divide and conquer.

SHERRY What!

*Enter SCHOONER BOY.*

DIGGER Go and get Mister Readyboy’s bags, Schooner Boy.

SCHOONER But-

DIGGER No buts, just do it.

*Exit SCHOONER BOY.*

I may be blind to some things but I can see the devil when I stand face to face and look him in the eye. As soon as *My World* opens there’ll be a bloody Paddy O’Shea’s popping up next door, lowering the price of a slab of beer to below cost all with the goal killing off the local competition. Just like you did with the petrol but you don’t see petrol prices coming down any more, do ya!

SHERRY Digger, lower your voice!

*Enter SCHOONER BOY with BUFF’S bag.*

Schooner Boy, take Mister Readyboy’s bag back upstairs.

SCHOONER Upstairs, downstairs, what am I, a bloody gerbil? *Beat*. Stuff this, I’m going out.

SHERRY But you’ve never been outside of the pub before. Where will you go and what will you do?

SCHOONER I’m going to see the world and all the sights of Simpletown. And while I’m out there, stepmother, I might just find me somebody to love.

*Queen’s ‘I Want to Break Free’ begins playing.*

No! I said somebody to love!
SHERRY    Schooner Boy, come back!

Queen’s ‘Somebody to Love’ plays as SCHOONER BOY exits with BUFF’S bag, closely followed by SHERRY. Fade music.

BUFF    Look, Digger, I know what you mean about petrol prices, but there’s a global fuel crisis out there, we don’t make the stuff, we just buy and sell it with a four cent a litre discount if you shop at My World. Anything else would be un-Australian.

DIGGER    You’re twisting everything I’m saying.

BUFF    I’m twisting it to make sense. And it’s the same with the price of grog, we like getting it to Aussie battlers at the best price. But don’t get me wrong, My World loves pubs; places of great social, sanctimonial and ceremonial functions-

DIGGER    I was just saying that to Schooner Boy. (Shouting) Where are you, Schooner Boy!

BUFF    And we want to keep places like Digger’s Rest open. Pubs like yours are part of the Australian identity, like the baggy green cap-

DIGGER    Yes!

BUFF    Like the outback explorers-

DIGGER    Yes!

BUFF    Like the Aussie digger!

DIGGER    Yes!

BUFF    Are you with me?

DIGGER    Yes!

BUFF    Can they hear you on the street?

DIGGER    Yes!

BUFF    That’s what I’m talking about! Now where’s my bag?

DIGGER    Schooner Boy took it!
BUFF That little lovable, Beat. mongrel. (Leaving) Memo to self, destroy this bloody pub.

Exit BUFF. Lights down. Exit DIGGER.

**Coffee Time**

*Lights up.* TERRY, TRICIA & TINA are standing together fretting the presence of PAISLEY & DOOBIE, who are sitting at a table.

TERRY Message to planet Earth, I am going to go absolutely sterile if someone doesn’t get those hippies out of Coffee Time.

TINA I just saw Buff Readyboy on his way over here and he looked like Action Man, GI Joe and Barbie all rolled into one.

TERRY And we’re stuck with a couple of psychedelic paddle pops ponging up the place just as our financial lifeline’s about to walk in the door.

TRICIA They look like two drag queens on the way home after a Mardi Gras recovery party. Tina, do your father a favour and serve those whiffy freaks.

TINA You can’t expect me to face the public this morning, Mother, when I’m just so obese.

TRICIA This is not about us losing your brother again is it, Tina Angst? How many times do we have to say sozzles?

TERRY Fine, if you want to get something done then you have to do it yourself. Once more unto the breach, once more.

TERRY approaches the hippies who are yawning.

Good morning, Terry Turnstile’s the name, what can I get you?

PAISLEY Oh look, it’s the waiter. Hey, Mister Waiter.

DOOBIE Man, I’m so hungry I could eat you.

TERRY Just lucky that I’m not on the menu. Though for the right price…

PAISLEY Doob, there’s nothing on the menu that I like.
TERRY If you hold it the right way up and possess the literacy skills of a five year old I’m sure you’ll be able to find something.

PAISLEY *(Chanting)* Om!

TERRY Oh my God, what the hell’s she doing?

DOOBIE She always retreats into her inner baby when somebody insults her, Dude. You feel like a big man insulting such a precious flower of nature?

TERRY I always feel like a big man.

PAISLEY *stops chanting.*

Now we have cappuccino, frappacino, skinny latte, fat latte, short black, long black, give the dog a bone-

DOOBIE I think we’ll have a pot of Jasmine tea, dude.

*Pause. Silence. Then all mayhem breaks loose.* PAISLEY begins chanting again.

TERRY Jesus, my beads, Tea? We don’t sell tea, he said the tea word. Somebody get me my nebuliser, I’m having breathing issues.

TRICIA He had tennis elbow and athlete’s foot last week and now you want tea!

TERRY Bring the defibrillator!

TINA I don’t know what your game is, Mister, but this is a coffee shop, K-O-F-Y coffee!

TRICIA I want you out of here, you, you, tea drinkers! And take your loose morals and your free love with you too!

PAISLEY Dude, you’re harshing my mellow, let’s blow.

DOOBIE Like the clouds upon the winds of Isis.

PAISLEY & DOOBIE *mime themselves as clouds as they exit.*

TINA Mother, did you say they’ve got free love; I want free love, where do I sign up?
TRICIA There’s no such thing as free love, pet, love is pain, love is heartache, love is six months in rehab-

TINA But it’s free, and it’s love. Where are those hippies?

Exit TINA, who passes BUFF entering on her way out.

BUFF Hi, I’m Buff Readyboy the My World and boy am I ready for some tea!

Pause. Then panic.

TERRY Of course, Mister Readyboy, sir, anything you want, sir.

TRICIA Would you like a seat by the window, sir? Can I give your pillows a pat?

TERRY We have Jasmine, Peppermint, Vanilla, Mango-

TRICIA English Breakfast, Irish Breakfast, Scottish Breakfast, Welsh Breakfast-

TERRY Black tea, green tea, white tea, purple tea-

BUFF (To audience) That’s what I’m talking about.

Lights fade to black as the list of teas continue, becoming progressively more stupid.

Main Street

Light up on NARRATOR.

NARRATOR So Buff Readyboy arrives and a day later he’s got the whole town eating out of the palm of his My World hand. But not everybody’s been won over by Buff Readyboy, there’s still one man, Bill Brady, who doesn’t quite like what he sees. Maybe he’s worried about the future of his farm or maybe he’s just worried about his future with Georgie. And hell hath no fury like a farmer scorned. Yet, so far Buff seems to be one step ahead of the game, like he’s writing the playbook before anyone knows he’s playing for keeps. I wonder what he’s got in store next?

Light down on NARRATOR. Lights up on Main Street. All of Simpletown, minus SCHOONER BOY, TINA, the hippies and the soothsayers are waiting for a big announcement.
JESSICA Quick, places please everyone. Buff Readyboy’s got a big announcement and he’s going to be here any moment.

PAT I hope he makes it snappy, it’s past our bed-time, the sun’s about to set.

AGNES And it won’t be long before the Stillnox kicks in.

JESSICA Shush up, you old crones, this is very important.

PORTIA Oh, Mumsy, it’s my birthday, since when has Buff been more important than my birthday?

JESSICA Silence, Portia, or you’ll be sent to your room to sit in the corner on the naughty chair.

PORTIA Your threats don’t scare me, Mother. I’m not a child any more. Now I’m eighteen, now I’m a woman.

SHYLOCK We’ll hold your party tomorrow, we’ll have matzo balls and prune juice.

