



TAZ Entertainment

ABN: 16237449334

PO Box 4072, Swan View WA 6056, Australia

Tel: (08) 9255 3336 Fax: (08) 9255 3395

Mob: 0417 093 800

Email: taz@tazentertainment.com.au

www.tazentertainment.com.au

Travis Hooper

- "...and Egg Nog for Afters"

A one act play – Light Drama

Running Time: approx. 30 minutes

Period: Modern Day

Synopsis:

A father brings his grown family together for an early Christmas dinner. During the night, he reveals a dark secret that could tear his family apart. What would you do if everything you believed about your family was untrue? What happens when your Father is revealed as a stranger? This play takes a realistic look at the ties that bind a family together and the lies that push it apart.

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All enquiries to:

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About the Author: Travis Hooper

- This page updated shortly.



bio

About the Play:

...and Egg Nog for Afters was written and first performed in 2006 at The Brookman St Theatre, home of the Goldfields Repertory Club (1931) Inc, and directed by Ben Anderson.

The original 2006 cast:

Barry Ryan played by Brett Thomas
Dianne Ryan played by Antoinette Fedeli
Jonathon Ryan played by James Parker
Gary Ryan played by Owen Hinton
Sharon Ryan played by Pippa Doyle
Julia Cheswick — Ryan played by Gillian Binks

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...AND EGG NOG FOR AFTERS

By Travis Hooper

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- Barry Ryan: Father of Jonathon & Gary Ryan late 50's — early 60's. Recently retired train driver. Recovering from a recent heart attack. A pragmatist who seeks compromise to problems
- Dianne Ryan: Barry's 2nd wife. A housewife, who has a son of her own living in Washington. A woman who while very much in love with Barry, still sees herself as an outsider in the family.
- Jonathon Ryan: The eldest son of Barry, a public servant working for the Department of Conservation and Land Management. A peacemaker.
- Gary Ryan: The youngest son of Barry, a Long-haul truck driver. Quick to anger, he sees no shades of grey.
- Julia Cheswick-Ryan: Jonathon's wife. A co-worker of Jonathon. Self confident, articulate, very much an equal partner of Jonathon. Suffering from recent a tragedy.
- Sharon Ryan: Gary's wife. Owner of a hairdressing salon. Very much in awe of Gary.

Lounge room interior. A sofa sits CS, a coffee table directly in front. A sofa chair sits SL facing SR (Barry 's), another to the right of the sofa (Dianne 's). Between Barry 's chair and the sofa sits 2 Lounge Chairs. Two exits, one SR out to the Front-door hallway, the other SL to the Kitchen. A drinks cabinet is positioned next to the kitchen door. On the cabinet are 4 presents.

Lights up on BARRY, pouring a light beer into a glass on the drink's cabinet.

BARRY: Di! How's the Turkey going?

DIANNE: (offstage) Should be done in a minute Barry

BARRY: Perfect! The kids will be here in a minute. You right with everything love?

DIANNE: Just finishing the dishes dear. The table's set?

BARRY: Yes ma'am, more knives and forks than I know what to do with, and one crappy cracker per person, just like Christmases of old.

DIANNE: Did you put that wine in the fridge?

BARRY: Not yet, there's no room. Tell you what, I'll finish this one and grab another, that'll make room.

DIANNE: *(enter SL)* Oh for goodness sake! Take it easy will you? A bypass is a big deal. You know what Dr. Davies said, you've only just got your all clear.

BARRY: Aright, alright, I was just kidding. I'll put the bottle in the fridge.
(turns to leave)

DIANNE: *(worried)* Barry?

BARRY: Yes Love?

DIANNE: *(taking his hand)* Do you have to tell them tonight?

BARRY: Look love, we're heading to America for six months, and after what happened to John and Julia —

DIANNE: I know, But — God Barry, why didn't you tell them earlier?

BARRY: For years they were too young, and then Jo got sick,... I mean, she wanted to tell them —

DIANNE: So why didn't you? You could have both told them, why did you have to carry this yourself?

BARRY: She wanted to tell them, but I couldn't do that to her. I wouldn't allow her to spoil her last days with her boys. It was my decision, so I have to put up with it.

DIANNE: I understand love, I guess you know what you're doing. *(kisses him)* I love you.

BARRY: Hove you too Di.

DIANNE: Alright. Off you go. Pop the bottle in the fridge eh?

BARRY: *(gently mocking)* Yes mistress.

DIANNE: No give it here, you won't know where to put it.

(Dianna exits SR,)

BARRY: *(to audience)* Some things they never tell you when you're sick. Sure they tell you that they'll connect a vein form your leg and

attach it into the ventricle and aorta while under general anaesthetic. But they never tell you just how helpless you feel. Like not being able to walk, or even take a jimmy riddle without help. But I got over it. They told me that the drink and the smokes were what wrecked my heart. What they didn't know was that it had been broken for twenty years.

