

DARWIN THEATRE COMPANY

presents the premiere of

OVERCOME BY CHLORINE

by Suzanne Spinner

set in Tropical Australia in the present,
the action of the play spanning a five year cycle of pool progress

THE POOLS -- a ballroom dancing duo & proprietors
of The Crystal Blue Poolshop ~ MAC COCKER
BLUE ~ a pool doctor ~ PAULEEN MONTGOMERY
CRYSTAL ~ a retail manager

POOLOGUE

Somewhere down the track ...

ACT I

The Greens' house & garden
The Oldhands' pool & patio
The Crystal Blue Poolshop

THE GREENS -- the hapless pool owners whose pool
progress we follow ~ TERRY KENWRICK
GARY -- a bank employee ~ ANNIE GASTIN
GERI -- a hairdresser

INTERVAL ~ 20 minutes

ACT II

A Pool Party at The Greens' to
celebrate Gary's 40th Birthday

THE OLDHANDS -- the experienced pool owners
HEC ~ an engineer ~ PAUL COSTIGAN
HAZEL ~ a travel agent ~ KAY BROWN

FRANK YARD -- an airconditioning installer, a man
trying to erect an Above pool ~ BRIAN BAILEY
THE SMARTS -- young acheivers & beach culture refugees
LARRY ~ an entrepreneur ~ CHRIS NOONE
LUCIA ~ an audiologist ~ HANIA RADVAN



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Pool Construction and Maintenance

Production Manager/Lighting Designer	Anne-Maree Garcia
Stage Manager	Creena Hemmings
Assistant Stage Managers	Vera Beatson Khiara Frazer-Allen Kristen Kenny Andrew Rodd Heather Wilson
Lighting Operator	Tim Mitchell
Sound Operator	Margaret Johnston
Set Construction	Jim Scholfield
Costumes	Melody Cooper
Assisted by	Jenny Armour
Painting	Andy Lowe

Song: Once In A Lifetime with apologies to David Byrne

Rearrangement by Cocker, Gastin & Barrett
Musical Direction by Geoff Barrett
Sung by Mac Cocker, Annie Gastin & Kay Brown

Television Commercial:

Devised by Mac Cocker & Suzanne Spinner
Original Concept by Mac Cocker & Aqua Robins

In-depth Pool Analysis

The Experts : Greg & Kerry Blowers, proprietors of The Fannie Bay Pool Shop

Overcome By Chlorine was inspired by the obsessions of Ian Gray, Richard Coates, Alistair Wyvill & Tom Pauling.

Many people's pool stories have become part of *Overcome By Chlorine* including - Terry Kenwick, Greg Blowers, Ken Conway, David Ritchie, Michelle Dewar, Phil Gerner, Lill Smith, Mac Cocker, Kay Brown, Annie Gastin, Robyn Knox & Phil Harris.

Overcome By Chlorine is dedicated to ~

Maurie Klein, a local legend in pool construction and to the pool maintainer in your life

Overcome By Chlorine was first performed on 4 June 1992 at The Town Hall Ruins in Darwin.

Overcome By Chlorine is the sequel to *Dragged Screaming To Paradise* which was produced by Paradise Productions at Brown's Mart and DPAC in 1988-90.

Overcome By Chlorine was researched and workshopped by Paradise Productions last year and scheduled for performance at 24 Hour Art as part of the Bougainvillea Festival but unforeseen circumstances prevented a production. However the creative development phase was completed and it included

- a Design Workshop at 24 Hour Art,
- a pool stories night at Brown's Mart, and
- the distribution of a questionnaire on pool maintenance.

A Work-in-Progress Reading of the first draft was held poolside in the garden of a house in Fannie Bay, before an invited audience in June last year.

The Reading was directed by Tessa Pauling, designed by Suzanne Spinner and produced by ~ Chris Bond with assistance from Chris Colton, Jude Swift, Wendy Attenborough, Colin Holt and many others

The cast featured ~ Terry Kenwick & Annie Gastin as The Greens,
Ken Conway & Kay Brown as The Oldhands,
Mac Cocker & Aqua Robins as The Pools,
Peter Stretton & Christine Brown as The Smarts, and
Paul Costigan as Frank.

Paradise Productions received assistance from DTC and the NT Arts Council to complete the developmental phase.

OVERCOME BY CHLORINE
a play about Men, Mania and
Maintenance...

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DRAFT 5

JULY 1992

CAST:

FRANK YARD- an air-conditioning installer

His wife Lorraine and their children-
Glen, Jason, Kylie and Jade.

GARY GREEN -a Bank employee, later a Manager
35 at the beginning - an Assistant Manager
40 at the end - the City Branch manager

GERI GREEN -a hairdresser
30 at the beginning at home with the kids
35 at the end back at work full-time

Their three boys under five-
Russell, aged 4 at Pre-school, Rodney 2 and
6 months old Robert- the baby
By the end they are 9, 7 years old and 5
ie: the last one has just started school

HEC OLDHAND -an Engineer
Mid forties to 50 at the end
HAZEL OLDHAND -a Travel Consultant

Their twins, Megan and Michael.
who are 14 at the beginning and
19 at the end and have both left home

BLUE POOL -former Merchant Marine
CRYSTAL POOL -former Hotel receptionist
ageless, eternally youthful ... because they dance and don't
have children and never have to worry about their pool....
The proprietors of The Crystal Blue Poolshop.

LARRY SMART -an Entrepreneur
Late twenties at the beginning, early thirties when he
becomes a father
LUCIA CAPPADONNA -an Audiologist
Mid twenties and on the way up at the beginning, becomes a
mother at 30 and isn't sure anymore who she is or where
she's going
and later their baby daughter, Chiara.

LOCATION : In the backyards of the suburbs of tropical Australia, you think its Darwin but it could be North Queensland...or the suburbs of Sydney

POOLOGUE Frank's backyard,
down the track somewhere

ACT ONE The Green's garden
and barbeque

The Oldhand's patio
and pool

The Crystal Blue Poolshop

ACT TWO A Poolside Party at
the Greens
for Gary's fortieth-

OVERCOME BY CHLORINE

TIME: The action of the play spans five years
The passage of time is marked by the acquisition of a new pool and moving on to a different stage of pool ownership and a more difficult level of pool maintenance

First Year: The Greens exchange their Clam shell thing for a collapsible wading pool, The Oldhands give away their Above-ground and build an In-ground Chlorine pool, Frank acquires their old Above-ground

Poologue
Just give it away, get rid of it
I'll have to sterilise the whole pool
Do you want me to write it all out?
He just wants to hold the hose
An investment in efficiency
They're just not like the beaches down south

Second Year: The Greens put up a Splaher Pool and teach the kids to swim, Gary becomes a regular at the Crystal Blue Poolshop.

You two are the Experts
A Glorified wading Pool- really
Kick, Kick, Paddle, Paddle
I've come about some Chlorine

Third Year : The Oldhand twins celebrate their 16th Birthday with a pool party at home, The Greens decide to buy a second-hand Above-Ground Pool, Frank sells his second-hand above ground....

Words and forgetting
Pump not included

ACT II

Two Years later - The end of the Fifth Year: The Greens host a Pool Party to celebrate Gary's 40th Birthday and the completion of their In-ground Salt pool- all of ACT TWO

POOLOGUE

SETTING: A BLOCK SOMEWHERE DOWN THE TRACK...

FRANK YARD DRIVES UP IN A TRUCK FULL OF THE BITS AND PIECES OF A SECONDHAND ABOVE GROUND POOL- A MONUMENTALLY HEAVY ROLL OF TIN, AN OLD LADDER, AN OLD DAVEY PUMP ETC.

THE TRUCK STOPS AND FRANK CLIMBS DOWN AND BEGINS TO UNLOAD THE POOL. A LARGE PILE OF SAND AND A SHOVEL IS ALREADY WAITING FOR HIM...

HIS YARD IS A GRAVEYARD OF OLD COCONUTS- SOME ARE SPROUTING BUT HAVE NOWHERE TO GO, OTHERS WILL NEVER SPROUT BUT THEY TOO ARE GOING NOWHERE.

ON A SMALL CRUDELY BUILT BACK PORCH MASQUERADING AS A VERANDAH, HIS WIFE LORRAINE, ENSCONCED IN A BANANA LOUNGE WATCHES HIM SILENTLY

FRANK'S OWN BANANA LOUNGE AND A BATTERED ESKY ARE NEARBY

FRANK Lorraine saw the ad in the paper. Lorraine likes the Classifieds. "Free A.G. pool-dismantled-you collect-no hoses attached-Davey pump V.G.C.-first in best dressed" and the phone number "Ring A.H. A.S.A.P". So I did, and here I am.

Nice chap -the one who gave it away, most approachable. His son was very obliging too. Course when you buy secondhand you don't get any instructions. It was fully dismantled, stacked up, very tidy under the house. Though I don't know how his wife had managed -the access to the laundry was impeded considerably. Very neat place, though...

So it's all D.I.Y . No contractor'll touch an old pool- it's understandable. So you've just got yourself and any mates you can rope in. But I like doing things by myself- you've only got yourself to blame. What have you got to lose except a coupla weekends?

So I rang U Cart and ordered the sand-reckoned I'd need a coupla tonne- but when I told the chap at U Cart what it was for- he reckoned I'd need more than I'd anticipated. Surprisingly pricey- sand. Where do they get it from-it's definitely not from round here -wrong colour for the sand up here. I suppose it's not beach sand anyways-I like the idea of it being beach sand , seems fitting , but I don't relish the idea of the beaches being without. It could cause erosion. After we'd shovelled a tonne onto the tray, it struck me how small a pile a tonne is -you wouldn't credit it. But heavy -a tonne of sand is heavy, I can vouch for that. I was going to bring it home in the boot - you could have fitted it in - it really doesn't look much.

But the chap at U Cart advised me over the phone, that it wouldn't be wise, not if I had hopes of driving the car afterwards. Ruin your back axle he said, so I heeded his advice and borrowed the wife's brother's ute 4 by 4.

Course there is a right and a wrong way to shovel sand or anything for that matter. It constantly astounds me the number of fellers who've got no idea at all. You've only got to watch them on the roads. It is staggering the percentage of men who don't know how to shovel correctly. Just common sense, if you look at the job and analyse the actions. Like kicking a footy or doing a hand pass - simple technique once you know it.

I took young Glen and Jason with me to U Cart, they like going anywhere in the truck. The boys had a terrific time in the big bins at U Cart. I suppose all the kids do. It's just like a big sand pit. Mind you we did use to have a sand pit, bolted together a few sleepers and put a bit of black plastic down. Naturally the kids never went near it. Finished it the night of Jason's sixth birthday, even rigged up a light so I could finish it by the morning- never went near it. Kids are buggers like that.

The chap at U Cart was very reasonable at the outset. At any rate he didn't mind. Well not until the boys started throwing great handfuls at each other. See they were mixing up the different types of sand. Amazing the varieties of sand they've got there. Fine sand, coarse sand and in an array of different colours. The kid's were making a hell of a mess and so the chap stepped in and straightened them out, but at that same juncture I'd said to them "Cut it out boys! Enough's enough. Smarten up or you'll be sitting in the cabin."

I'd taken the boys with me to give Lorraine a break. She likes to do the shopping of a Saturday. Lorraine works at the CES. Difficult job, the CES. Not a lot Lorraine can do, not on her own. They send them up from down South with fairy stories about there being work, and as Lorraine says the buck stops with her, at the front desk. It's heartbreaking. Whereas the airconditioning game is pretty straightforward, hard yakka but without the attendant stress. I do sometimes think Lorraine is at the kids a bit much, but they know their Mum works. She had the girls with her at CheapFoods. Mind you the girls are a lot easier- they're quieter for a start. Lorraine says sometimes just listening to the boys gives her a me-grain. The kids are inside watching the video.

Don't ask me what they're watching, I wouldn't know. But at least if they're watching a video you know where they are.

At anyrate it's a bit of a challenge this pool business. Bit like putting together a Meccano set and probably a lot easier than that Lay-Go. Young Jason and Glen make the most amazing constructions with the Lay-go. You wouldn't credit it. You need small hands, little fingers -some of the pieces are so tiny -the little lights they've got in the police car set are this small. Lorraine's always getting the boys to go through the bag after she's done the vaccuuming. She says if they've left them there, she's not going to pick them up, they can go through the bag if they want them. And they do.....