JESSICA Portia, where are you going? I need you by my side.

PORTIA You’ve got Daddy, that’s enough, you don’t need me, all I am is some Jessica Belmont clone to you.

JESSICA How could you think such a thing, darling, there’s only one Jessica Belmont.

PORTIA Goodbye, Mother.

Exit PORTIA.

BILL I don’t know why I had to come to this announcement anyway, Georgie, it’ll just be more of that man’s hoo-hah.

GEORGIE Hooey to your hoo-hah, Bill Brady, this is about us.

BILL More like you and your fancy Buff Readyboy who seems to impress you so much.

GEORGIE Doesn’t anything impress you any more?

BILL I’m just not some sucker taken in by a fast talker from the city.
GEORGIE Are you calling me a sucker?

BILL You’re not alone, ever since Buff arrived in town, everyone’s been sucked in.

WHITNEY Oh, Britney, look he’s here. He’s even got his own helicopter.

BRITNEY He could fly me to the moon.

*Sound f/x of a ship’s foghorn.*

JESSICA Oh Bluey, you welcome him, I’m feeling a little flustered.

BLUEY Can do, Jessica. All right people, listen up. Now I know some of us didn’t know how to take him at first, but I reckon we’ve got a top mate here who’s going to really put Simpletown on the map. So without any further ado, here he is, Buff Readyboy.

*The theme from ‘Let’s Make a Deal’ plays. Streamers and poppers are set off by the cast as BUFF enters looking amazing in a flashy new suit. All the females are stunned and make ‘oh’ noises. Cut music.*

BUFF Thanks Bobby for your kind words and, folks, I’m glad that your world is going to become My World. But it doesn’t stop there, ‘cause, I’ve got one extra surprise for you to seal the deal and seal this wonderful community’s trust for good.

GEORGIE What is it, Buff?

RAYLENE Yeah, what is it?

BUFF You sure you want me to tell you?

*All, except BILL, start chanting ‘Tell Us!’*

Okay, people, my one last surprise, I know this town needs exposure to put it on the map like Bobby said. So I was speaking to my good friend Fox Faker at Channel Eight-

ALL Eight is great.

BUFF And he’s agreed to do his big new reality TV show from right here in Simpletown.

ALL Yay! What is it, Buff, what is it?
BUFF You ready?

ALL Yes!

BUFF It's called 'The Farmer Wants a Supermodel' and here's the star of the show, Monica Supré!

The theme for ‘America's Next Top Model’ plays as MONICA enters. All the males are stunned and make ‘oh’ noises.

MONICA (Indicating BILL) That the one?

BUFF That's the one.

make ‘oh’ noises.

BILL Holy mama! Where do I sign up?

Lights snap to black.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

Digger’s Rest

Night. Low level lights. Enter PORTIA, carrying a half-finished bottle of Mudshake. She drinks throughout the following.

PORTIA (Singing)  Happy birthday to me,
               Happy birthday to me,
               Happy birthday dear Portia,
               Happy birthday to me.
               For Digger’s a jolly good fellow,
               For leaving open the window.
               For Digger’s a jolly good fellow
               And I need to get some sleep.

She falls off the stage, rising quickly and holding up the bottle.

Oh these Mudshakes are tasty, just like a chocolate milkshake only Beat muddy. And I thought Digger’s Rest only served alcohol. Though this Mudshake is making me a little woozy. (Spotting the bins) Lucky they’ve got these little rooms here for sleepy time beddy byes. This has been the bestest birthday I never had. Nighty night, hope the bin bugs don’t bite.

PORTIA raises the bin lid and up pops SOOTHSAYER.

SOOTH The Soothsayer!

PORTIA screams.

You have disturbed The Soothsayer’s beauty sleep and screaming won’t do you any good-

Enter LITTLE SOOTH from other bin.

LITTLE Your beauty sleep won’t do you any good, either.

SOOTH Sometimes I just don’t know what to do with you, Little Sooth.

LITTLE No, you stick my head in a rubbish bin and make me play jack-in-the-box just to scare the cripes out of one stuck-up rich kid.

PORTIA Stuck up? Moi?
LITTLE  *(Mocking)* A Belmont always knows a Belmont, it's in the breeding.

PORTIA  I'm not in-bred!

LITTLE  I love making fun of people when they’re drunk.

SOOTH  Do you mind?

LITTLE  You can shave their eyebrows-

SOOTH  Be quiet!

LITTLE  And set their bums on fire.

SOOTH  *(Screaming)* Shut it!

LITTLE  Back in bin.

LITTLE  *exits into the bin.*

PORTIA  All this screaming’s giving me a headache. I need another Mudshake.

SOOTH  Oh no you don’t, desist with the alcopops!

PORTIA  Snap, crackle and pop! Mudshake!

SOOTH  A Mudshake is an alcopop, little one; it encourages binge drinking, the loss of brain cells and the inability to make rational decisions and think logically.

PORTIA  So it’s not true that if you mix vodka and carrot juice you can improve your eyesight while you’re getting blind?

SOOTH  That’s an urban myth, my child, and it will turn a night out into a nightmare. Don’t try it at home.

PORTIA  I’m not going home!

SOOTH  Then go to sleep, you will need it for when the sky closes in when you awake. And I will offer you a lullaby prophecy-

PORTIA  A prophecy?

SOOTH  A prophecy to send you to the land of nod.
PORTIA I like Noddy.

SOOTH Shh, time for dreams.

_Throughout the limerick, SOOTHSAYER helps PORTIA into the bin._

There once was a girl named Portia,
And nothing rhymes with Portia.
She slept in a bin,
A treasure dropped in,
And still nothing rhymes with Portia.

SOOTHSAYER _closes the lid on PORTIA and begins to wheel away the bin in which LITTLE sleeps._

Come on, Little Sooth, we need to find a new place of rest before Frogzilla comes. _Beat._ Bortia, Cortia, Dortia, Forceya? Pretty close…

_Exit SOOTHSAYER & LITTLE. Enter SCHOONER BOY, carrying BUFF’S bag._

SCHOONER This is so radical, I feel like a new born chick that’s just been plucked. And to think I’ve spent sixteen long years cooped up and now I can spread my wings and fly. Get yourself ready for me, world, ‘cause here I come, ready or not-

_Ed TINA. Their eyes meet, it’s love at first sight. SCHOONER BOY drops BUFF’S bag on the bin in which PORTIA sleeps._

TINA & Hello. _Beat._ Who are you? _Beat._ I’m-

SCHOONER Sorry, you go first.

TINA No you go first.

SCHOONER I’m Schooner Boy. And, wow, you’re so, like, beautiful.

TINA Don’t be silly, I must look like a heifer in this dress.

SCHOONER You’re the silly one, you’re so beautiful you could be on _Home & Away._

TINA I love that show, it’s, like, my life story.

SCHOONER I know what you mean, every episode just speaks to me.
TINA I’m Tina, Tina Angst. And I’m searching, searching for romance.

SCHOONER Did I tell you how beautiful you are, Tina?

TINA A girl could drown in your eyes and be happy just hearing you say that, Schooner Boy. I just want to wrap you up and make you my pressie at Christmas.

SCHOONER I’m all wrapped up and waiting for you to open me.

‘Girl’ begins playing. TINA & SCHOONER BOY sing and dance romantically.

SCHOONER Girl help me out, I can’t think of nothing but you.
TINA Boy help me out, I can’t think of nothing but you.

BOTH Do you think a heaven will be waiting
With something magical for all those who are dating?
A place where you are mine and I am yours,
Just like on the TV in Home & Away and Neighbours.