(A doorbell rings)

BARRY: *(to offstage)* It's Open!

(enter Jonathon & Julia, each carrying a dress box Both are dressed conservatively but stylishly.)

JOHN: Thanks dad! *(looks at Dianne who enters)* Hi Dianne, how are you? *(kisses her)*

DIANNE: Fine thanks Jonathon, *(looks at Julia)* oh Julia! That outfit's gorgeous! *(they embrace)*

JULIA: Thank you Dianne, you're looking lovely too. *(Barry hugs Jonathon and Julia in turn.)*

BARRY: John! Julia! How are you!

JOHN: Great Dad. How are you?

BARRY: Never better. Drink?

JOHN: Thanks Dad, I have a beer. Julia?

BARRY: I've got wine, it should be cold enough —

JULIA: No thanks dad. Sheryl is bringing some from the Bottle-shop.

BARRY: Alright, Sit! Sit! *(leaves)*

JOHN: He's Okay?

DIANNE: He's still not a hundred percent, but he's really looking forward to heading overseas. Anyway, after 44 years on the railways, he's earned a break.

JULIA: You're heading straight to Roger and Leanne's?

DIANNE: We're spending 2 weeks in Brisbane first. I've got relatives in Ipswich and your Father wants to go to the Test match at the Gabba. But from there we head down to Sydney, flying Direct to Los Angeles, then up to Seattle.

JULIA: Are you spending Christmas in Seattle?

BARRY: *(Entering)* Yeah we'll be there about a month just staying around with Dianne's son and his family, then, we're going to rent one of those Motor homes, um, you know, Winfield's?

JOHN: Winnebagoes?

BARRY: Yeah, that's it, We'll spend about 2 months travelling "daawn south" - we're even going to Mek kik ko!

JOHN: Try that accent down there, and they'll have you deported Dad.

DIANNE: We'll return back to Seattle in time for Easter, before heading back home.

JULIA: Sounds wonderful!

DIANNE: Yes. I'm really looking forward to it. Connor's three and talking with a horrible American accent. He calls Leanne his "mom". Briannon will be about 8 months when we get there. I haven't seen Briannon since he was born. I do love having Grandchildren — Oh, I'm so sony Julia, I-

JOHN: It's Okay Dianne.

DIANNE: No, I -

JULIA: No really Dianne, It's alright. *(pause)* I spoke to Dr. Rothschild, and he said that there's nothing wrong, it was just bad luck. We'll try again in the new year. *(reaches for John 's hand)*

GARY: *(offstage)* Jesus! What Bowling Club did you flog that Daewoo from Johnno?

BARRY: *(as Gary enters)* Gary!

GARY: Big Fella! *(they embrace)* Johnno! *(moves to John)* How you doing, you boring old fart! Leave your beige cardy at home? G'day Jules!

JULIA: Hi Gary *(kiss on the cheek)*

JOHN: G'day Gary, where's Sheryl?

GARY: Grabbing the drinks out of the boot, *(to Julia)* she bought your drinks.

JULIA: Thanks Gary

GARY: Hey dad, a man's not a camel -

BARRY: On my way, mid strength alright? *(leaves)*

JOHN: *(motioning to Sheryl)* Yeah, the boss'll string me up if the cops get me.

SHERYL: *(entering)* You're a bloody Truck driver, you know better than that you idiot. Hi everyone!

DIANNE: Hello Sheryl, I love What you've done with your hair!

SHERYL: Thanks Dianne, I've got a new girl working for me, she's a wonder, came over from Sam Rifici.

BARRY: G'day sweetie, can I get you something cold? *(tosses a can to Gary)*
There you go mate

SHERYL: No thanks Dad, I've brought some straight from the fridge.

GARY: So how you going you hippie bastards? Still trying to save the world?

JULIA: Things are going well at the Department if that's what you mean.

GARY: Land rights for gay whales, love. Fight the power!

SHERYL: Do you still have to deal with those ferals?

JOHN: Part of our dealings are with the Forest action group as well as the logging industry, we deal with all sorts.

SHERYL: What I can't understand is why do these people who reckon they can save the world insist on being so dirty? I mean some of those women don't even, you know, shave! I could do wonders with their hair.

JULIA: Perhaps they're more interested in protecting the environment.

SHERYL: Yes, but it doesn't mean they can't take pride in how they look.

GARY: *(to John)* So, did you get that job?

JOHN: No, they went with someone else.

GARY: Serves you right.

JOHN: What?

GARY: You'd be head of the whole bloody department if you were a blind black lesbian

JULIA: It's not like that, despite what you think.

GARY: What, you DON'T have to suck up each other's arses? I thought Johnno here would be an expert at that.

JOHN: Keeping your head down is not sucking up, you're lucky, Truckies don't have to play office politics.

GARY: Danm right, the only problems I have are with roos, and they don't argue with you after meeting the front of a bull bar!