No Lorraine I don't think it should go under the Poinciana. That blessed tree sheds like a dog with mange. Tiny little leaves, they'd get into the filter and from there into the pump and that'd be it. A Davey pump is a fine piece of machinery, you can't risk jeopardising it. Leaves weren't a problem for him, he had Palms. You wouldn't credit the varieties he had, and they were all Palms ..

Not under the Poinciana Lorraine, over here where I reefered out the Coffee Bush. Very virulent plant -the Coffee Bush. It could puncture the liner. It's only plastic afterall and Coffee Bush is fierce. The tidy chap gave me a lot of pointers. He said I had better keep the liner wet, Lorraine or it could shrink and crack. The liner's in very good nick at the moment. Hardly faded at all-you can see. See it's not just sun fading, the chlorine itself is highly corrosive and fairly heavy on the plastic. So you have to water the liner to keep it moist and pliable.

I dunno, Lorraine for as long as it takes me to erect the pool.

Kylie! Bring us down the tranny-the radio love, it was beside our bed on your mother's side. Well if you're helping your mother ask Jade. Jade get me the tranny. I need to check the scores it'd be half time by now- It's a big job, could take a coupla weekends.

LORRAINE TOSSES DOWN THE TRANNY AND FRANK TURNS IT ON FOR THE HALF TIME SCORES IN THE MELBOURNE- CARLTON MATCH.. AND SETTLES DOWN WITH A BEER TO CONTEMPLATE THE BEST APPROACH TO HIS HERCULEAN TASK...

MEANWHILE THE AUDIENCE TAKE THEIR SEATS FOR ACT ONE ...

Thanks Lorraine....

ACT I

In ACT I, there should be a sense of life going on in the other locations/ environments/ patios and backyards while we are focusing on the particular scene in one locale. So that most of the characters are visible in their homes all the time - engaged in some quiet not too distracting activity -

LUCIA and LARRY could be drinking coffee and reading Southern weekend newspapers;
HAZEL could be relaxing on her sunlounge overlooking their pool and HEC could be cleaning the pool or raking up leaves in his garden
GARY would invariably be outside fiddling in his garden, GERI would inevitably be inside upstairs and making occasional forays downstairs to pick things up left behind.

Each of these three environments should be clearly distinguished in terms of their occupants- different styles of outdoor furniture, key colour schemes, degrees of order/ neatness/ chaos, physical perspective

THE SMARTS - Balcony of a flat looking down on the body corporate pool which they never get into, Moderne hard edged furniture

THE OLDHANDS - Patio Outdoor entertaining area close to their pool, the latest gas BBQ trolley style, white big tube plastic furniture with pastel cushions

THE GREENS- Jarrah Wooden outdoor furniture, Weber BBQ, litter of kids toys, leaves on the ground, upstairs, downstairs, a backyard that becomes the site/graveyard of discarded pools.

THE CRYSTAL BLUE POOL SHOP is a different order of reality - it should only become animated during the scenes that take place there and CRYSTAL and BLUE should not be on stage at other times.

The image for the Pool Shop is that of a Cocktail Bar, a place of show, fancy merchandise and the performance of almost choreographed tasks - testing pool samples, selling pool accoutrements.

SCENE (1) JUST GIVE IT AWAY, GET RID OF IT!

EARLY AFTERNOON OF A SATURDAY. HEC IS PRACTISING HIS PUTTING INTO A STUBBIE HOLDER AROUND THE POOL.

CAR DOOR SLAMS - HAZEL ENTERS LADEN WITH SHOPPING IN COLD BAGS, SHE PLONKS IT DOWN OBVIOUSLY WAITING FOR HEC TO CARRY IT UPSTAIRS. SHE PLANTS HERSELF ON A SUN LOUNGE AND KICKS OFF HER SHOES, AS THE SCENE PROGRESSES SHE EXITS AND CHANGES INTO BATHERS AND A COVERUP/ PAREO.

CONTINUING ACTION.....SHE RESUMES HER POSITION ON THE LOUNGE WITH A DRINK AND PAINTS HER TOENAILS, READING TRAVEL BROCHURES WHILE THE NAILS DRY. HEC TAKES THE SHOPPING INSIDE, AND LATER HOSES DOWN HIS PAVING AND HOPS IN THE POOL TO SCOOP OUT THE LEAVES. LATER HEC CLEANS HIS GOLF SHOES AND HIS CLUBS....

HAZEL That's only the freezer stuff, Hec. The rest is in the boot.

HEC Watch me sink this putt...

THE GOLF BALL ROLLS INTO THE POOL, HEC GOES OFF TO COLLECT THE SHOPPING

HAZEL It's got to go Hec. Give it away! We've hung onto it for long enough. None of our friends want it. I can't get to the washing line. I don't know why you took out the Hills Hoist.

HEC We took out the Hills' Hazel, to make room for the pool. That's when I designed the retracting line.

HAZEL Whatever it is Hec, no-one can get to it now.

HEC People will pay good money for a pool set up like this. The pump alone is worth five hundred dollars. I've done my best, it's well stacked and I've numbered all the sections.

HAZEL It is neatly stacked- you'd hardly know it was there, but you can't get past it.

HEC It's too valuable to put out in the weather.

HAZEL Just get rid of it!

HEC What time did Megan get in last night?

HAZEL Before midnight, Hec... Just give it away!.

HEC I've tried. Gary and Geri don't want it. They've got young kids....

- HAZEL Toddlers , Hec. They said their Clam Shell thing is more than enough at the moment.
- HEC Clam Shell?
- HAZEL You know -plastic! It looks like a big ..Clam Shell. Geri said, Gary said an Above-Ground'd spoil his garden.
- HEC Garden? Like a rain forest after a storm.
- HAZEL Gary likes the leaves, he thinks they look natural -a part of the environment.
- HEC He wouldn't have leaves everywhere, if he'd listened to me about Palms.
- HAZEL He doesn't regard dead leaves as a problem, Hec. You do. To Gary it's all good mulch.
- HEC Is she going out with that boy again?
- HAZEL I don't know, you ask her.
- HEC I don't know why Gary doesn't put down pavers and palms around the edge- it'd be a lot easier to maintain.
- HAZEL They like their rainforest. Hec, their kids can't swim. Geri'd be worried. She is very safety-conscious about those boys. She and Gary think Above -Ground pools are a bit of an eyesore.
- HEC They've never said that in my company.
- HAZEL When she first came up here -Geri said she'd never seen so many backyards full of Springform cake tins with blue icing on top.
- HEC I never heard her say that... Gary could put it in that back corner, there's a decent sort of slope , it must be one in three. If he got a Bobcat in and dug it in and put some nice Cypress decking on the other side.... You'd think it was in the ground anyway.
- HAZEL They've said they don't want it.
- HEC In his garden you'd never notice it.....

HAZEL What have you got against that boy of Megan's anyway?

HEC In my experience Hazel, a man who knocks back a free pool is always sorry later. You did tell Geri to tell Gary that Michael and I'd help him put it up? Only take a weekend. Did you tell her the liner's brand new and I'd throw in the Davey pump, and the old filter and the ladder? We won't need them for the new pool

HAZEL Yes Hec, I did tell her and she saw it herself. She dropped in with the boys yesterday. She had a devil of a time keeping them off it. Young Rodney crawled into the roll of tin and we were calling out to him -Geri was real worried. You recall Mikey used to do that at that age, disappear, go off and hide. I'd be worried sick and eventually a little voice would call out laughing, then I'd have to go through the whole rigmarole of pretending I didn't know where he was. Don't you think, Mikey's gone very secretive lately?

HEC The liner's in good shape, but it can't go on like this for much longer.

HAZEL I'm surprised you haven't got the liner soaking in the bath. At least we'd still be able to have a shower. Soaking in the trough it's only stopping me from using the washing machine, but as I can't get to the line...

HEC I'll advertise it in next Saturday's paper - for nix. It'll be a bargain for somebody. You wait, the phone'll be running hot, before 8 O'clock. It'll be gone by next Sunday - Promise!

.....

SCENE (2) I'LL HAVE TO STERILISE THE WHOLE POOL

AN AVERAGE SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT THE GREENS, GARY IS INSPECTING THE PLASTIC CLAM SHELL WADING POOL AND SAND PIT COMBO. GERI IS UPSTAIRS TRYING TO GET DINNER FOR EVERYONE. SOUND OF DOGS BARKING IN THE DISTANCE

GARY Next door's bloody dogs have been in here again! It's full of shit and they've kicked shit and sand into the water.

GERI Rodney don't repeat that! Daddy wasn't swearing - he was talking about poo, doggie poo. Rodney, don't say shit! And Russell don't you copy your brother. Russ- don't! I'm warning you. Well Darling you'll just have to empty it out. Quick Gazza grab Robbie -he's got that dog turd in his hand -it's in his fist, undo it! Boys come inside, leave your father alone. He's got to clean the pool out.

GARY Where's the Napisan, Luv? I'll have to sterilise the whole pool

GERI In the laundry-top right. Between the White King and the Wonder Soap.

LOUD PIERCING SOUNDS OF A CHAINSAW FROM NEXT DOOR

GARY Oh, Jeez the annual chainsaw massacre's begun next door. Why don't you get a slasher in? Or what about a ball and chain? Even quicker. Flatten the lot! Then they'll rake up every bloody leaf in sight and take the lot to the tip. What's wrong with mulching - eh?

GERI Darl, why don't we get one of those little foldup wading pools - then all we'd have to worry about'd be the kids pooing in it. Those foldup numbers are that bit bigger, I could even sit in it on a hot day - which is every day after all. Then we could use the other half of the clam shell as a cover for the sand pit.

GARY Mmm

GERI No Russell, I know you wouldn't do poo in the pool. I was talking about Robbo- he's still a baby, he can't help it. Rodney I don't think that's funny and take that nappie off your head. It was clean. Rodney if you don't stop that you won't get one of those banana icy poles we made.

SOUND OF CRUNCHING GEARS AND THE BEEP BEEP OF A TRUCK BACKING IN

GARY Is that the garden going out or the hay bales coming in?

GERI Russell! Don't point that at me. You know I don't like you playing with guns and you're only allowed to, if you don't point them at anyone, ever! Alright, that Supersonic Death Ray thing whatever it's called, don't point it and stop making that awful noise. I can't hear myself think. .. Yes, Rodney thinking is quiet but you still need to hear yourself doing it. I'm not sure about dreams, Roddy. Sometimes you can hear them.

GARY I can't find my bloody shovel now.

GERI You lent it to Hec - he came round after golf, remember? And Mikey got the wheelbarrow later on. You're always thrusting your tools on your mates and then you get furious when you need them.

GARY You'd think he'd have his own shovel- wouldn't you?

GERI He has, he said yours was a spade and that was what he needed. For every job there is one right tool, Hec said.

GARY You mean there is a difference between a shovel and a spade... Do I really thrust my tools on my mates?

GERI Darl, could you come and get the boys, I can't do anything with them under my feet.

GARY But I told you I'll do a Barbeque.

GERI Yes Gazza, but we will be eating something else as well.

- GARY I'm doing snags for the boys.
- GERI Rodney's the only one who actually eats them, Darling. They just throw them at each other and smear themselves with sauce. That's probably why next door's dog likes this place so much. It's not just your Blood and Bone that attracts them. I'm doing Baked Beans for Russ and mush for Robbie. Gazza, what are you doing?
- GARY Just doing a bit of watering. The pressure here's dreadful. Look at this Soaker, it's barely trickling. We really should look into a sprinkler system but I doubt if we'd have the pressure to make it viable.
- GERI Hazel said they're on special again.
- GARY There's no point until we can do something about the pressure, the pipes from the mains are too old. Hey Darl, I think this Pawpaw's finally taking off, it definitely looks like it wants to fruit. It still needs more sun, I should move it, I will, I'll just do it before I put the snags on. Oh shit my shovel!
- GERI Boys go and help Daddy water the garden, your tea 'll be ready in a minute. Robbie sweetie, just sit still darling, Mummy's busy making din din - lovely gooey carrot and beans -just for you lambchop. Sit down Robbie, don't try and climb out. Robbie! Sit still!
- GARY Darl, do you remember how bad the soil was when we first moved in? So dry and powdery. Well, It's full of worms now- absolutely chockers. It's amazing what a lot of mulch and water'll do.
MULCH - EVER HEARD OF IT?