SCHOONER Girl hold me close, I can’t think of nothing but you.
TINA Boy hold me close, I can’t think of nothing but you.

BOTH There’s so much resistance standing in our way,
But this love grows in us day by day.
We’ll overcome the odds and pursue our fate,
Even though they think we’re gay and there’s nothing wrong with that.

BOTH I can read your mind and I know what you’re thinking.
Drown me in this love into which we’re slowly sinking.
It feels as though I’ve known you forever,
We are closer now than brothers and sisters.

SCHOONER Girl help me out, I can’t think of nothing but you.
TINA Boy help me out, I can’t think of nothing but you.

Music stops. Enter DIGGER, SHERRY, TERRY & TRICIA.

TERRY Heavens to Betsy, Tina Angst, we’ve been worried sick.

DIGGER Get away from that girl, Schooner Boy, and come over here.

SCHOONER But why?

SHERRY Don’t ask questions, just do as your father says.
TINA But Daddy, he’s my one true love.

TRICIA He’s your one true something, sweetheart. I’ve never seen him before but his face rings a bell.

TERRY You’re not suggesting?

DIGGER Schooner Boy?

SCHOONER No I won’t do it, I’m not letting go of Tina Angst. I love Tina Angst.

TINA At last, a superhero to whisk me away into the cold, dark night.

SHERRY How will you keep warm?

TINA We’ll snuggle up together like a sausage roll. Come on, Schooner Boy, let’s vamoose!

Exit TINA & SCHOONER BOY.

TRICIA Come on, Terry, I want to have a look at our family photos.

Exit TERRY & TRICIA. SHERRY sees BUFF’S bag.

SHERRY Look, Dig, isn’t this Buff Readyboy’s bag?

DIGGER Ah, good riddance to him, it’s him that’s to blame for all this mess.

DIGGER throws BUFF’S bag into the bin in which PORTIA is. Exit DIGGER & SHERRY. PORTIA jumps up out of the bin, holding the bag.

PORTIA Ow!

Enter DOOBIE & PAISLEY.

DOOBIE Hey dude, what are you doing in a bin?

PAISLEY Gross, man, aren’t you worried about germs?

PORTIA Ah, who cares about germs when nobody cares about your birthday?

DOOBIE It’s your birthday?

PAISLEY Hippy birthday.
PORTIA Hippy birthday? Are you from New Zealand?

DOOBIE No, dude.

PORTIA ‘Cause that would explain why you don’t have jobs.

PAISLEY Oh man, that’s just cultural stereotyping from the elite and nobody’s ever been higher than that kiwi Edward Hillbilly on Mount Everest.

PORTIA Edmund Hillary.

PAISLEY Him too.

DOOBIE We’re not citizens of any country, we’re citizens of the world, dude.

PAISLEY And who wants to work in a big box?

PORTIA My mother says that My World-

DOOBIE Your mother can’t even remember your birthday, dude.

PAISLEY Hippy birthday.

PORTIA But I don’t get it, what’s wrong with the big box?

DOOBIE Man, we’re being turned into hamsters. Get onto the consumerist treadmill in the morning and don’t stop until the end of the day.

PORTIA But don’t we do that anyway in Simpletown?

PAISLEY At least there’s a sense of community on Main Street.

DOOBIE And the environment. You step foot inside a big box and you could be in any city in the world, dude.

PAISLEY You can’t even see the river ‘cause there’s no windows.

DOOBIE No solar power.

PAISLEY No rainwater tanks.

DOOBIE No sustainability.

PAISLEY It’s just like this big, clunky, concrete monster that’s fallen from the skies and is now taking over.
PORTIA The Soothsayer said something about the sky falling in.

PAISLEY The Soothsayer?

DUDE & PAISLEY We’ll have what you’re having.

PORTIA But the big box is going to make everybody rich.

DOOBIE The only cats that get rich in a big box are the fat cats with claws, man.

PAISLEY What’s with the bag, have you run away from home?

DOOBIE To join the hippies?

PORTIA No, somebody threw it on my head.

DOOBIE Score.

PAISLEY What’s inside?

PORTIA opens up the bag and pulls out photos and documents.

PORTIA Just a bunch of photos and documents.

PAISLEY Cool, something to read. I like reading.

DOOBIE Hey, Portia, you wanna come with us, we’re gonna walk down to the river and let the ripples’ lullaby on the water slowly send us to sleep.

PORTIA Anything’s better than a wheely bin.

PAISLEY Cool. And Portia?

PORTIA Yes?

PAISLEY & DOOBIE Hippy birthday.

Exit PORTIA, PAISLEY & DOOBIE. Spotlight up on NARRATOR.

NARRATOR In an effort to avoid this play moving into a new time zone, the director-
The theme for ‘The Price Is Right’ plays. Note – The Word of the Night can be inserted at any time.

AUDIENCE ‘Director’! Word of the Night.

NARRATOR That’s right, you’ve got the Word of the Night and here to present your prize is Maddi!

Enter MADDI dressed in a frog costume carrying a bag of frogs. Cut music.

MADDI Hi, I’m Maddi, I’m the Stage Manager. Now who said the Word of the Night?

Enter SOOTHSAYER.

SOOTH Frogzilla! Beware the eyes of Frogzilla! Give me that talisman!

SOOTHSAYER snatches the bag of frogs from MADDI.

See, a bag of frogs! Look how quickly she breeds!

MADDI Oh, know you don’t, Soothsayer, this is my time. All you actors think it’s easy don’t you, la-de-da-ing about on stage when I’m back there in the darkness making sure you guys come on and off at the right time. I’ve stage managed for every Ribbit Up production and if there’s one thing I’ve got to say to you it’s Beat. don’t mess with the frog.

MADDI slaps SOOTHSAYER, who falls to the ground. She then throws out the bag of frogs to the audience winner.

Congratulations, enjoy the show, everyone.

Exit MADDI.

NARRATOR Hey, Soothsayer, you look kinda sexy down there.

SOOTH I beg your pardon; The Soothsayer has no time for sexiness. A Chicken Rendang, perhaps, but not the sexiness.

SOOTHSAYER gets up and brushes herself off.

NARRATOR But?

SOOTH No buts about it, big boy, The Soothsayer has frogs to catch!

Exit SOOTH.
NARRATOR But I love you! Oh, everybody else is going to get together at the end of this play, why do I always have to be left alone like a bride at the wedding altar? Sometimes it’s no fun being the narrator. (Snapping back) Anyway, the director, don’t yell it out again, and the cast have decided to skip the next twenty pages of the script because it just involved a bunch of construction workers with hard hats and fluoro yellow vests erecting My World and wolf-whistling-

Sound effect of a raspberry being blown.

-any time a person of the female persuasion walked by.

Enter two WORKERS.

WORKER 1 Oi! That sort of stuff doesn’t happen any more! Not since that Julia Gillard woman came in.

WORKER 2 And we’ve been professionally developed on gender equality and sexist behaviour in the workplace.

NARRATOR I was just saying that-

WORKER 1 And if you want to argue about it I’ll knock your bleeding block off.

Enter PAT & AGNES.

WORKER 2 Here, here come two women now; you won’t see us doing anything improper, no whistling or gestures.

PAT Have you thought about how you’re going to pose for the Country Women’s Association calendar this year, Agnes?

AGNES Well I thought a couple of carefully placed scones might do the trick.

PAT You’ll need more than two. I was thinking about wearing my old Girl Guides’ uniform.

AGNES But that hardly fits.

PAT Precisely. (To the workers) Hello boys.