BARRY: Alright, Well Merry fake Christmas everyone

ALL: Merry Christmas/all the best/down the hatch

GARY: *(clapping hands)* Right, Presents!

JOHN: *(to Julia)* He's been like that for years, he could never sleep on Christmas eve.

BARRY: Well here we go, Di, can you get the presents?

DIANNE: Sure love.

(Dianne passes out the presents then sits as Julia passes the 2 dress boxes to Barry and Dianne)

DIANNE: Come on, open them up.

JULIA: Oh fantastic, I love Tim Winton, that'll be great for driving to work.

SHERYL: Oh look! A waterfall! We just got one at work, they are SO relaxing. Thanks guys!

GARY: *(looking over at John)* Wood covers? *(to Barry)* Are you trying to make him middle aged?

JOHN: Steady on mate, Julia got me a set for my birthday, and god knows, I need the exercise, I can't play front row for the college team anymore.

GARY: Oh diddums, have all your boyfriends left the side? *(John responds with the time-honoured gesture.) (Gary laughs then opens his present)* Wicked! Warwick Todd on CD! He's really funny, like Rodney Rude, but, you know, classy. Wonder who he's playing for these days?

JULIA: I-

GARY: Just kidding everyone.

BARRY: Yeah well, Sheryl let us in on a little secret —

GARY: Huh?

SHERYL: I'm getting you a CD player for the Truck, merry Christmas!

GARY: Thanks sweetie! *(they Kiss)*

JOHN: *(to Dianne & Barry)* Come on, Open up your present guys. *(They open their presents, two overcoats)*

DIANNE: Oh they're beautiful!

BARRY: Thanks everyone! These'll be perfect for our trip.

DIANNE: *(hears a buzzer offstage)* Well, that's the turkey, shall we eat?

BARRY: Sounds like a great idea love.

GARY: Two four six eight, bog in, don't wait

(All move towards kitchen. Lights down.)

Scene two.

(One hour later. All return from kitchen, obviously satiated. Gary and Barry are wearing paper crowns.)

SHERYL: And then Jerry Seinfeld says. "Oh! Her name is Delores!"
(polite laughter)

SHERYL: Ok, maybe it's not that funny, but I like that show.

BARRY: Don't worry Sheryl, it's funnier than those stupid jokes in the crackers.

GARY: Damn straight. Bad jokes are traditional at Christmas. Now, who's going to put on the Queen's message?

JOHN: It's November, the message hasn't been written yet.

GARY: No worries, I'll give it a bash. *(poses Dramatically)* My husband and I blah blah, people coming together from all nations do di do, Hasn't my daughter in law got a face like a bashed crab? Thank you and god bless. *(normal voice)* up the republic I say.

JULIA: The republic? I thought that would be too lefty for you.

GARY: Nah, of course not, I'm voting Ricky Ponting for President.

JOHN: You've got to be joking!

GARY: Der. Who'd bat at number four?

JULIA: Thank you Dianne, that was a lovely meal.

DIANNE: Thank you.

SHERYL: No, thank you. It was a real Christmas feast.

GARY: Except for one thing -

BARRY: *(jokingly)* Oh for God sake's! It's not the end of the world.

GARY: I'm just saying, where was the Egg nog?

JOHN: Come off it Gary, you do remember visiting Dad in Hospital don't you?

GARY: Yeah, but we always have ham for dinner, plum pudding —

G & J: And Egg nog for afters!

GARY: It's a Christmas tradition.

JULIA: What? Like Ray Martin's carols by candlelight or fighting with your relatives?

GARY: Ha Ha.

JOHN: Look, Dad's just had a heart attack, He really shouldn't be having dairy products.

BARRY: No it's alright, Dr. Davies said I can still have whatever I want, Just in moderation.

GARY: God, you sound like one of those bloody Healthways adverts.

BARRY: *(deep breath)* Um, I was wondering if I could talk to you two?

DIANNE: Girls! Would you mind helping me to do the washing up?

SHERYL: Sure Dianne.

JULIA: Another family tradition?

JOHN: Come on sweetie, you know us Ryans, last bastion of the white male Patriarchy.

(Julia pokes her tongue at John & vice versa. Women exit.)

JOHN: Well Dad, this had better be good mate, cos I'll be paying for it later.

BARRY: I wanted to talk to you both, you know, before I left.

GARY: *(laughing)* Hey, if it's the facts of life Dad, you're fifteen years too late! *(pause, then fading off)* Well, ten years...

BARRY: No it's about what might happen in the future.

JOHN: Look Dad, your heart attack made both of us stop and think. I'm playing 9 holes twice a week –

GARY: - and I've sworn off the Durries Dad—

BARRY: That's what I wanted to talk to you about.

GARY: Durries?

BARRY: No. The Dad bit.

JOHN: What are you trying to tell us?

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