SCENE(3) DO YOU WANT ME TO WRITE IT ALL OUT?

A BUSY SATURDAY MORNING AT THE POOLSHOP. SOUND OF THE CRYSTAL BLUE POOLSHOP ADVERT/ THEME SONG.
FRANK IS AT THE COUNTER NEGOTIATING THE PURCHASE OF BANANA RACERS FOR HIS FOUR KIDS

BLUE Yeah, well there are male and females, but you can only tell by reading the back of the packet, cause the picture's the same on all of them. Crystal, have we got a female Banana Racer out the back? Could you have a look, Pet?

CRYSTAL No Blue, no luck, sold out. Would you like a double Pool Pony instead? They're the same as the single ones, only you can fit two kids on them. Fine, then you'll take the male bananas and the double pony that'll be thirty eight eighteen, thirty eight'll do. We're getting an order in next week - bound to be a couple of females. They usually send equal numbers.

BLUE Mind you most people don't really notice, they just buy the next one on the shelf, but you're right anything for a bit of peace where kids are concerned -hmmm?

FRANK EXITS WITH HIS ALREADY INFLATED DOUBLE POOL PONY AND BANANA RACERS.

BLUE Hope you've got a truck - I'd lash them to the tray if I were you.

LARRY ENTER WITH HIS POOL SAMPLE IN A BISLERI MINERAL WATER BOTTLE

CRYSTAL Morning, can I help you?

LARRY I want to get my water tested. Well it's not my water, it's my friends, it's her pool- she's overseas- I'm looking after it..

CRYSTAL What have you been doing?

LARRY Everything she said, she wrote it out for me -see.

CRYSTAL That looks right. How's the water looking?
Can you see the bottom of the pool?

LARRY Sort of.... No, you can't, not really.....
 And it's going greenish and cloudy.

CRYSTAL How big is your friend's pool?

LARRY Biggish...

CRYSTAL OK, so it's 50,000 litres...
 And what sort of surface?

LARRY There are blue tiles around the edge but they're
 falling off... Surface? Concrete.

CRYSTAL Well, hand it over..You've never had this done
 before - have you ?

LARRY Yeah, first time. She's due back Sunday week.

CRYSTAL The first test is to see how much chlorine's
 there....

LARRY Should be plenty, I've been chucking it in every
 day.

CRYSTAL You'd be surprised how quickly the Chlorine gets
 used up.

LARRY I have missed the odd day, but hardly anyone's
 been using the pool, just my Father and his...wife
 - they're staying with us, actually at my friends
 house and all they do is float around on Li-Los.
 They don't swim in it.

CRYSTAL When do you put the Chlorine in?

LARRY When I remember. Oh, at night.

CRYSTAL That's a good start - but I'm afraid your
 Chlorine's used up, your reading is zero

BLUE Excuse me, Pet, I'm gonna have to abandon ship.
 That was the Sheraton. Can you hold the fort?
 Dont know when I'll be back, sounds like a big
 cock up with their filtration system.

CRYSTAL Sure Hon, give me a ring if you're running late,
 and I'll meet you at the Studio. Do you want your
 white suit or your tails and the patent pumps?

- BLUE The White suit, my red cumberband and the red socks. It's Latin American tonight.
- LARRY There's no chlorine - zilch.
- CRYSTAL And you said it's going green and cloudy, that means there's a lot of Algae swimming around in there.
- LARRY So the Algae killed the Chlorine?
- CRYSTAL Well, the Chlorine's certainly not killed them. Algae reproduces at an astonishing rate - Three thousand times per minute! Sexy little devils aren't they ?
- LARRY So I have to drain the pool and start again?
- CRYSTAL That is actually one approach, but there is anotherYou could floc(k) your pool.
- LARRY Flock?
- CRYSTAL Add a flocculent, like Aluminium Sulphate, Alum. It causes all the organisms and rubbish in the water to hang together- coalesce into larger particles. After twelve hours if you don't disturb them, they settle on the bottom of the pool. So the next morning before it gets too hot, if you're lucky, you can vacuum them all up. But there is a danger that the water could lock...
- LARRY LOCK?
- CRYSTAL Lock - die! Then you would have to empty it. But it's worth trying flocking and backwashing first.
- LARRY Flocking and backwashing?
- CRYSTAL Backwashing's self-explanatory. She's not due back for a week - there's plenty of time. You'll need two kilos of Alum, two of Chlorine and two of Bicarb. You put the Chlorine in first to kill the Algae, and then you mix the Alum and the Bicarb in a bucket, dry, until it foams and then you put that in the pool, then you put your filter on "recirculate" for fifteen minutes then...Do you want me to write this all down?
- LARRY I think you'd better.
-

SCENE(4) HE JUST WANTS TO HOLD THE HOSE

GARY EXITS FOR HIS RUN IN SINGLET AND JOGGERS, GERI IS SUPERVISING THE THREE BOYS WHO ARE PLAYING IN THE PLASTIC WADING POOL ON THE LAWN. SHE HAS HOSE IN THE WADING POOL ON FULL, THEN SHE TURNS IT DOWN TO A TRICKLE

GERI There you go Robbie, sit down! Oopsa daisy... splishity splash. Now boys just have a little play. Rodney, just make it drive on the water don't bomb with it -it's all plastic isn't it? If you keep kapowing it like that you could make a hole in the pool, Sweetheart I know it's not sharp, but if you keep doing that with it the pointy bit could still rip the bottom of the pool. And then all the water will run out, No Russ don't put your Tonka truck in -it's metal it'll get rusty and it's got very sharp bits. Yes, I can see the wheels are made of rubber. Not the front end loader either, it's the same. Yes Russell I do know the difference between a truck and a front end loader. Mummy's right here and I can see everything you do Rodney. Don't wet Robbo, he just wants to sit and hold the hose. Rod just leave him alone. It doesn't matter if he wets you, you're both wet anyway. He's not doing it deliberately. He's a baby, he thinks it's a game. Play with him you two, he's your brother. You've all got to be good for Mummy. Aunty Haze is coming round any tick now, so Mummy can do her hair -she's going out. She wants to look beautiful. Daddy'll be back any minute from his exercise run-jog, jog, jogging along. If he catches you big boys hurting Robbo, you'll be in big trouble. Well, ask him when he gets back Rod- I don't know what he's promised you

HAZEL Yoo hoo Geri, it's me love -downstairs are we? Sorry I'm late- the computer at work went down and I had to write out, by hand twenty three tickets for a group going to Hong Kong, while this tart from the Netball Association watched over my shoulder. I've brought my own spray. Salon style hard-to-hold.

GERI Goodday Luv, just keep an eye on the boys for a mo. My combs and gear's in the pantry.

GERI GOES INSIDE UPSTAIRS TO GET HER COMBS AND GEAR Gary's out on his run.

HAZEL Hullo gorgeous! You're a lucky boy! You've got a big hose to play with? Rodney's really filling out Geri, he must weigh almost as much as Russ, course Russ is a lot taller. Yes, Russ I know you're a big preschool boy now. What's your teacher's name? Oh, I don't think her name's really Mrs Bumbum, Russell. Gee Ger they grow up fast - Don't they?

GERI Not a day too soon though. Russell, I have told you about that hose -leave it alone! You want to hang onto the baby don't you? Now what did you have in mind?

HAZEL I don't know Janine always does this at the front and the sides go under, but it's different on each side....Now which way do they go?

GERI What if I sweep it off just above your ear here and flick it under on the other side? And puff up the top a bit, cause it's pretty short on top, and just sort of shape the back. What sort of earrings are you wearing?

HAZEL The big gold ones with the danglies.

GERI You're not wearing the diamond studs Hec gave you?

HAZEL They're beautiful aren't they? But they're not really me, they're so small. You hardly notice them.

GERI I just thought Hec might want you to wear the diamonds, seeing it's such a big do... Just hold it in front of your face, so I don't get the spray in your eyes. But it's your night too.

GARY RUNS IN SWEATY FROM HIS RUN AND HEADS FOR THE DRIPPING HOSE FOR A DRINK AND HE DUNKS HIS HEAD IN THE WADING POOL AND COMES UP SHAKING IT LIKE A DOG OVER THE BOYS.

GARY Gooday Girls, hasn't lost her touch -eh Haze? You always were the best stylist in that place weren't you Darl?

HE TRIES TO KISS HER, SHE HALF PUSHES HIM AWAY

GERI You're all wet and sweaty!

- GARY She loves it. Gooday boys -what are up to, eh?
Turning the garden into a paddy field. A dam -
right Roddy, I can see it. If Uncle Hec could see
it, he'd tell you that big wall'd need to be a bit
wider at the bottom, otherwise the dam might BURST
Don't cry Robbo! Dadda was only tricking.
- GERI Keeren always said my combups were very creative-
I was the one with the flair.
- GARY Just give me a minute boys to get my breath
back. I've been on a big run. Got as far the
Sailing Club tonight, Darl. Give us the hose
Robbo, your Dad needs a big drink. Want a beer
Darl, Haze?
- HAZEL There's two bottles of Blush in the Koid
Bag, I should have put them in the fridge. You'll
have a bubbly with me, won't you luv? They were
for you anyway. One drink won't hurt. Just prime
me for the evening.
- GERI Oh, OK Haze, that'd be nice. Rodney, Don't you
even think about going inside with wet feet!
Darl, bring down a coupla towels for the boys.
Just the ones hanging over the back verandah.
They're only going to get them wet.
- GARY Do you want the glass glasses?
- GERI No, not when boys are down here.
- GARY There you are girls, set like jelly. Did I say I'd
do that Rodney? Ohh.. Well come on, get a move on
Russ, dry off and we'll go for for a little
explore and see if we can find a good possie for
it. Which tree were you thinking of Russ? No Rod,
that branch isn't strong enough.
- GERI Did you tell them, you'd build them a treehouse?
- GARY Just a bit of a platform Darl, with a rope ladder.
- GERI Well, not too high up Gary. Is it going to have
any sides? They'll fall off. And you'd better make
it where I can see them from the kitchen window.
- HAZEL Gary's so good with the kids -isn't he? Hec never
really played with ours when they were little
And Gary really appreciates you-as a woman...

GERI Oh that! He's just kidding around.

GARY Yeah, you could have a Tarzan rope, Rod. No problem, I can incorporate that into the design....

GERI Gazza get the Rid, there's a heap of mozzies in that corner.

GARY Boys come here and I'll put some Rid on you.

ROBBO FEELS LEFT OUT AND HAZEL PICKS HIM UP AND BEGINS SINGING HIM A LITTLE SONG TO PLACATE HIM

GERI Thanks Haze. He's just feeling a bit left out aren't you lambchop? Gazza come and get Robbo - Hazel can't hold him while I'm doing her hair.

.....

SCENE(5) AN INVESTMENT IN EFFICIENCY

SOUND OF POOL PUMP CHURNING THE WATER, AND SNATCHES OF SCREAMING/ SHRIEKING KIDS
HEC AND LARRY HAVE JUST FINISHED A GAME OF GOLF - LARRY WON. AND NOW HEC IS DRAGGING LARRY OFF TO THE FAR REACHES OF HIS GARDEN TO INSPECT AND ADMIRE THE PUMP

HEC Come on, come an have a gander at the pump, it's a little beauty, but strong

HEC SWITCHES OFF THE PUMP
Look at the size of the filter.

LARRY Big sand job -eh?

HEC Bit of an outlay to begin with, but she really works this pump. In theory it turns the water over in eight to ten hours.

LARRY HAS PICKED UP HEC'S BROOM OR LEAF SCOOP AND IS ABSENTMINDEDLY SWINGING IT AS A GOLF CLUB

LARRY You know what your problem is.. you're not following through, you're losing power in your drive. It's probably your stance...

HEC Haven't played since you were a kid - eh? You're a regular hustler! As I was saying, eight to ten hours. I reckon nine's about right.

LARRY Big pool, lot of water...

HEC Seventy thousand- with that amount of water you can't piss around with a Mickey Mouse system.

LARRY So how many hours a day are you running her?

HEC Now, when we're all using the pool, about nine on average, but in the Dry six is enough. Haze and the twins won't even hop in that time of year, they reckon it's too cold.

LARRY Luce and I go in the water every day -you need to.

HEC That depends how long you've been here.

LARRY Course it's all a matter of relaxation - you can't tense up the shoulders...