Exit PAT & AGNES.

WORKER 1 Coor, that one on the left was kinda cute.
WORKER 2  And the one on the right was Beat. well spoken.

WORKERS  Down tools! Let’s go.

Exit WORKERS.

NARRATOR  So you see, we’re not missing much. It’s amazing how quickly they can build a big box these days. In fact, if I’m not very much mistaken, My World has just opened for business.

My World

Curtains pull aside to reveal the main stage area as My World. There are four cash registers down stage for the grocers, BOB & GAYLENE, the bakers, TOM & CHARLENE, the butchers/ fishmongers, JENNY & MARIA, and the newsagents, BLUEY & RAYLENE. BUFF is overseeing their work and checking the registers. The workers are now all wearing My World aprons. JESSICA, SHYLOCK, PAT & AGNES are doing some shopping.

TOM & CHARLENE  Everybody’s a winner here today at Baker’s Dozen. We’ve got buns, pies, scones and loaves just walking out the door.

PAT  Ooh, you might like to pick up those scones, Agnes.

JENNY & MARIA  Shish kebabs, sausages and sushi, super deals at sensational prices at Meat Works, buy one, get one free, these offers can’t last.

JESSICA  I see you veges are now selling meat. Leave the veges to losers.

BOB & GAYLENE  We’ve got carrots, tomatoes, potatoes, strawberries, blackberries, straight from the farm gate into your fridge at Fruits’R’Us.

AGNES  I used to like carrots, but now they make me burp.

BLUEY & RAYLENE  Don’t be fooled by cheap imitations, at paper, Scissors, Shop, we have the all new three-in-one stapler, hole punch and sticky tape as seen on TV. Have you got Fly-Buys?

SHYLOCK  death.

TOM & CHARLENE  This lamington is more than just your ordinary lamington, people, it’s a friend to comfort you in those dark, flabby moments when you’re weighing yourself on the scales.
PAT That’s not fair! A girl likes to look her best in her Girl Guides’ clobber.

JENNY & MARIA Don’t be the last one on your street to have steak for dinner, we’ve got scotch fillet, sirloin and sizzling steak, now with up to fifty months interest free.

JESSICA Do you have dog? I rather like dog.

BOB & GAYLENE You too can be the proud owner of this pineapple, it’ll turn a fruit salad into a four course meal and can be assembled in the privacy of your own kitchen.

AGNES There’s no privacy in the kitchen with the heffalump hoeing in.

BLUEY & RAYLENE Finding those unsightly tabloid newspapers harder to read? Well here’s a newspaper so advanced that it reads itself. One hundred percent money back guarantee if not completely satisfied.

SHYLOCK Then why don’t you give me the paper first; if I like it I’ll pay you the money.

TOM & CHARLENE We’ve got bargains coming out of our ears. You want a gingerbread man, we’ve got the only gingerbread man you’ll ever need, drive it away today.

PAT I used to love a ginger-haired man-

AGNES Gingerbread man, Pat.

PAT Yes he used to do that too.

JENNY & MARIA Step right up for swordfish, snapper, salmon, sardines, snook, skate and shark straight from the river and onto your plate.

JESSICA My, hasn’t your English improved at My World? Assimilation, that’s the key.

MARIA I’ll give you assimilation, you stuck-up woman!

BOB & GAYLENE Are you tired of small fruit?

SHYLOCK Just who are you calling small?
Then get yourselves a watermelon! Scientific studies show that they’re not only tasty but they remove dandruff and take years off your life.

I’m not in the old folks’ home yet, you whippersnapper!

Got your *New Idea, Woman’s Day* and *Who Weekly*, yet? Don’t be the last in your street to find out all the gossip behind the scenes of *The Farmer Wants a Supermodel*.

All here today at My World!

That’s what I’m talking about! Time for a rent increase. And if these losers can’t pay it, there’s plenty of others who can.

*Lights down. Exit all.*

*The Farm*

*Lights up on the front of stage.* **MONICA** is receiving a shoulder massage from **BILL**, while **ROCK & HUNK** serve drinks (*mimed*). **GEORGIE, WHITNEY & BRITNEY** look on, unimpressed.

It sure livens up the place to have a good looking woman around, Monica.

It’s what I do, Bob-

Bill.

I bring beauty into people’s lives. A little more to the left, please.

Here’s your lemonade, Miss Supré.

Are these lemons freshly squeezed?

Mum wouldn’t give us any.

Well ask again; no lemons, no play.

Oh Mum, be a sport, give us some lemons.

You two don’t have time for sport and the lemons have to be packed away for their delivery to My World. You know what Buff said, if we don’t start increasing our output then he’s going to have to pay us less or
worse still, find another supplier for the produce. And he said the same thing to you too, Bill.

MONICA Oh, don’t worry about Buff, Ben-

BILL Bill.

MONICA Buff will never do anything to you while I’m around, I’m his good luck charm and, thanks to me, The Farmer Wants a Supermodel is number one in the ratings.

BILL Yeah, I know, but where are all the cameras and crew?

MONICA Oh, you can’t see them, but they’re there. I’m always on film, my face was just born for the camera, it’s like the trees and the sun; natural.

GEORGIE The only natural thing about you is your-

MONICA But the sun can do terrible things to a woman’s complexion if she’s out in it all day, it can make you look so much Beat. older.

HUNK Just a couple of lemons, eh Mum?

MONICA Now did you finish making that outdoor spa like you promised you would, Brett?

BILL Bill, Monica. And yes, it’s just filling up now.

MONICA I need a good soak and some shampoo for my hair.

BILL I can drive up to My World for you, if you like.

MONICA I don’t want you to leave, honeybuns, surely those scraggly daughters of yours have some homebrand shampoo.

WHITNEY We don’t use homebrand shampoo!

BILL Girls? Go and get some shampoo for Miss Supré.

BRITNEY Oh Dad, she can’t use our shampoos, some things are personal.

BILL Nothing’s personal on a farm, Britney. Now go and get your shampoo.

BRITNEY exits to get the shampoo.
(Looking at GEORGIE) How does that feel, Miss Supré?

GEORGIE follows BRITNEY and exits.

MONICA A little more to the right.

WHITNEY I can’t wait to jump in the spa! We can play Marco Polo and have splash fights.

ROCK Splash fights? They’re for babies.

WHITNEY But Hunk, you always used to like splash fights.

HUNK Yeah, when I was a kid, I’m a man now.

ROCK Yeah, so why don’t you grow up?

WHITNEY I am grown up.

BRITNEY returns with the shampoo and hands it to MONICA.

BRITNEY Here's the shampoo, Miss Supré.

MONICA Johnson’s Baby Shampoo?

ROCK & HUNK (Laughing) ‘No More Tears’.

WHITNEY Give me that!

ROCK Coochie-coochie-coo.

HUNK Who’s a cute little girl?

BRITNEY Lay off her!

Enter GEORGIE.

GEORGIE Oi, what’s going on over there?

WHITNEY We used to think your boys were just the best. Now I, I, I hate you, Hunk McCune!

BRITNEY That goes double for me, Rock!

GEORGIE Oh girls, come to Georgie, I’ll look after you.
HUNK    Georgie-porgy, pudding and pie.
ROCK    Kissed the girls and made them cry.
GEORGIE Boys!

*The boys immediately snap to. Pause. GEORGIE hugs the girls as they have a good cry. They exit.*

ROCK    Hmm, women.
MONICA I beg your pardon, Rock?
ROCK    Oh, not you miss, you’re woman.
MONICA Now, how about that spa, Brad?
BILL    It’s Bill.
HUNK    Can we jump in too?
BILL    You know what they say, boys, two’s company and-
MONICA And four’s twice as much fun!
ROCK & HUNK Yay!

ROCK, HUNK & MONICA push past BILL and exit. BILL begins clearing away the drinks as the sound of water splashing and the others having fun can be heard. BILL looks longingly in the direction of GEORGIE’S farm and then exits in the direction of the spa.

**The Mayor’s Office**

Lights up. JESSICA is chilling a bottle of champagne. Enter BUFF.

JESSICA Ah, there you are, Buff. Champagne?
BUFF    Yes, I believe some celebrations are in order. I couldn’t have destroyed this community so quickly if it hadn’t have been for your help with those documents, photographs and research.
JESSICA Research is my middle name, Buff, and it’s devilishly easy to get hold of people’s financial statements when your husband is the manager of the community bank.

BUFF But I just don’t get one thing.

JESSICA And what’s that?

BUFF What made you do it? You’ve lost a daughter in all of this.

JESSICA Portia? I don’t care about her. She was once bitten by my pet Pit-bull and I didn’t know which one to put down.

BUFF But you made the right choice.

JESSICA Oh yes, but how Portia survived those needles I’ll never know. She’s a true Belmont. But you and I, Buff, we’re like peas in a pod. I saw an opportunity in you and I went for it. And now it’s time to collect on my reward.

BUFF What did you have in mind?

JESSICA Oh, a little bit of this and a little bit of Beat. this.

JESSICA pulls BUFF towards her as SHYLOCK enters.

SHYLOCK Honey, do know how to use these cameras, they’ve gone all digital these days and I just can’t seem to get mine to work.

A flash goes off, SHYLOCK has taken a photo of BUFF & JESSICA embracing.

Oi-vey, what’s going on?

JESSICA I can explain everything, I can.

SHYLOCK I would very much like an explanation Beat. as to the pixilation in this photo. If I didn’t know better I would have thought you two were kissing.

JESSICA No, we were just leaning over this desk to sign some last minute papers.

SHYLOCK I’ve been pushing this button for fifteen minutes and all of sudden it goes off.

BUFF Let me have a look.
BUFF approaches SHYLOCK just as the flash goes off again, this time blinding him.

SHYLOCK There it goes again. (To the camera) Now you make up your mind you want to work. Give me a Polaroid, already.

JESSICA Give me the camera.

JESSICA approaches SHYLOCK just as the flash goes off again, this time blinding her. During the following, SHYLOCK keeps using the flash on the camera where appropriate.

SHYLOCK Third time’s the trick. Jessica, you may think you’re some smart cookie and I’m a schmuck, but what I have in my hand here now is not a camera but an insurance policy.

JESSICA For what?

SHYLOCK For insurance, that’s what an insurance policy does, it insures; what a schlemiel. You have soiled our marriage, Jessica, and it hurts. I loved you once, but I’m a man, flesh and blood. If you tickle me do I not laugh, if you prick me do I not bleed?

BUFF Ah, forget him, Jessica, I want you and I want you bad.

BUFF wraps his arms around SHYLOCK.

Oh, Jess, you’re a whole lot of woman. Pucker up for Buffy.

SHYLOCK looks at the audience-

SHYLOCK Hubba, hubba!

-and sets the flash off again. Lights snap to black.

Narrator

Darkness. Enter NARRATOR.

NARRATOR Hello? Who turned the lights off? I don’t like this, we’re only three quarters of the way through the story and the plug’s been pulled. How’s the show supposed to-

A light comes on.
Oh, there’s a light. *(Stepping into the light and coughing)* Yes well, I can understand why that scene was cut short. I mean, I’m all for a bit of love and smoochy-woochie, but Jessica and Shylock are a married couple and I don’t like the idea of illicit love. This play needs to lift the tone.

*Light out on NARRATOR, lights up on front stage. Enter Schooner Boy, Tina, Tricia, Terry, Digger & Sherry.*

**Digger** There you are you rotten mongrel!

**Terry** Tina Angst, you’ll be the death of me. Of all the boys in the world to pick, why did you have to pick him?

**Tina** But I’ve never met anyone like him, Father.

**Schooner** And I’ve never met anybody like her.

**Sherry** You’ve never met anyone.

**Tina** We’re so alike.

**Schooner** We’ve got so much in common.

**Tricia** More than you think.

**Tina** I’m not following you, Mother.

**Tricia** Listen, pet, I’m not saying don’t date boys-

**Terry** Your mother and I have been as happy as a fat boy with a packet of crisps.

**Tricia** I’m just saying don’t date this one. It’s too close to home.

**Schooner** But we’re in love.

**Tina** And home is where the heart is.

**Terry** Tina Angst, I expressly forbid it.

*Enter Agnes & Pat.*

**Agnes** Oh, you’ll forbid nothing, you coffee-making klutz.
PAT It's only when you say a person can't do something that they really want to do the thing you say they can't do.

DIGGER & SHERRY Huh?

AGNES You're only pushing 'em together by trying to tear them apart.

PAT You see-

AGNES It's like 'Romeo & Juliet'-

PAT The greatest love story ever told.

AGNES Boy meets girl.

PAT Girl meets boy.

AGNES Boy and girl fall in love.

PAT But their parents don't allow it.

AGNES So then there's poison and knives and other unsavoury things and, to cut a long story short, they both end up dead.

PAT Because they couldn't live without each other.

SCHOONER Oh that's so romantic. I couldn't live without you, Tina. Would you stop living if you couldn't have me?

TINA No.

SCHOONER Tina!

TINA Romeo and Juliet were stupid.

SHERRY Are you suggesting that we let our Schooner Boy go out with just any white trash?

PAT No Sherry, I think what we're really trying to say is that all that's important in this world is-

PAT & AGNES Love.
TRICIA Love, you say. Fine if that’s the way you want the cookie to crumble. Tina Angst? Say hello to Twist Turnstile, your long lost brother.

A chorus of ‘ohs’.

TERRY And I think it’s time you both came home; you can fight over the bunks when you get there.

SCHOONER This can’t be!

TINA Don’t cry, Schooner Boy.

*The theme from ‘Home & Away’ starts playing.*

SCHOONER I hate the name Twist.

TINA You’ll always be Schooner Boy to me.

SCHOONER And you’ll always be Tina Angst to me.

TINA But that’s my name.

SCHOONER I know.

DIGGER Bye, Schooner, Twist, you’ll always be like the son I never had.

SCHOONER But you never had me.

SHERRY That’s his point.

SCHOONER BOY & TINA sing the chorus of ‘Home & Away’ as all exit. Lights down.

*My World*

Curtains pull aside to reveal the main stage area again as My World. BOB, GAYLENE, TOM, CHARLENE, JENNY, MARIA, BLUEY & RAYLENE are in a wild panic. They are now dressed entirely in black bodysuits with black stockings over their faces revealing only their mouths. BUFF is manipulating them as a puppeteer. JESSICA, SHYLOCK, PAT & AGNES are doing some shopping, but now as automatons/ machines.
TOM &    That’s it folks, it’s the sale you’ve been waiting for, our once a year
GAYLENE half yearly clearance sale. We’re under strict instructions to move all
jam tarts, cream pies, fudge slices you can fill your gobs with, buy one get
one free.

BOB &    Shoppers don’t delay, it’s our end of financial year clearance sale,
CHARLENE all fruit and vege must go, we’ve got paw-paw, passion fruit, parsley
and pumpkins at never to be repeated prices at up to fifty percent of the
already reduced marked price.