THE VOLUME OF THE KIDS SCREAMING AND SPLASHING IN WATER,
INCREASES - DROWNING OUT LARRY'S WORDS

LARRY Is it always as loud as this?

HEC At weekends - Yep. Something about kids and water,
they always scream when they're in it. It seems to
bounce more on water...Maze and the kids have
almost convinced me on a solar blanket. It'd
certainly keep the leaves and muck out.

LARRY That Bubble plastic stuff? I've seen it on pools
down South...

HEC It works, they reckon if you use it properly
you'll get a good five degrees gain.

LARRY Sounds like a lot of hassle

HEC The usual system is a roller, but I think I could
design something that was a bit easier to use.
Cold doesn't worry me. I'm in it every day -
cleaning it, and improving my underwater swimming
record. When we first put it in, I could barely
get to the end on one breath now I turn -proper
tumble turn and get back to here.

LARRY It's Chlorine - isn't it? You didn't consider
salt?

HEC Considered it and rejected it - too risky for the
plants. I've got a lot of my really special ones
- the Exotics, up close here. Some of them are
very susceptible to salt burn. In the end I wanted
to stick with something I knew, and I knew my
Chlorine.

LARRY It looks terrific. How deep is it?

HEC Two point five metres at this end..They've
quietened down a bit.

LARRY Maybe they drowned.

HEC Don't you like kids? You and Luce'll be wanting to
start a family. She's an Italian woman afterall.

LARRY Marco and Maria would love a bambino. But Luce has
other ideas. For Luce life is a career path, and
babies are speed traps. They slow you down.

HEC You can plan everything these days -eh?

SCREAMING AND SPLASHING STARTS UP AGAIN

LARRY They've revived..Must have been satisfying designing it yourself?

HEC The whole family put in their two bobs' worth, Mikey wanted it tiled in Black marble -could you imagine it? Megan wanted a fountain in the centre. I did look into that, but it's only worthwhile if you marry it to an automatic cleaning device. Hazel just wanted her spa, and a bit of a shallow ledge for her Aquaerobics. It was the engineering side that was satisfying, course I've over-engineered it to buggery, the MPA of that concrete is higher than.. the footings of a high rise office block. There's no way it'll ever crack.

LARRY Cost a packet to go that deep?

HEC Yes and No, overseeing it myself saved a lot. I took a fortnight off so I could keep the subbies on their toes. But she came in on time and just under my estimate.

LARRY Whatta ya reckon about these robotic cleaners? Feller I know's the national distributor, wants me to take on the local franchise, but I don't really like the look of them. No one seems to go for them up here..

HEC Oh, there's always a few naive types, too bone lazy to get in and get wet, reckon they can flick a switch and ... But from my experience and observation they're damn near useless - just get stuck in a corner and chew up your power and burn out your pump. Even the sweeping ones go everywhere but where you want them to. About as useful as an electric toothbrush.

LARRY People did go for electric toothbrushes.

HEC Yeah, well relatively they weren't that expensive,
 but those robotic jobs cost an arm and a leg.

LARRY I guess it's what the market'll bear.

HEC Assuming there is a market.

LARRY I said no. Got other fish to fry for the present.

.....

SCENE(6) THEY'RE JUST NOT LIKE THE BEACHES DOWN SOUTH

GARY IS BUSY WITH THE WEBER BBQ, AND GERI IS UPSTAIRS TRYING TO GET THE KIDS SETTLED, STRAINS OF HER LULLABY SONG - THREE JEELYFISH SITTING ON A ROCK -WAFT DOWN.
 LUCE AND LARRY ENTER, LARRY HAS A DECOR WINE CARRIER AND LUCE IS CARRYING AN ITALIAN POTTERY BOWL OF SQUID SALAD

GARY Goodday, Geri won't be long -she's just getting the kids to bed. Do you want to open that now? Fancy label -must be good.

LARRY Let it breathe eh?

LUCIA Are we a bit early ?

GARY No, we're all organised. Beer- Luce, Larry?

LARRY Green can for me mate and Luce'll have a white can

LUCIA A light beer thanks Gary.

GARY Here you are. Yeah, Robbo's been down for ages, and Rodney's out like a light at 7.30 regular as clockwork, but Russ is giving her a hard time. He knew you were coming. That boy hates missing out on anything.

LUCIA I've made some squid in olive oil and garlic...

GARY Thanks Luce, mmm it smells great..

LARRY Want a hand with the barbeque?

GARY No, no sit down -it's all under control. The Weber's all stoked up, the potatoes are in foil, the fish is ready to go, and Geri's done the salads, so just enjoy your drinks...

LARRY What are we having-Barra?

GARY No, Reef fish whole Red Emporer. Mmm this tastes great Luce. So what have you two been up to?

LUCIA Oh, the usual Saturday things I went for my swim while Larry walked the dogs on the beach, then we did the shopping and found some fresh Boccincini. Then we had coffee at The Cool Spot and read the papers.

- LARRY and the Travel brochures.
- LUCIA And this afternoon, I finished an assignment on Conflict management and group dynamics -it's really makes you so aware of the practices in your own work place- the power games at the Clinic are unbelievable but....meanwhile Larry went -Surfing, true, he did...
- GARY Where?
- LARRY Out off the point, it was pretty choppy , but there were waves, I kid you not..
- GARY Did you wear a Stinger suit?
- LARRY Yeah, 'course
- LUCE And panty hose underneath...
- GARY If you get waves then the water'll be very churned up..If the Stinger's don't get you, the crocs might-eh?
- LARRY Yeah, it was a bit freaky. It's like a warm bath, you relax, your defences are down. You'd never see them - would you?
- GARY You on a board?
- LARRY Yeah I bought it with me
- LUCIA For when we go to Bali. There's a Conference there in August, Larry. I could probably just swing it, I'd have to give a paper though...
- LARRY Body surfing's really my thing, but you need clean waves for that.
- GARY You must miss decent beaches?
- LUCIA I do, I've always swum my laps in pools but I love lying on the beach listening to the surf... It's too hot here and the sand's filthy. I miss white squeaky sand - real beach sand.
- GARY There's no two ways about it - They're just not like the beaches down south.

LARRY Still at least you can get on it - wouldn't mind getting a little boat. What do you reckon Gazza?

GARY You know what they say about owning a boat, mate You might as well stand under a shower and rip up fifty dollar bills

LUCIA Oh, but it is lovely at sunset, we take a bottle of wine and sit on the rocks and watch the sun go down. It reminds me of Santorini. It's so Romantic....

GERI ENTERS FROM THE STAIRS

GERI "See Sun go plop sea, Mummy", Roddy says.

LUCIA Geri -all asleep? You look tired, sit down.

GERI I am. Rod's had another bout of Tropical Ear. I was up all last night to him. He's a lot better now. Gary, that Russell had to be sung to sleep. He was so awake. I'll have a white can thanks, Darl.

LUCIA You really need to watch Tropical Ear -it can lead to permanent damage of the Otitis Media.. What drops did they prescribe?

GERI The right ones, Can't remember the name. Do you wanta read the label? They're in the beer fridge. Have a look!

GARY Luce and Larry have been dreaming about the beaches they left behind.

GERI Yeah it takes a while to get used to -doesn't it? 'Cause you think Tropical beaches, but they never tell you what they're like before you get here. Some days the water looks so blue just like a sheet of scrunchy blue plastic or it's as smooth as a sheet of Gladwrap. And from the car, the sand even looks white. But when you get down there, it's so disappointing ...But the sunsets are lovely -aren't they?

LUCIA Yes, but for swimming in the Tropics -you've got to go to a pool.

LARRY Luce really loves the way up here, you can swim in outdoor pools all year round.

- LARRY Still at least you can get on it - wouldn't mind getting a little boat. What do you reckon Gazza?
- GARY You know what they say about owning a boat, mate You might as well stand under a shower and rip up fifty dollar bills.
- LUCIA Oh, but it is lovely at sunset, we take a bottle of wine and sit on the rocks and watch the sun go down. It reminds me of Santorini. It's so Romantic....
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- LUCIA Geri -all asleep? You look tired, sit down.
- GERI I am. Rod's had another bout of Tropical Ear. I was up all last night to him. He's a lot better now. Gary, that Russell had to be sung to sleep. He was so awake. I'll have a white can thanks, Darl.
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- GERI Yeah it takes a while to get used to -doesn't it? 'Cause you think Tropical beaches, but they never tell you what they're like before you get here. Some days the water looks so blue just like a sheet of scrunchy blue plastic or it's as smooth as a sheet of Gladwrap. And from the car, the sand even looks white. But when you get down there, it's so disappointing ...But the sunsets are lovely -aren't they?
- LUCIA Yes, but for swimming in the Tropics -you've got to go to a pool.
- LARRY Luce really loves the way up here, you can swim in outdoor pools all year round.

- GARY You're one of those serious lap swimmers -eh Luce?
- LUCIA I go every morning before work, I ride my bike to the pool, and Larry picks me up after his run and drops me at the clinic by 8.15.
- GERI What happens to your bike?
- LUCIA It folds up and goes in the boot.
- LARRY Luce swims six kilometers a week
- GERI That much, I wish I could do something...physical.
- LUCIA Give yourself a break, Geri you're probably really fit from running around after the boys..
- GERI I suppose so - but it's not exactly aerobic, is it?
- GARY Hazel's always trying to get Geri to go to classes at the gym.
- LUCIA Have they got free childminding?
- GERI I don't know. Paying to have the kids looked after is ok if you're actually earning, but just paying someone to make you do exercise seems...
- GARY Cheaper to get one of those videos, and do it at home with Jane Fonda..
- LUCIA Looking after yourself properly Geri, isn't indulgent
- GERI Yeah, but first you've got to have the time.
- LUCIA Sch(SH)eduling it in, as a normal part of the day is the key.
- GERI Sch(SK)edules sound like hard work to me.
- LARRY Lucia is a sch(SH)edulaire extraordinaire!
- GARY I've always said I'll look after them at night on weekends if you want to go and do something.
- GERI Yeah I know - guess I'm not motivated. When I haven't got the kids all I can think of is doing the shopping in peace. You just don't get a minute to yourself- they're so ..constant.

- LUCIA A bit like clients I suppose, that's what I love about swimming -it's so - mediatative, it really clears my head.
- GERI Anyway, Swimming wouldn't suit me, you get your hair wet.
- LUCIA I wear a cap.
- GERI Even with a cap it still gets in and ruins the colour
- LUCIA You're a natural redhead aren't you?
- GERI Na, gorgeous mouse! Aren't we all? So where are you two off to this year? Bali?
- LUCIA No. Asia's really the same as here -isn't it ? And touristy... When I first went to Bali it was - perfetto, absolutely unspoilt..
- GERI I spose the weather's the same as here, but it'd be different being hot, if you were on a holiday.....
- LUCIA I want to go somewhere you can eat fresh figs and Mascharpone under pergolas (PERG-E- LAS)laden with grape vines
- GERI You can do that here - sort of.. More shade cloth than pergolas(PER-GOAL-AS). Hec's thinking of building a Cabana by their pool. It'd be nice...
- LUCIA Italy or Provence - the south of France, we haven't made up our minds yet.
-

SCENE(7) YOU TWO ARE THE EXPERTS

A BUSY SATURDAY MORNING AT THE POOLSHOP, CUSTOMERS ARE THRONGING IN WITH POOL SAMPLES AND DIAGNOSTIC PROBLEMS BLUE IS DOING SOME POOL DOCTORING OVER THE PHONE.... FRANK WANDERS IN WITH VARIOUS PUMP BITS AND STANDS AND WATCHES, AFTER A WHILE HE LEAVES

BLUE I've tested your sample. Your reading's way down, you'll need twelve bags of salt. Do you want me to bring'm round this arvo? I've gotta look at another pool in your area. You're on my way. Yep, eight wouldn't do it. It's not enough. Twelve bags. How old are the chemicals in your test kit? Well, that could be your problem. Mate, you need twelve bags of salt. I think you're cells must be shot. Well, why did you want me to test it? Come down to the shop and I'll test it in front of you then.

CRYSTAL What sort of pump is it? You don't know, you bought it second hand. Good price was it? Goes well does it? It would except that it doesn't seal properly. You're right, it needs new O rings.

BLUE Don't argue with my results, right. You bring your water in, you get me to test it and I advise you what to do. That's the deal, right. You're the customer, sure, but in my shop the customer's not right, I'm right in my shop. I know you're a regular, yeah you probably have spent a lot of dough here. So why do you suddenly question my advice?