JENNY &    Our Red Spot special sale prices are on all day now for pork loin,
MARIA beef loin, lamb loin, duck loin, fish loin. If it’s got a loin, we’re
sticking a Red Spot on it. You don’t have to worry how much money we’re
losing, you just have to buy, buy, buy, buy!

BLUEY &    It’s a fire sale people, or it will be if we don’t start making money.
RAYLENE We’ve got Powerball, Lotto, Ozlotto, scratchies. Forget about the
other stuff, who needs to read anyway and keep up with the world? As
long as you’ve got a debit card we can make it right for you.

ALL    It’s our once in lifetime, going out of business moving sale,
everything must go, our shirts, our socks, our shoes, our shorts, our souls.

_They remove the stockings from their faces._

Our souls?

BUFF    Now that’s what I’m talking about!

_Weights to black._

_The Farm_

_Weights up. The sound of children playing in a spa can be heard. BILL, WHITNEY,
BRITNEY & GEORGIE are stacking crates of produce, getting them ready for
shipment. Enter BUFF._

BUFF    Miss McCune, a word, please.

GEORGIE    Not Georgie any more?

BUFF    We’re long past that, Miss McCune, ever since those slacker boys
of yours stopped working, your produce has been half as much and half
as good.
GEORGIE  It’s your fault, you put Monica Supré in front of their noses. She’s taken to them like a hot pig in cold mud.

BUFF    Ah yeah, Monica, now where is Monica?

BILL    She’s out in the spa I had to make for her.

BUFF    You sucker, go and get her.

GEORGIE  That makes two of us, suck-face.

BILL & BUFF I beg your pardon?

BUFF    Go and get her, Brady.

WHITNEY We’ll go, Dad.

Exit WHITNEY & BRITNEY.

BUFF    Now, Miss McCune, we have to talk business. You see, My World is not making enough money out of your world’s produce-

GEORGIE  You’re not making money? I’ve been supplying you for two months and I still haven’t been paid.

BILL    Me neither.

BUFF    Did you pay the rebate?

GEORGIE  What rebate? Isn’t that something we get back?

BUFF    You get nothing back from My World and if you’d taken the time to read your contracts that you have to pay a rebate, a fee, to be paid on time.

BILL    What?

GEORGIE  We have to pay you so we can be paid on time?

BUFF    It’s not rocket science. So if you’d care to pay the rebate now, I can organise a cheque.

BILL    We don’t have any money, you haven’t paid us.

BUFF    Well I guess you’ll just have to wait.
Enter MONICA, WHITNEY, BRITNEY, BUFF & HUNK.

MONICA Buff, what a surprise. Look, I've been working on my tan.

BUFF Looking good, Monica.

MONICA And I want to say thank you for setting me up with such a nice farmer; he's big and strong and a real man.

BILL Hey, you're getting me wet.

MONICA I thought you liked getting wet.

BUFF Listen Monica, pack your things, we're out of here.

MONICA But what about the big finale for the show?

BUFF What show?

MONICA *The Farmer Wants a Supermodel*.

BUFF Oh yeah, that show. We've got everything we need, the footage is in the can.

MONICA And that's the best place for footage. Do you think I'll win a Logie?

BUFF Look the cameras are off. Cut the crap and go and get your things.

MONICA Thank God for that, any longer and I was going to go out of mind with boredom. These people are such hicks.

HUNK I thought you liked us, Monica?

MONICA I do like you, but face facts, you're just a bit rural.

ROCK Didn't we have fun?

MONICA Fun? You call having to breathe your farts in a spa bath all day 'fun'? I'll back in an instant.

Exit MONICA.

BILL Does she really believe that someone's been filming *The Farmer Wants a Supermodel* all this time?
BUFF Yeah, she does. But we had you going for a while too there, didn’t we?

BILL I’ve learnt something from you, Buff. I’m going to think with my brain from now on.

BUFF Glad to be of help. Now, while I’ve got the two of you together, some bad news. Unfortunately due to your lower output over these past two months we’ve had to go and outsource.

GEORGIE Huh?

BUFF Find other suppliers for meat and vege. So what I’m saying is that My World doesn’t require any more of your food.

GEORGIE But we’ve got it all loaded up there. What do you suggest we so with it?

BUFF I don’t know, eat it?

Enter MONICA.

MONICA Got everything, ready to go. You know, Brad, this has been such a great experience, I’ll never forget the moments we’ve shared. I just hope you don’t embarrass me with your ugliness on camera. But they can do wonders these days, Ben, they might even be able to airbrush you out and put some hunk in.

HUNK Yes please!

BILL You know my father told me never to be rude to a lady, but Monica, you’re a bitch!

MONICA How dare you.

GEORGIE And his name’s Bill.

BUFF Just a sec-

GEORGIE And you’re no better, Readyboy, you’re a male bitch-

WHITNEY & A Mitch.

BRITNEY
BUFF  *Beat.* Well, glad you got that off your chests. And, uh, good luck finding another buyer, maybe you might be able to sell to what's left of that ghost town.

MONICA  Come on, Buff, I want out of Loserville.

MONICA *puts her arm around Buff.*

BUFF  Hey Brady, did your father also tell you that the good guy always gets the girl in the end?

Exit MONICA & BUFF.

BILL  Well I guess that's it. The days of making a living on the land are over.

BRITNEY  You're not going to give up that easily are you, Dad?

BILL  I don't see that we've got any choice, Britney, we'll all have to get real jobs.

WHITNEY  There's plenty of jobs at My World.

ROCK  Stuff that, I'm gonna sign up for the dole.

BILL  You might have to think about that too, girls.

BRITNEY  You're not going to give up that easily are you, Dad?

WHITNEY  I don't wanna be a dole-mole.

HUNK  Yeah, she's no moll, Mister Brady.

WHITNEY  Thanks, Hunk.

BILL  Monica was right; we let that Buff Readyboy into Simpletown and he turned it into Loserville.

ROCK  I'm no loser, I like being simple.

BRITNEY  You're not going to give up that easily are you, Dad?

GEORGIE  No-one's giving up that easily, Britney, and if you say that one more time I'm going to have to call into question the textual integrity of this play.

BILL  What did you have in mind?
GEORGIE Perhaps forwarding the plot a little to see if we can all get out of here before McDonald’s shuts.

Light up on NARRATOR.

NARRATOR But isn’t that a global multinational corporation that’s taken the place of the humble local hamburger joint?

ALL Shut up!

NARRATOR Well if you’re talking textual integrity here. Excuse me.

Light down on NARRATOR.

BILL So what did you have in mind?

GEORGIE It’s time to see if we can’t talk some sense into those other fools that were caught under Buff’s spell.

BILL So what did you have- 

GEORGIE Just try it, I dare you, say it again and if you dare say it again then I’m not going to tell you how much I love you!

BILL You love me?

GEORGIE Maybe, but I’m going lose that feeling very fast if you keep talking about losing and trying to sign your kids up for the dole. It’s time for action, Bill Brady, and I want a man of action.

BILL Well I’m putting my hand up for the job, Georgie, and I know one fellow here who’s a bit of a nerd who could sure use a hug.

GEORGIE When you’ve actually done something, Bill. Actions speak louder than nerds.

GEORGIE & BILL freeze with pained expressions on their faces. The following voice-over begins.

V/O Attention. Ribbit Up Productions would like to formally apologise for the high content of cheese in that last joke. At the time we thought it was rather gouda, but now we camembert it. Beat. Enjoy the rest of the show.

BILL Come on kids, we’re going to My World.
Lights to black.

My World

Lights up on main stage. BLUEY, RAYLENE, TOM, CHARLENE, BOB, GAYLENE, JENNY & MARIA are in a huddle talking. They are wearing their original clothing with the My World aprons. Enter BUFF & MONICA.

MONICA Oh look, Buff, are those the little people you were telling me about?
BUFF That’s them.
MONICA I like little people, they make me feel over developed.
BLUEY Excuse me, Mister Readyboy, but I wonder if you’ve got a moment?
BUFF What’s this, the dying man’s last words?
RAYLENE What do you mean by that?
BUFF I mean, Gaylene-
CHARLENE Buff, her name’s Raylene, Buff.
BUFF Raylene, Gaylene, Charlene, Delvene-
GAYLENE Ooh, Delvene, I like that-
CHARLENE Maybe if any of us has a child we can call them Delvene, maybe?
GAYLENE Not for a boy, though?
CHARLENE You don’t think?
RAYLENE (Loudly) I had a child once, a beautiful boy with hair so golden he looked like a crumpet. Why are you all looking at me like that?
MARIA Maybe it’s because of that story about the jumping castle.
RAYLENE What did she say?
JENNY She said what kind of a mutter are you, letting a two year old run away at a springen schloss?
RAYLENE You’re not a very nice little Spanish person, are you?
MARIA Maybe it’s because of all the meat I’ve been eating, I’ve got high blood pressure.

JENNY (Approaching BUFF) And right now, I’m going to stick this cleaver up your boden!

MARIA What the hell is this boden?

BUFF Hey, this is business, lady, and if you touch me I’ll sue you!

JENNY When I’m finished with you, you’ll be a boy named Sue!

BLUEY There’s no need for violence, Jenny.

BUFF What did they do, mix up all your DNA at birth and spit you out as simpletons?

CHARLENE Don’t you mean Simpletown, don’t you?

BOB Oi, Readyboy-

MONICA Ooh, he can rhyme.

BOB I don’t like the way you’re talking to Charlene.

TOM Wasn’t that supposed to be my line? Did I miss a meeting?

BOB I’ve always liked the way you’ve folded your dough, Charlene.

CHARLENE And I like the way you arrange your fruit.

TOM What’s going on?

GAYLENE Maybe you need some of my vitamins, Tommo.

TOM Gaylene, you can have my cake and eat it too.

TOM, BOB, CHARLENE, GAYLENE

MONICA Oh, look everybody, it’s Wife Swap Australia! Now everybody’s happy.
BLUEY Not everybody, Miss Supré. That boyfriend of yours has given us such a short shelf-life here at My World that we’ve already passed our use-by-date.

BUFF You’re just a My World off-cut, Bluey, we’re throwing you away with the scraps.

BLUEY That’s all we’ve ever been to you, isn’t it? You made us discount our specials to below cost so we couldn’t make any money.

BUFF You’ve got to get people in the door, Bluey. They’re called loss leaders; you lose, we’re the leaders.

BLUEY And now we hear you’re going to open a supermarket in My World that’s going to have even lower prices than us.

BUFF That’s the waterbed effect; our prices go down, our competitors’ blow up.

RAYLENE How can that be fair?

BLUEY It’s not fair, sweetheart. This is Australia, all of our iconic values like living off the sheep’s back, helping out your mates and thumbs up to the Aussie battler are only just that. They don’t mean anything any more. You can’t have a simple town when the road train named Progress comes through.

BUFF Don’t make it out to be so romantic, it wasn’t progress you were standing in the way of, it was business. The only thing that matters these days is what happens to our share price. And our share price is good.

BLUEY Bugger your share price. I reckon guys that if we all pull together-

BLUEY & Newsagent!

RAYLENE

JENNY & Butcher!

MORIA

TOM, Baker!

BOB, CHARLENE, GAYLENE

TOM Alright, you two can have the bakery.
BOB & Baker!
CHARLENE

TOM & Grocer!
GAYLENE

BLUEY And with our shops combined we can open up our own super-duper market and put My World’s out of business.

‘My World’ plays. Led by BLUEY, the shopkeepers sing.

You think nothing in this world would ever get us down
Tending to our shops and working on our farms
A simple town a million miles from harm
You hope our luck won’t stop…or slow us down

Then along comes Buff and brings us to our knees yeah yeah

But My World, you’re going down
There ain’t enough room in our simple town
My World, you’re going down
You better get out before we smack you down

Our families have toiled for a hundred years
Generations living through the sweat and tears
We’re all for one and one for all
And now you think we’re gonna stop…and take the fall

Then along came Buff, but now we’re off our knees, yeah yeah

My World, you’re going down
There ain’t enough room in our simple town
My World, you’re going down
You better get out before we smack you down

Stop music. Enter JESSICA & SHYLOCK.

JESSICA And where do you propose to do that, Mister Davidson?

BLUEY We’re going to open up right here, in My World, Mayor.

JESSICA I think not. You see, when we allowed My World to open here, including its new supermarket, there was a restrictive clause in the contract that expressly forbids any other supermarket opening within two kilometres of My World.
BLUEY So you’re saying we can’t open in the My World mall?

BUFF Not within two kilometres of the building which just leaves you Beat.
the ghost town.

JESSICA & Simpletown.

MONICA

JESSICA Shush up, airhead, I think I can speak for myself.

RAYLENE What are you talking about, Mayor Belmont, aren’t you on our side?

JESSICA Mayor? I’m not your mayor any more. I’ve resigned to join the
board of directors of My World Australia.

SHYLOCK This is the first time I’ve heard of this.

JESSICA You’re out of the loop, Shylock.

SHYLOCK But what about ‘family first’?

JESSICA That was just a slogan, from now on it’s me first, family last.

Enter GEORGIE, HUNK, ROCK, BILL, WHITNEY & BRITNEY.

BILL Not where we come from, Belmont.

JESSICA Oh look, it’s the yokels.

GEORGIE And we found these three squatting down on the farm.

Enter PAISLEY, DOOBIE & PORTIA, who’s now dressed as a hippie.

JESSICA Really Buff, I thought we had security guards to keep this hippie
garbage out of My World.

DOOBIE Your negative energy is indicating major stress levels.

PAISLEY Chill and out chant with me, sister. Om…

JESSICA begins spraying them with deodorant.

JESSICA Get this unwashed filth away from me and, look, there’s now three
of them. Who taught them how to breed?

PORTIA You did, Mother.
JESSICA Portia? Is that you?

PORTIA A Belmont always knows a Belmont, but now you can call me Summer Breeze.

‘Summer Breeze’ by Seals & Croft starts playing.

DOOBIE (Singing) Summer breeze makes me feel fine.
PAISLEY & Blowing through the jasmine in my mind.
PORTIA

Cut music.

JESSICA You dumb, useless, trash.

PORTIA (Producing BUFF’S bag) And it’s amazing what you find in the trash, Mother.

JESSICA What’s that?

BUFF That’s my bag!

GEORGIE With financial documents, leases and personal photos of every member of Simpletown.

BUFF Give it to me!

BLUEY Just a second, Buff, I don’t want to have to hurt you.

RAYLENE Oh, why not?

SHYLOCK I’m sure ASIC would like to peruse those documents.

CHARLENE ASIC, who’s ASIC?

SHYLOCK The Australian Securities and Investment Commission, and if you’ve been doing illegal surveillance on all these good people before you went into business with them then you’re going to have to answer some questions as to your anti-competitive practises.

BUFF So what, big business does it all the time.

BLUEY But big business doesn’t get caught, Buff, and from where we stand, matey, you’re just a small fry.
SHYLOCK And when word of this gets out to the Stock Exchange in these times of global financial crisis, My World’s share price will drop so fast that you’ll be out of business forever.