CRYSTAL A lot of different sizes, bound to be one the same Well, that's what you'd think. No, No, almost, close but still it's got to be exact. No, sorry, guess they don't make that size O ring anymore. Yes, try them. But I think you'll find we carry the largest stock in town.

FRANK WANDERS OUT DISPIRITED WITH HIS PUMP BITS....

BLUE If I gave people the run around, they'd soon realise I was a shonk and I'd be out of business. Look mate I've got a lot of other customers to serve, customers who believe me. I don't need your business and I don't need the aggravation. I've told you twelve bags. Look mate, let's forget it! Well, you get it tested somewhere else then and let me know if they deliver free !

BLUE SLAMS DOWN THE PHONE. WHILE BLUE HAS BEEN ON THE PHONE HEC HAS COME IN TO THE SHOP, JUST MISSING FRANK GOING, AND HE'S GIVEN HIS SAMPLE TO CRYSTAL WHO HAS BEGUN TESTING IT.

HEC Goodday Blue - You've certainly put him in his box-eh?

BLUE I'm not interested in kowtowing to customers who think they know everything

CRYSTAL Don't worry Sweet, he'll be back. Ph 7.3 just a smidge under, nothing to worry about Hec. How's it looking?

HEC Not bad, I'm not complaining

BLUE Well let's just see, Chlorine2, fine .

BLUE Alkilinity 110 good. Cyanuric Acid what did you get on that, Pet?

CRYSTAL 50 -Perfect score and his TDS is 500.

BLUE Spot on! Going for straight As are you Hec? Not too many could boast a Report Card as good as yours. So all I can add is leave it as is..You're obviously doing everything right.

HEC Been doing it for years now, Ought to have learnt something.

BLUE You could probably forget about coming in here every week.

CRYSTAL Hec doesn't come in every week, sometimes it's twice a week. You just come in here to skite in front of the other poor punters.

HEC Well you never know, you two are the experts.

BLUE Indeed we are! Well, what do you need-anything?

HEC Running a bit low, another bucket of Chlorine.

THE PHONE RINGS AND CRYSTAL ANSWERS IT

CRYSTAL What sort of smell? Chloriney? Yes, that's not actually Chlorine you're smelling. It's the Chloramines. They're what pong, turn your hair green and sting your eyes.

- BLUE Do you want to try this new one - it's the same price but it seems to give a better performance.
- HEC I'm game. Will I need to use as much?
- BLUE They claim it's more efficient, so try using 10% less and see what you come up with, your pool'd be a good one to trial it in. Is there anything else you want?
- CRYSTAL So there's not enough Chlorine. It's been used up too quickly. It could be the sun. It's in full sun. Well! The Chlorine get's broken down and dissipated by the sun.
- HEC Well I was just wondering ...Obviously my pool's clean, you've verified that but It's not as sparkling as it should be...
- BLUE Do you want to try a Water Polisher?
- HEC What do you reckon? I've never really used one before. I mean it couldn't hurt - could it?
- BLUE Upset that delicate balance perched on the edge of perfection- No, it shouldn't, but then pools can be unpredictable. What you are dealing with is a subtle chemical cocktail. A Water Polisher is just like that zest of lemon on a Dry Martini -the crowning glory or an unnecessary excess. Up to you? What would the man behind the Bar know?
- HEC I think I might like to try it. What's the damage?
- BLUE Twelve ninety nine for the polisher and and forty nine ninety for the Chlorine, call it sixty two. Your'e a good customer Hec, call it sixty.
- CRYSTAL So I'm afraid you haven't got a lot of choice you'll have to Shock it! Superchlorinate! Add extra Chlorine - double or triple your normal dose.

FRANK RETURNS WITH HIS FAULTY PUMP AND ATTEMPTS TO GAIN ENTRY TO THE POOL SHOP

BLUE What a morning! Shut the door! Lock it! Sorry,
we're closed! Come back on Monday. Did you hear
that guy? To think I had to listen to him....
The public -Customers...

CRYSTAL are never right!
Easy does it, re-lax- One two, one two,
shuffle ,kick , shuffle , one two, shuffle kick,
turn , one two, shuffle, kick, reverse twirl.
There's more to life than pools.....

.....

SCENE(8) A GLORIFIED WADING POOL -REALLY

GARY AND LARRY ARE PREPARING THE GROUND, LEVELLING THE SAND BEFORE ASSEMBLING AN ABOVE -GROUND "SPLASHER POOL" FROM A KIT IN A BOX, GERRY IS UPSTAIRS APPARENTLY LOOKING AFTER THE KIDS, BUT REALLY ALL SHE WANTS TO DO IS GET THROUGH A MONUMENTAL PILE OF IRONING.

GARY What do you reckon Lazza? Looks level enough .

LARRY Looks OK to me Gazza. Flat- very smooth.

GARY We could tamp it down a bit more. Perhaps just a light spray of water and then stomp on it a bit more....

GERI That was Hec, he's coming over

GARY To supervise us?

GERI He said to wait for him , he's bringing The oddo-light?

GARY Theodolyte, Darl! That'd be right. For every job the right tool. Well Lazza, guess we'd better have a beer and wait for him, we could always read the instructions again

LARRY and watch a bit of footy?

GERI You boys'll have to play outside, Robbo's asleep and if either of you two wake him, I'll throttle you. It's like choking, Rodney. I didn't mean it, I just meant, I'd get very cross, it's an expression - a way of talking. Just go outside and play. Play on the swing! You can push yourselves. Rod, Don't lean on the louvres like that, you'll cut yourself!

LARRY This tin's very light isn't it? It'd buckle under pressure. Wouldn't it?
Shit! Did you see that mark?

GARY What a screamer! Come on, hang on to it. Kick it! Well, the pool's only a couple of feet deep, so there's not a great volume to hold

LARRY And they reckon he was off form, just shows what selector's know.

- GERI No you can't have a Poppper- I'll make you some cordial and you can put it in Russ's flask -the one he's got for Pre-School. OK you can have a Meusli Bar each. We never have the chocolate ones Roddy, I don't care what the other kids have - they're bad for your teeth.
- LARRY In the back- no question. What are you ump-blind? Is this all there is? A roll of corrugated tin, a coupla screws and these curvy bits to create the shape and then you just plonk the liner in.
- GARY You forgot the plastic clips. Kick it, kick it! You're not playing bloody Soccer!
- LARRY You hold the liner on with these?.....
Look at that will ya? Fumbling , fumbling...
- GARY The water holds the liner in place but these hold the plastic to the top and stop it flopping into the pool. Couldn't be simpler....
Come on, Come on, it's not a Sunday School picnic. Play the game, will ya!
- GERI No, there's no point asking your father to put up the tent, he's busy making you a new pool. I am not going to put it up either. Yes, I do know how to Russell. I want to get this pile of ironing done before Robbie wakes up so I want you two outside away from the iron. Because it's dangerous as you well know, Rodney. Remember that picture in the Safety Book of that naughty boy and those terrible burns he had.. Well, we don't want that to happen to you, do we? Russell, that is not a nice thing to say. Say sorry to your brother! Say it properly!
- GARY Only cost a couple of hundred bucks -wouldn't want to be more..... Free kick! Whose side are you on? Glorified wading pool really, but on the other hand big enough to need a pump, a filter and Chlorine.
- LARRY It's a goal, it's definitely one -Shit another bloody point!... So operational, it's a bit more expensive. How much?

GARY Hec's giving me his old Onga pump, he reckons I could get it reconditioned for about a hundred bucks and she'll purr like a kitten. And he thinks I should be able to pick up an old cartridge filter pretty cheap, so all up under five hundred dollars -not bad for a family leisure centre eh? Geri and I'll be able to get in it together. Which, I might add will be a major improvement on the old one. And it'll be big enough to teach the kids to swim in.

ENTER HEC WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

HEC Garry, Larry! Goodday -Having a smoko eh lads? Game over is it? Swans win ?

LARRY By eight points

GARY Don't gloat Hec. Sheer luck, they had the wind in the last quarter.

LARRY And they still couldn't kick straight

HEC Well let's check those levels. ...Pretty close, but in this game near enough's not good enough. Any unevenness'll put extra strain on the walls - it's only the equal distribution of the water that holds it up- there's no buttressing. The tin's only lightweight, you wouldn't want it to buckle under pressure..

GARY No, we wouldn't want it to buckle under pressure.

HEC Hold this Garry and Larry, you stand over there. The shilly shallying's over fellers, the foreman's on the job now!

GARY We were waiting for the right equipment, Hec.

.....

SCENE(9) I'VE COME ABOUT SOME CHLORINE

BLUE AND CRYSTAL STEAL A QUIET MOMENT IN THE POOLSHOP TO PRACTISE FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN HEATS, BEFORE THEY ARE RUDELY INTERRUPTED BY A PHONE CALL FROM A DEMANDING CUSTOMER WHO IS DETERMINED TO BUY A "KREEPY KRAULY"
PHONE RINGS, CRYSTAL TURNS DOWN THE TAPE BUT CONTINUES PRACTISING HER DANCE STEPS ..

BLUE I'll get it Pet

BLUE PICKS UP THE PHONE LISTENS FOR A MOMENT THEN PUTS HIS HAND OVER THE RECIEVER TO TALK TO CRYSTAL

That's it, do it again- beautiful...
Well, I can't exactly say I'd reccomend it, I sell them, they're in my shop, and you can buy them, it's up to you, but what I'm saying is I won't sell them to you, if you get my drift. What do I reccomend? A good leaf scoop and a bit of Aqua-robic exercise, elbow grease, you can't beat it. No, well they're not made in Australia in fact. That's just a lot of manufacturer's propoganda. Yeah they do look nice, if you're wanting a bit of sculpture around your pool. But at that price, I reckon they ought to be signed by the artist - don't you? Yeah, it's high quality plastic alright, so are the leaf rakes we stock. It's up to you. OK that's fine with me -five ninety nine dollars, let's call it \$600 shall we? Cheque or Bankcard? Yeah, we take Mastercard. You can pick it up in your lunch hour.

GARY HAS COME IN WITH A SAMPLE IN A VEGEMITE JAR, HIS ARRIVAL CATCHES CRYSTAL UNAWARES...

GARY I've come about some Chlorine

CRYSTAL Well most people do -what sort were you after?

GARY Not exactly sure, you see I've just put in this Splasher Pool. It's really just a big wading pool for the kids.

BLUE You would be surprised at the volume of water one kid with a runny nose can foul. Let alone the rest of them. How many have you got?

GARY Three under five

CRYSTAL What a handful they must be. My husband doesn't mean to sound discouraging. It's just that a lot of people don't appreciate the seriousness of pool sanitation. You haven't been here before have you?

GARY No, a neighbour of mine told me you were the best

CRYSTAL Who's that ?

GARY Hec, Hec Oldhand.

CRYSTAL He is a regular. Very nice pool from all accounts. Course he's never needed any Pool Doctoring so we haven't actually seen his pool. Have we Blue?

BLUE No, but we feel we know it -don't we, Pet?

CRYSTAL Intimately. Now about your kiddies pool. Have you brought a sample?

GARY In a brown paper bag, Hec warned me.

CRYSTAL This's had Vegemite in it before? We'll take that into account. I'll test

GARY Gary, Gary Green

CRYSTAL Gary's water while Blue gives you a rundown on Chlorine. Just fill in your details on this card We always like to give new customers a bit of a briefing first.

BLUE Alright, Chlorine or Calcium hypochlorite is a toxic substance. It is volatile, explosive and highly dangerous unless handled correctly.

CRYSTAL A lot of people think it's just like any other Household Bleach, you know White King, Napisan, Dishwashing detergent, but it's not really.

BLUE In fact it can behave violently. Explode that is, if you're not careful. So always store it in a cool dry well-ventilated place away from sunlight.

GARY I always keep it in the laundry up high.

BLUE The point is that damp conditions and moist air can release a gas mixture that may ignite in sunlight. This bears thinking about .

- CRYSTAL So try to avoid storing large quantities at home. And any amount needs to go in a childproof place.
- GARY Childproofing? It's a constant challenge at our place
- CRYSTAL I can imagine
- BLUE Sounds easy? Just buy it every week or so, but have you considered the dangers of transporting Chlorine? And we're not talking Road Trains - we're talking about your car. Chlorine can ignite with friction.
- CRYSTAL When I see some people driving off with the kids in the back all buckled up in those little safety seats ...
- BLUE And they just lob the Chlorine container over the back seat so it can roll around like a bowling ball.
- CRYSTAL And get it out of the car as soon as you get home, don't leave it to get hot in the boot
- GARY Put it away in that darkish dry place. Right?
- CRYSTAL And don't drop it!
- BLUE And never mix different types of Chlorine together And always fill your bucket with water first and then add the Chlorine to the water. When it's thoroughly mixed, throw it in the pool -being extra careful not to splash yourself or anything else nearby.
- CRYSTAL And that's not as easy as it sounds is it Blue?
- BLUE The point being Chlorine can react with anything non-metallic- even contact with your skin'll cause it to go off...
- CRYSTAL Sounds like Blue's a bit of a panic merchant, but I can assure you he's not, he's had some nasty experiences himself. He was once overcome by Chlorine. He had to go to hospital.
- BLUE Only for observation, Pet.

CRYSTAL I hope we haven't put you off. Once you get into a routine you'll be right. Now I've written everything down and entered your results here. You'll need a few things to begin with....

BLUE AND CRYSTAL LOAD GARY UP WITH BUCKETS OF CHLORINE AND CONTAINERS OF CHEMICALS, HE STRUGGLES FROM THE POOLSHOP UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THEM AND THEIR ADVICE AND INSTRUCTIONS

CRYSTAL Have a good weekend!

THEY WATCH HIM LEAVE AND TURN THE MUSIC BACK ON AND RESUME THEIR DANCE PRACTICE

BLUE Now Crystal that Argentinian Tango is really a piece of cake. Pet, the secret is in the straight back. So Back straight, eyes right, slow motion half kick and I'll lead, if you promise to follow.

CRYSTAL "Ze mann he leads"

BLUE Now that turn is a bit tricky...
.....

SCENE (10) KICK, KICK, PADDLE, PADDLE!

GERI IS GETTING THE BOYS READY FOR THEIR SWIMMING LESSON WITH MUMMY AND DADDY, PUTTING IN EAR DROPS, APPLYING SUNSCREEN AND BLOWING UP AND FITTING A PANOPLY OF SAFETY INFLATABLES- "BABY SWIM SEAT" for ROBBO, "FLOATIES" ARM BANDS AND GOGGLES for RUSSELL AND "KIDDYFLOTE" VEST for RODNEY

GERI Rod just come here and put your head on my lap, so I can get the drops in. Yes, they do feel funny . Now turn over, so I can do the other ear. No, Rod that way. No, no don't get up. Let it go right in. It doesn't matter - most of it went in. I'll wipe it off with the towel. Russ hand me the towel. Thank you Russell. Don't run off you haven't had any Blockout on yet. Just stand still, stop fidgetting! Now turn round so I can do your shoulders. Russ, stand still , you don't want to get Cancer - do you? Remember what happened to Grandpa, he had to have a bit of his ear cut off. He did so, Rod.....Gazza, What are you doing?

GARY Making a whirlpool to herd the leaves into the middle. It is one of the more satisfying things you CAN DO in this pool. Perfect corkscrew like a real tornado. See! The leaves are all dancing to the top.

GERI You should leave that to me, it's good exercise for firming the thighs. Hold Still, Rod -Stop moving your arms I can't blow them up right if you're jiggling about. Elizabeth Taylor used to do it, it was in New idea -she'd walk very fast in the water, lifting her legs as if she was marching in the surf in California or Malibu. Very good for the tops of the legs she said.

GARY Rodney poke your arms through these holes, and your head goes in the middle. The middle hole, boy. The big hole! Ger, this is too small, his head won't go through -you big Boofa Roddy.

GERI Lead with his crown - smallest part of the head comes first. Same principle as giving birth.

GARY So you're not such a boofhead afterall. Your Dad was a duffer wasn't he? Turn round so I can tie the strings . Now the other side. Don't pull them you'll get them all knotted up.

- GERI Gazza did you put any cream on Robbo? He always gets so burnt under his eyes and just on the inside of his elbows -where you're gorgeous and chubby, Lambchop. No, Rod you can't wear flippers, And don't wear them on your hands either.
- GARY Russell, don't jump off the ladder and don't try and sit on the sides! They're already buckled there, from where Hec got in when he was full. Of whiskey, Rodney. Alright hang on a minute, I'll find your goggles. I don't know why your eyes are hurting. ...No, there's not too much Chlorine in the water. I just know. OK?
- GERI Dari, you can't get him in it that way. Just float it on the top and lower his legs in. Russell you hold the ring still, so Daddy can put Robbo in it.
- GARY Rod, I've told you before, don't swing on that branch. That Frangipani's just recovering from the last branch you kids broke off it. See! It's got all those new buds on it.
- GERI Rod, just stay near the ladder. I'm hopping in now. Russell, don't splash, I don't want to get my hair wet. You weren't kicking, you were splashing. Dad's allowed to get in that way, his legs are longer than yours Russ. He isn't breaking the pool, Russ.
- GARY Come on Roddy, dog paddle -like this. Kick, kick, kick, paddle, paddle!
- GERI Dig, dig, like a wombat, Sweetheart and try and put your head under. You won't drown if you put your head down. Stretch out, push your tummy up and stretch out your legs like this. And try and keep your bottom up. Isn't it lovely Robbo, just bobbing about in your own little boat. Don't cry Mummy was just making little waves for your boat. Quick catch the little fishy! Dadda must have missed that leaf.
- GARY Keep your hands going. Paddle, paddle, kick, kick, Come on you can do it. Rod, It's just a bit of water- well, come here and I'll blow your nose. Oh, yuck. How long's he had this cold Ger?

- GERI It's just a cold, Gary. We went to the clinic on Thursday. It's just a virus. Russ come on, show me those wonderful windmill arms. Russ, Russ, stop! Get your breath. Now put your head under and blow some big monster bubbles. Good -Did you see them? Open your eyes then. You've got goggles on. Go on blow some more big beauties. Did you really open your eyes? Gazza, you have a look - is he opening his eyes? I don't want to put my head under.
- GARY Good boy! I saw your big Groper eyes staring back at me didn't I Russ? And those Gi-a-gantic bubbles. Come on now, show us how far you can go? Alright and then you can swim through my legs.
- GERI Shit Gazza! Robbo's head's under, quick grab him!
- GARY It's alright, baby, it's alright. You just musta swallowed a BI-G lot of water. Cough it up! Cough it up mate!
- GERI Oh, God that gave me a fright. I had no idea that could happen. I suppose it's cause his head's so heavy and his body's so short, once he topples forward..
- GARY Yeah, the ring was still around him, he couldn't right himself. His legs were caught in it.
- GERI I think I'd better get him out, he got a real bad fright. My heart's still pounding. No Rod, he didn't drown. Russ, he didn't nearly drown... It was just a very valuable lesson for us all.
- GARY OK, Russ seeing as you've swum all that way across, you can swim under me. Hang on -you've gotta get the floaties off. You won't be able to get them off like that, you've got to let a bit of air out. Just pulling the stopper out won't do it. You have to squeeze the valve like this. Right-you ready?I was just guiding you.... Alright, I'll let you do it yourself this time.
-

SCENE (11) WORDS AND FORGETTING

HAZEL HAS BROUGHT OUT A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE AND A GLASS AND HEC'S WHISKEY AND AN ICE BUCKET AND GLASS AS WELL A BOWL OF DIP AND DRY BISCUITS. HEC COMES OUT, DRESSED AND READY FOR A LATE AFTERNOON GOLF GAME

HEC Well I'll be off now.

HAZEL To golf? I thought we could have a little drink down here -there's a lovely breeze. I've got the brochures.

HEC What for?

HAZEL Just to talk.

HEC The brochures, Hazel?

HAZEL Oohh, for the Mediterranean cruise. I told you all about it, I just didn't have the prices. Seven starlit nights on the azure sea- really only five days but, I can get a twenty percent off.

HEC I don't want to sit on a boat. Why can't we go to Singapore again.

HAZEL And you play golf all day. No.

HEC You shopped.

HAZEL What else could I do?

HEC Haze, we'll discuss it tonight. If I don't go now I'll miss the light. If we don't hit off by quarter past it's pointless.

HAZEL It's pointless anyway.

HEC And don't forget to tell Megan I want a word with her...when she gets home.

HAZEL And Mikey?

HEC Alright both of them, but it was obviously one of her friends.

HEC STARTS GOING

Could you turn the pump on for me.

HEC LEAVES, HAZEL ABANDONS THE IDEA OF A LITTLE DRINK AND TURNS ON A TAPE OF DANCE MUSIC AND HOPS IN THE POOL TO DO HER AQUAEROBICS, GERI ENTERS WITH A DRESS BOUTIQUE BAG UNDER HER ARM.

HAZEL Goodday Luv - turn it down. Kids in the car?
Get them out.

GERI No, no, the kids aren't with me. Gary's flexed off
and he's taken them to the pool for swimming
lessons.

HAZEL You don't mind if I do my star jumps. Sit down,
There's some Diet Coke in the beer fridge.

GERI I'm right, I'll watch you.

HAZEL I thought you were teaching them yourselves

GERI No longer. Gary's now decided our Splasher Pool's
too small to do anything in and it's collapsing
and sinking and the liner's leaking. But I'm a
free woman so I've been in town, paid some bills,
got some cash from Medicare and bought myself
this.

HAZEL It's definitely your colour.

GERI You sure? So how did the Party go?

HAZEL Beaut, Geri. My little babies- sixteen! The kids
were terriffic. The music was a bit much. But they
were all very well-behaved, so we thought. Hec
and I retired upstairs-I made that advocado dip
and I'd got a video for us, to stimulate things...
romanticallyBut anyway this morning Hec is up
at the crack of dawn, before golf- cleaning the
pool and sweeping the patio and so forth and ...

GERI And?

HAZEL And he found a pair of very skimpy bikini briefs
in the skimmer box.

GERI They weren't Megan's?

HAZEL No, no, she won't wear Nylon. Megan has very
sensitive skin.

GERI So they'd been skinny dipping?

- HAZEL Apparently. "I won't have them doing that under my roof - in my pool!" .
- GERI 000hh!. Well, for heavens sake we all do it - it doesn't mean they were doing it in the pool.
- HAZEL It doesn't -does it?
- GERI Do you think he's forgotten?
- HAZEL He remembers only too well....
Geri, do you think people ever really get over divorce?
- GERI If they remarry, they must have... You and Hec had a barney?
- HAZEL No, we just don't talk.
- GERI DOHH! I've just remembered I forgot to get the Chlorine. The Pool Shop'd be shut now. Gary'll be shitty.
- HAZEL Get it at Rite Price- it's cheaper- I'm sure buckets are on special.
- GERI We don't buy buckets, Hazel.
- HAZEL Why?
- GERI It's too dangerous with the kids. They can go off you know. Explode. Gary'll be ropeable.
- HAZEL Have you two had words?
- GERI Oh, he's just started talking about leaving the bank again. That Larry and his schemes. He wants to set Gary up to grow Rambutans for export.
- HAZEL Sounds alright. Gary does have a knack with plants.
- GERI Oh Haze, we can't afford to stick our necks out now. It'll be a years before I can go back to work full time. There's the mortgage and...
- HAZEL Yes, you're right it's risky. Oh, damm it I forgot to put the pump on.
- GERI Anyhow I've got to be going. I left the fridge on defrost. Bye!There'll be water everywhere
-

SCENE (12) PUMP NOT INCLUDED

GERI IS UPSTAIRS VACCUUMING. GARY IS DOWNSTAIRS LISTENING TO THE SAT. MORN GARDENING PROGRAMME ON THE RADIO, AND READING THE PAPER, CALLING OUT TO HER AS HE STUDIES THE SATURDAY CLASSIFIEDS. SHE FINISHES VACUUMING AND COMES DOWN AND BEGINS PICKING THINGS UP AROUND THE POOL.

GARY Fifty hectares, an artesian bore and a concrete slab, electricity's on.. vendor terms available.

GERI Are there any good ones?

GARY Yes, Darl a few..What about this one?
"Large oval -shaped above-ground pool, all equipment and accessories, take as is ,bargain at \$450" It's gotta be full of rust, you'd only be buying it for the accessories and it doesn't say pump or filter , so what's he talking about a ladder, a few hoses and a flat Li-10?