MONICA That’s okay, isn’t it, Buff? At least we’ll still have The Farmer Wants a Supermodel.

BUFF Oh there never was a Farmer Wants a Supermodel you big, dopey cow.

SHYLOCK Oi, that’s no way to talk to a lady, Readyboy!

SHYLOCK punches BUFF. Nothing happens until the sound effect of a punch can be heard a second or two after the action. BUFF falls down in a heap. Rising, BUFF pulls a gun.

BUFF That bag is my personal property and I think I’ll have it now. (To PORTIA) Bring it, hippie!

PORTIA hands BUFF the bag.

Nice try, losers, but it’d take a lot more than you to stop me and even if you did, there’s a million more Buff Readyboys out there waiting to take my place and they won’t stop until Earth is just one big My World mall.

JESSICA Yes! My prince on a shiny white horse. Take me away, Buff.

BUFF You’d think I’d leave my princess behind?

BUFF & JESSICA embrace. SHYLOCK holds up a photo.

But I must leave you behind for the time being.

SHYLOCK For insurance.

BUFF For insurance. But I’ll be back for you. I promise, I swear, I guarantee it. Beat. (To the others) And don’t forget, redheads are hot.

He growls at JESSICA, who growls back. Exit BUFF.

BILL Well we gave it our best shot.

RAYLENE Is there nothing else we can do?

CHARLENE He’s got the bag, Raylene, he’s got all the evidence.
PAISLEY Oh, like, wow, I think he took the wrong bag.

JESSICA What?

PORTIA I switched the bags, Mother, all Buff has is a bag full of blank paper.

DOOBIE (Producing the BUFF’S bag) This is the real bag, dude.

JESSICA You mean?

PORTIA I mean that first thing tomorrow we fly down to ASIC and the Stock Exchange and put My World out of business.

JESSICA But our shares! Shylock, we’ll be ruined.

SHYLOCK Your shares, Jessica, only your shares were in My World. I’ve invested my money in Channel Eight.

MONICA Eight is great! You mean, you’ve got money in television?

SHYLOCK Just enough to be able to wield a little power.

MONICA Enough to put on *The Farmer Wants a Supermodel*?

SHYLOCK But there never was-

MONICA hugs SHYLOCK.

MONICA Shut up you gorgeous little man.

SHYLOCK Hubba Hubba!

*Exit* SHYLOCK & MONICA. *Enter* DIGGER, SHERRY, SCHOONER BOY, TERRY, TRICIA & TINA.

SCHOONER I can’t stand it any more, being in the same house, the same room, as Tina is just too much.

TINA I’m having dreams of Schooner Boy and I living in a lavender coloured town house-

SCHOONER With suede wallpaper-

TINA & And leopard skin carpets wall to wall.

SCHOONER
TERRY  It’s official, I’m hysterical!
TRICIA  It’s for your own good, pettles.
DIGGER  You can’t come home, Schooner Boy.
SHERRY  As much as we’d love to have you.
RAYLENE  (To SCHOONER BOY) Bluey Junior?
ALL    Huh?
RAYLENE  I never thought after the jumping castle that I’d see those dimples again. And look, you’ve even grown some bum fluff.
SCHOONER Mummy?
RAYLENE  I’ve been incomplete for so many years, Bluey Junior. And I don’t know if anybody in the audience has noticed that I’ve only been able to ask questions throughout this play, now I have my answer. Come to Mummy.
BLUEY  And to Daddy.
SCHOONER Does this mean Tina and I can be united as one?
RAYLENE  Forever and ever.
TINA  What joy! Come and get me, spunkrat.
TINA & SCHOONER BOY *embrace.*
BILL  Georgie McCune? I want a word from you.
GEORGIE  And what word would that be, Bill?
BILL  Yes.
GEORGIE  What?
BILL  Not what, yes.
GEORGIE  I don’t get it.
BILL  Georgie, will you marry me?
Pause.

GEORGIE Yes.

BILL Hot damn!

BILL & GEORGIE hug, then hold hands.

GEORGIE Buff was wrong; it’s the good girl that always gets the guy in the end.

BRITNEY Hold on a second.

WHITNEY You two can’t get married.

BILL & GEORGIE Why not?

HUNK Because we like the girls and they like us and, you know, it’d be like kissing your sister.

ROCK Who cares? I’m into that.

BRITNEY (To ROCK) Oh, you rock my world!

WHITNEY (To HUNK) And you’re my hunk-a-hunk of burning love.

Exit WHITNEY, BRITNEY, ROCK & HUNK.

GEORGIE They’re good kids, Bill Brady.

BILL And if we have a couple more we won’t be-

BILL & GEORGIE Two Bradys short of a bunch!

*The theme from ‘The Brady Bunch’ starts playing. Exit BILL & GEORGIE.*

JESSICA Excuse me!

*The music stops.*

While we’re playing happy families. Portia?

PAISLEY Summer Breeze, dude.
JESSICA  Summer, sweetie, cookie, honey-

Enter PAT & AGNES, wheeling in the bins.

PORTIA  Granny Pat, Granny Agnes? Would you take out the trash, please?

JESSICA  I don’t think so.

PAT  It’d be a pleasure. Oi, Agnes? Something smells funny.

AGNES  (To JESSICA) Have you been bathing in your own effluent again?

JESSICA  How dare you!

JENNY  (Producing the cleaver) It’s either the garbage or your boden!

AGNES  Maria? You haven’t said a lot Beat. in English. Would you do the honours?

MARIA  It would be my pleasure. Hasta la vista, baby.

MARIA  whips off her red apron and starts shaking it between the bin and JESSICA matador-style. The others form a passageway, shaking their red aprons, to push JESSICA through. Just as JESSICA is about to reach the bins, PAT & ROSIE open it and NARRATOR & SOOTHSAYER pop out.

NARRATOR  Can’t a man and a woman get a moment’s peace?

SOOTH  Oh, don’t worry about them, schnookums, come back to bin.

NARRATOR & SOOTHSAYER  close the lid of the bin and ROSIE & PAT wheel them away.

JESSICA  Alright you people, I get the hint, I know when I’m not wanted. But Buff’s out there, waiting for me.

PORTIA  This is about as close as you’re ever going to get to Buff, Mother.

PORTIA  pours the contents of BUFF’S bag over JESSICA’S head. JESSICA falls to the ground, sifting through the documents.

JESSICA  This is not Buff, these are just photos of you. Where is my red-headed warrior? Oh crap!

Exit JESSICA. All freeze. Main lights down, spot on LITTLE SOOTH.
LITTLE   You see folks, we may come from a little town, but we’re not little people if we all join together. And if there’s one thing that we’ve learnt tonight is that from little things big things grow. Like, Coffs has got the Big Banana, Ballina’s got the Big Prawn and Kiama’s got the Big Poo. So we’re gonna have-

Lights up on all.

JENNY & MARIA   The Big Tofu!

TOM & GAYLENE   The Big Spud!

DIGGER & SHERRY   The Big Beer!

BOB & CHARLENE   The Big Buns!

TERRY & TRICIA   The Big Jasmine-scented Tea Leaf!

BLUEY & RAYLENE   The Big Corner Store!

TINA & SCHOONER   But we don’t even have a corner.

LITTLE   Nah, but we will when the tourists all start coming in and tonight we’re inviting you to check out our community. And when you arrive, there’ll be a whole lot of smiling faces just waiting to say-

ALL   WELCOME TO BIG TOWN!

THE END