GERI Well ring and find out.

GARY It'd be gone by now, it's nine o'clock. here's another-
"Pool Above ground 16x14x4 incl-uding filter and ladder, \$850" and this one-
"Swimming Pool 24x12x4, \$1,000 with pump and filter" -that's bigger than the 850 job and it's got a pump so if it's OK it's relatively cheaper.

GERI Ring them up, Gary ! They'll all go while you're deciding on the best bargain.

GARY Ah, but there's one more -
"Swimming Pool, above-ground 24x12x4, sand filter, pump and accessories. All in good condition, fifteen hundred dollars"-
Now that sounds like us, don't you reckon Darl? He's the only bloke who's dared to describe the condition and he says it's good, and he has specified it's a sand filter. So it's directly comparable to the thousand dollar one except that it's got a good filter and it's all in top condition.

GERI A sand filter and good condition is what he said Gary. He has to say something if he's asking more than the rest.

ACT 2

THE POOL PARTY

GARY AND GERI ARE PREPARING FOR THE POOL PARTY TO END ALL POOL PARTIES -TO CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION OF THEIR IN-GROUND SALT AND GARY'S 40th BIRTHDAY. THE ACTION TAKES PLACE DOWNSTAIRS UNDER THE HOUSE, ON THE PATIO POOLSIDE AND ON THE UPSTAIRS VERANDAH. THE WHOLE PERFORMANCE AREA NOW REPRESENTS THE GREENS' PLACE.

PART 1.....

GERI Beer Nuts, peanuts, Corn Chips, Salt and Vinegar, Jatz Biscuits.. Cheezels? Gazza why did you get Cheezels? They weren't on the list.

GARY You always get Cheezels for parties.

GERI The kids' parties! Dips- Salmon, Mexican, Avocado, Cabana, Olives- Black, green and Stuffed. Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty paper plates, two packs forks, two knives, serviettes. Salads- Potato, Green, Rice, Macaroni...How many sausages did you get?

GARY Two kilos satay, two pork, one chilli and one Mexican and two dozen prawns for the early birds, and three kilos of of those little scallops. We've got limes haven't we?

GERI Yeah not enough though, Hazel's bringing some from her tree.

ENTER HEC AND HAZEL

HAZEL You Who you two! We're here. We thought we'd come on time to give you a hand.

HEC I told you Haze we're too early.

HAZEL Geri and Gary don't mind, we're friends. Where's the Birthday Boy? Gary!

HAZEL/HEC Happy Birthday Gary!!! Forty -eh?

HEC You're catching up, mate!

GARY I can still give you ten years, Hec

HAZEL HANDS OVER THE RIVIERA INFLATBLE FLOATING POOL BAR

HAZEL Something for your pool- just like the invitation said..for drinks

HEC I've tested it, it fits a green can.. And your own test kit...

HEC GIVES GARY A DIY POOL TEST KIT

GARY Thanks Haze, and Hec - they'll both be very handy...

GERI Blue won't like it; you might argue with his results.

GARY I already do.

HEC How's the pump? Still got some teething problems has she?

HEC AND GARY DISAPPEAR IN THE DIRECTION OF THE PUMP.
HAZEL GIVES GERI AN ICE CREAM BUCKET OF LIMES AND A BOWL OF DIP WITH GLADWRAP ON THE TOP

HAZEL The limes, I raided next doors as well. Gorgeous outfit, Geri

GERI Thanks Haze, you look pretty wonderful yourself.

HAZE It's a new recipe, equal parts Philly cheese and Cottage, chives and a packet of french onion.

GERI Thanks, it's great to see you both. Evening Hec..?

HAZEL You know Hec - can't keep his hands off a good piece of machinery- especially a new pump.

GERI Gary is so excited about this pool. When he gets home at night, I swear- he kisses the pool first.

HAZEL I know....Boys all asleep?

GERI Better -they're having a sleepover at Tracey's the girl from Robbie's old creche. I just asked if she could babysit- Tracey loves kids

HAZEL It must be different when it's your job..

GERI They went off with their sleeping bags- .. We don't have to get them till ten tomorrow.

- HAZEL What about the New parents? They are coming?
- GERI They weren't sure.
- HAZEL Don't tell me the most beautiful baby in the world's not been pooing according to schedule.
- GERI First baby, you remember -it's awful. Larry rang twice this afternoon and in between Luce's rung. He wanted to know whether we'd be inside or outside?
- HAZEL At a pool party?
- GERI He was worried about drafts outside and the noise inside. Then Luce rang and wanted to know if I thought they should bring her bassinette, and if so where could they put it ..
- HAZEL Down? I see.
- HAZEL NOTICES THE OBJECT ON THE TABLE
What's this?
- GERI A Floating pool thermometer...the kids gave it to Gary. We got it at the Pool Shop
- HAZEL To take the temperature of the pool?
- GERI Yes, and if it's got a fever you chuck in four litres of Panadol...
- HAZEL And put the pump on "Recirculate" for 15 minutes.
- GARY The coals are just right. Whatta ya reckon,Darl - Will I put the prawns on now?
- GERI When did you put them in the marinade?
- GARY Before I took the boys to Tracey's. About five..
- GERI OK then, Oh and Gazza could you put the dressing on the green salad I forgot. It's in that peanut butter jar near the tongs ...or would it better to just leave her in her capsule if she was asleep, cause she usually falls asleep when they go anywhere because of the rythmn of the engine relating to the mother's heartbeat in the womb...

- HAZEL Good heavens, is that true?
- GERI But if she falls asleep in the capsule she's bound to wake up later, and then really the only way to get her to sleep is to get back in the car and drive round the block or wheel her in the pram over a rolled up towel to make a bump so that the rhythm of the pram relates to the mother's heartbeat...
- HAZEL ...in the womb? I hope you said you've got plenty of towels they can roll up. So are they going to bring the pram as well as the bassinette?
- GERI You're being very unsympathetic, Hazel. You shouldn't even pick her up if you have that attitude, because a new born baby knows what you're feeling, it senses it in your arms, Hazel. Newborn babies are more intelligent than...
- HAZEL ...their parents? No! Just more cunning!
- HEC Gazza, How many bags of salt does this take? It's a considerable volume of water
- GARY Fifty thou. -so twelve to begin with, and then more as you need it. But Blue reckons once she's balanced I won't need more than a couple a month
- GERI And then she wanted to know whether there'd be anywhere to feed her and did I have hot water?
- HAZEL Hot water- for her bottle ? I thought she was feeding her herself.
- GERI She is, well sort of -the poor thing she's just had another bout of Mastitis.
- HAZEL Again , how awful..
- GERI ... and did I think it was ridiculous if she brought formula and Soy milk - Just in case she refused the breast again?
- HAZEL A new baby -it's a whole new world ...

- GERI Anyway I tried to reassure her that nothing a new mother does is ridiculous. Heavens we've all been there and done that. Though, I never had to go as far as Soy Milk -did you?
- HAZEL There seems to be an awful lot of them allergic these days. To cows' milk? It makes you wonder what's going on. No, mine were on bottles - ordinary formula, crates of it- from go to woe. With two of them it was a relief, and it did mean Hec and I shared the feeds from the beginning. He never changed a nappy though..
- HEC Like a prawn , girls?
- HAZEL Yes Hec, and bring us a spare plate for the shells
- GERI Gary was very good with the nappies- But then I breast fed all three, so....
- HAZEL Your only problem was stopping .
- GERI It was only with Robbo I kept going, but he was the last so ..
- GARY You forgot Darl, his final question was did we think it was a good idea for them to bring her at all?
- GERI That's right and I said- Into the world? -Yes. To our party? - She's your baby Larry, you can take her where you like..
- GARY And then he said that the invitation didn't specify her by name. Geri assured him this was an oversight. Besides we still couldn't say it - let alone spell it!
- HEC It's Chi-ara isn't it? It's Italian.
- HAZEL It's Italian, Hec, you say Key -ara.
- GERI Oh, I've been saying Che-ara
- HAZEL Definitely Key -ara, like Key-anti, you know the red wine in those pretty little raffia bottles.
- GERI That you stick candles in? Oh, I've never known how to say that...

GARY Those two are certainly doing it hard.

HEC It'll be a while before they can go overseas again..

HAZEL People travel with babies all the time now Hec, you'd be surprised.

PART 2.....

ENTER LUCIA AND LARRY WITH BABY SAFETY CAPSULE AND CARRY COT, VARIOUS BAGS OF BABY EQUIPMENT AND THE BABY AND STRUGGLE THROUGH THE CHILDPROOF POOL GATE TO GET INTO THE GARDEN.

LARRY Sounds like our cue, Good Evening all. So how do you get in? Excuse us, we'd better take her upstairs before she wakes up ..

LUCIA Hi, everyone! Happy Birthday Gary!

GERI Put her in our room, it'd be the quietest. The boys are away for the night.

LARRY Thanks Geri, we will, it's a bit nippy tonight Happy Birthday Gazza!

GERI Let me have a peek- you're a bootiful girl aren't you Che-sira? ...

LUCIA Larry, the present's in the car - in the other bag - with the spare clothes

LARRY I'll get it later Mate, better get her down first.

LARRY AND LUCIA DISAPPEAR UPSTAIRS WITH THE BABY CAPSULE AND SOME OF THE GEAR.

GARY No hurry, I can wait...

GERI Anyway Gary's invited half the bank, I think, and all our neighbours...

GARY Stops them complaining anyway. Lazza whatta ya wanta drink?

HAZ./GERI Shh! Keep it down.

GARY Sorry mate- Forgot. You do forget-don't you? Mind you our kids could sleep through anything

- GERI Yeahh, when they were babies, after six months it was a different story.
- HAZEL Hec and I didn't even try to go anywhere for the first..
- HEC ...year!
- HAZEL It was only three months, Hec.
- HEC And the rest, can you imagine fitting two portable cots in the back seat of a Corolla and carting them both- up and down stairs?
- HAZEL It was a lot easier after we got the station wagon
- GERI And I've asked Keeren and Angela and Sandra from the Salon.
- HAZEL Sandra?
- GERI No Haze you wouldn't have met Sandra yet- she's the new Colourist.
- HEC Hey Gazza, look what I found in your skimmer box?
- GARY Not another bloody frog!
- HEC We've had Blue Tongues twice, you'd wonder how they get in. It's worse if you live near the beach -apparently you get swarms of Hermit crabs after a high tide.
- GARY We didn't get much Wildlife in the Above-ground.
- HEC You wouldn't have, they'd have had to climb up.
- ENTER LARRY FROM THE STAIRS
- LARRY Love a beer Mate. So how goes it with you lot?. Pool hasn't developed any leaks yet, Gazza?
- GARY No, going like a beauty, this salt system is a breeze. Enough spare time to do a bit of sailing I've considered getting a little boat - whatta ya reckon Larry? Go halves ?

LARRY No time, and even less money. Luce finished her maternity leave last week. It's just us and the overdraft from now on.

GARY Yeah its bloody hard on one salary. We reckon we're in clover now Ger's back at work. Mate, you're a family man now. The boat can wait, anyway we're saving for a trip now. Geri wants to go to Thailand. Spose you haven't been out catching any waves either

LARRY Na, Luce needs me at home and I don't want to miss anything. You should see what Chiara's doing now, she's trying to stand up, she wants to walk - really strong little legs. Only eight weeks old and she's already trying to walk.

GARY Really!

LARRY She's not interested in crawling. Presses her little feet into my thighs and stands up straight like a little water skier. They're magic aren't they? You can't take your eyes off them....

HEC How's it all going with your solar powered water filters - problems ironed out?

ENTER LUCIA FROM THE STAIRS

LUCIA Larry, can you get the bag from the car, I need that cream for my ...breasts.

LARRY Sure Cara, Luce's nipples are so sore, cracked..

LUCIA Larry, just get the bag! Oh and bring the mosquito net too. Geri, I can't find a dimmer switch for the light.

GERI There isn't one

LARRY IS ON HIS WAY OUT TO THE CAR

LUCIA Oohh...And Larry get Gary's present - it's in the plastic bag with the spare jumpsuit.

GERI Move the light from beside the bed, if you open the wardrobe door just a bit, and put the light behind it. Oh look, I'll come up ..

LUCIA No it's alright I'll manage. I don't like to feed her in bright light, it stimulates her too much. She can't focus on the feed.

LARRY RETURNS FROM THE CAR

LARRY Is this what you wanted?

LUCIA Yes, but you'd better get the cotton square- the one I wrap her in to feed her - you know Larry...Ohh, it doesn't matter, I'll get it myself. It must be in my basket. Now, she's crying, I knew she was hungry..

LARRY Cara mia Lucia, stay put! It's alright I'll get it. Which bag did you say?

EXIT LARRY TO THE CAR AGAIN.

HAZEL What about Blue and Crystal - they are coming?

GERI With bells on. They're going to be late, they've got the heats of the New Vague?

HAZEL New Vogue

GERI Yes that's it, vague, vogue? So they'll come after -in their costumes..

HAZEL They can give us an exhibition - we could all have a dance.

GARY That reminds me. Hec, I ran into a bloke in their shop last Saturday morning. Funny sort, real character. We got talking and it turned out - he was the one who bought your Above-ground years ago .

HEC He didn't buy it, I gave it away. Remember, you didn't want it.

GERI That must be nearly five years ago. Robbie was still a baby, none of them could swim. Now you can't keep them out of the water.

GARY He told me his life story - his wife's left him, took the kids too. I felt sorry for the poor bugger, he looked so miserable I asked him to come tonight.

GERI Oh Gary! You didn't.

GARY He probably won't show.

HAZEL Those types always do. He'll just cry into his beer and tell us all, how he can't for the life of him understand how it happened.

ENTER LARRY FROM THE STAIRS

LARRY He probably can't....

GERI You're back with the living, Larry?

LARRY Here you are Gazza - Happy Fortieth from the three of us!

LARRY GIVES GARY A BOOK

GARY Thanks Lazza. "Holistic Hydroponics?" Sounds very interesting

GERI How's it going up there -Luce ok?

LARRY Yeah she's just trying to get her to sleep. You don't know about that before you have them. You just think about getting up and feeding them and changing nappies, but trying to get them to sleep is the real doozey of the lot.... Luce and I had no idea.

GERI PICKS UP THE BOOK

GARY It's all about growing things in water

GERI What, in the pool?

GARY No, Geri.

HEC You couldn't - not in a salt pool

LARRY Anyway, the book that Luce's got says ...

HAZEL She only got one book, has she Larry?

LARRY Alright, the books Luce's been reading, well I've read them too, they all reckon that the ones that don't want to sleep are really bright, you know 'cause they're so interested in the world around them.

HEC Haze and I were very lucky with Mikey and Megan..

- HAZEL Are you saying our kids weren't bright, Hec? Mikey topped his course in Quantity Surveying last year, and Megan's running the Dining Room at Gstaad. She's a maitre dee -I always thought they had to be men.
- LARRY I guess they just say that in the books to make you feel better.
- GERI Yeah, you might chuck them out otherwise.
- LARRY Oh no, Geri, she's no trouble she just doesn't sleep, that's all.
- GARY Small point when you think of it over a lifetime.
- HEC Ours slept through - a pair of logs.
- LARRY Twins are different Hec, it says it in the books, they develop a symbiotic relationship. So if one sleeps, the other is influenced...
- HEC We were lucky it wasn't the other way round. So how is it shaping up?
- LARRY We're coping, it's amazing how little sleep you do need?
- GARY What you mean is, it's amazing how little sleep you can get by on.
- HEC I didn't mean about Che...the baby, I meant your water filters, how's it going - Bank come through with the venture capital, eh Gary?
- GARY Wasn't up to me, I'm only a branch manager. It's gone to Head Office down south, but, no, there's a good chance they'll approve it.
- LARRY Yeah, yeah it looks like we'll be able to start limited production in a couple months, after we've ironed out a few glitches with the prototype.
- HEC Very innovative, and it's such a neat little unit - perfect for this climate. What are the sunshine days per year here Larry?
- LARRY It works out at 73 percent overall.

HEC Fantastic potential, you're on a winner this time Larry. When you get that export licence organised - the Asian and Pacific Rim market's your oyster.

LARRY The lawyers are looking into it and costing me a fortune and they haven't even opened their mouths yet! But anyway this sleep deprivation - it's a form of torture. We were asking the Doc we took her to, when she had a cold - a virus. Apparently it's really a good thing that she's got one, builds up their immune system. Luce asked him, why isn't she sleeping through. It was seven and a half weeks then, and they're supposed to have settled by six.

GARY The books say six weeks -do they?

LARRY He just laughed and said not to worry, his kids didn't until they were two and a half. He's a Doctor..... Guess he must have been joking.

GARY Two and a half years? Sounds close.

ENTER LUCIA FROM THE STAIRS

LUCIA Hi again, Larry get me a drink, something soft, Do you like the book? I couldn't decide between Aquaculture and Hydroponics

GARY Thanks Luce, it looks really interesting

LUCIA I think you need less water for Hydroponics

GARY Sit down mate I'll get it.

LUCIA No wine Gary, it gives gives her colic. He was joking wasn't he Geri? Two and half years... I couldn't bear it.

GERI Russ was sleeping through by eighteen months, but then we had Rodney by then and I was still getting up to him when Robbo was born so it didn't make much difference. Robbo was really good, he slept through at four months, but he was pretty ratty again when he was teething, but he was fine by fourteen months, except for his molars - he used to wake up screaming when he was cutting them...

GARY Here you are Luce, get that into you -replenish the lost fluids eh? It's not alcoholic - promise.

LUCIA Thanks Gary...That's nearly five years of broken sleep. How did you do it?

GERI Well, there's not a lot of choice, you do it cause you have to, after a while you forget what it's like not to..

LARRY How could you not notice -five years? I'm wrecked now..and it's only eight weeks!

LUCIA You're wrecked? How do you think I feel?

GARY We're on the home stretch now, aren't we Ger?

HEC You wait till they're teenagers, that's when it really starts.

HAZEL Don't frighten them Hec, the twins weren't that bad.

HEC Mikey's motorbikes and Megan's boyfriends - a very relaxing period, I don't think.

HAZEL He always wore his helmet and he never drank.

HEC Yes but what about the Marijuana?

HAZEL We don't know for sure.

HEC I'm pretty bloody sure.

HAZEL Anyway Megan's settled down, she's got a lovely boy, a real hunk, he looks like a ski instructor.

HEC He is a ski instructor

HAZEL I thought he was a student.

GERI Here it is, the stampede's arrived. Gary you get them drinks I'll introduce everyone. Hec, is that him, the one you gave the pool to?

HEC I think so, I wonder how he went, I'll get him a whiskey Gary, he looks like a man who could do with a stiff shot.

EXIT HEC TO GREET FRANK

- LUCIA Larry , did you hear that? She's started up again.
- GERI The barbeque's ready isn't it? They can help themselves. Hazel don't let anyone go upstairs. No, no Luce you sit down, relax.
- LUCIA I'm sure, I heard her cry, ssh! See that's it .
- GERI She'll be sleeping like a top, don't worry
- LARRY No Luce, that's a dog yowling.
- LUCIA Everything sounds like a baby crying to me..
- LARRY Your hearing becomes so sensitised doesn't it Cara. Oh Momma Mia! Lucia you look so tired - beautiful but tired.
- LUCIA I wish you wouldn't say that, I'm alright -OK?.
- HAZEL I don't know why people say it. It only makes you feel worse. You've got to remember you're doing a full-time job and shift work on top of it, so it's no wonder.
- LUCIA I had a full-time job before and I was studying as well. And I never felt tired, and I was swimming every day. I can't believe how much time one baby takes... You had two at once Hazel. How ever did you manage?
- HAZEL You just do, but two meant it was over quicker.
- LARRY I suppose it means you could get back to work sooner. Luce can't wait to get back to work.
- LUCIA I didn't say that.
- HAZEL I went back part-time when they started pre-school.
- LARRY Chiara was booked in to creche before she was born. Luce's going back to work in a month's time.
- HAZEL Oh...well I suppose if she's taking a bottle it'll be alright.
- LUCIA I haven't made up my mind yet, it all seems so remote now. But if I don't go back then, they won't guarantee my position.

HAZEL It'll be a wrench though, they're so...
 interesting at three months, really sociable

LUCIA I could go part-time, but I'd lose my
 seniority, but ..I just don't know what to do.
 I never thought I could feel so attached to a
 baby.....

HAZEL They are sticky like that.

LUCIA Sweetheart, could you get me a drink? You
 bought our Esky in didn't you?

LARRY Yeah, What do you want -Stout?

LUCIA It's got the spare bottle in it. Could you put
 it in the fridge. I forgot. The bottle- the
 milk wouldn't have gone off- would it?

HAZEL In an Esky -no!

LUCIA What would happen if it'd gone off? I didn't
 bring any dry Formula powder with me...

HAZEL You'd just go home early, we've had to. Hec,
 Remember that dinner we went to? We'd just fed
 them and they sicked it all up. It went
 everywhere... My dress, your slacks and their
 Seagrass matting.

PART 3

HEC So how's it held up?

FRANK The pool?

HEC That pump was a real workhouse - still going
 is it?

FRANK Spose so, haven't taken much notice lately...

HEC Hear you've had a pretty rough trot, mate?

FRANK Yeah, the wife pissed off a month ago. She's
 taken the kids with her. Can't understand what
 happened.

HEC Wives are very unpredictable- unlike machines.
 They always give you warning of an impending
 breakdown

- FRANK She was under a lot of stress at the time....
it must have been that...
- HEC Bound to be....So I suppose you don't have a
lot of use for the pool now?
- FRANK No, not a lot....
- HEC Best not to dwell on it-eh?
- FRANK Hard not to... Want a drink of this?
- HEC No, I'll stick to my whiskey. Must tell you a
funny story. My offsider, a young feller, he's
got these neighbours and this'll amuse you -
apparently they bought an Above-ground, not
unlike mine, yours - at a Lawn Sale.
- FRANK At a Lawn Sale...mmm
- HEC And every weekend my friend would see the chap
and a couple of his mates drag it all out -the
big roll of tin, the supports and buttresses.
They'd lay it all out on the lawn and try and
figure out how to put it together, but they
were overwhelmed by the task.
- FRANK It happens...
- HEC They'd pull up some chairs and raid his
downstairs fridge, and crack a few coldies and
that'd be it for the afternoon. This went on
for weeks with a lot of head scratching and a
quantity of alcohol was consumed, but nothing
ever happened. Eventually they didn't even
bother going through the motions, they just got
stuck into the grog.
Hard to credit isn't it?
- FRANK Yeah, hard to credit...
- HEC It probably rusted clean through before they
got it up. If they ever did. Some blokes
couldn't organise themselves out of a paper
bag. Staggering isn't it?
- FRANK Staggering...bloody staggering...
- HEC Get you a snag or something -line the gut?

FRANK Yeah, line the gut...

HEC GOES TO GET FRANK A SNAG

LUCIA Larry, the Stout's in the Esky, can you get me
a glass with some lemonade.

HAZEL Stout and Lemonade- ugh!!

LUCIA Not quite Campari is it? It's awful really, but
it's supposed to be good for the milk. The
Sister at the Health Centre even recommended
it.

LARRY Sorry Luce, you were right, she's crying.
No, Sit down. I'll go

EXIT LARRY UPSTAIRS

LUCIA She couldn't be hungry, I've just fed her. But
you never know how much they're getting do you?
I'd better warm up a bottle ...

EXIT LUCIA, HEC RETURNS

HAZEL How was he ?

HEC Not the best, he's half tanked, so I found him
a chair and a drink. He'll be right, tried to
cheer him up, told him about Bill's neighbours
- you know the ones who never got the pool up.

HAZEL Did it cheer him up?

HEC Seemed to...Now Gary's telling him and anyone
else who'll listen the story of his pool. He's
even laying out a hose to show he worked out
the shape..

HAZEL We'd better mingle. Just bring it with you

GARY The bloke who did this pool was an artist with
a Backhoe. He drove me all over town looking
at examples of his work. Then we came back here
and we got my hose out and we laid it out on
the ground to the shape I thought I'd like to
have, cause he said he could make any shape you
wanted. If you wanted a pool in the shape of
a... thong, he could do it.

- GERI Any shape you wanted - like a heart or a piano, anything...
- GARY So I laid out the hose just as I wanted it.....
- GERIas We wanted it, Gary
- GARY That's right, Geri adjusted it here and there until we were both happy and then he said, "OK, well you two can't afford that!" It was six hundred bucks for every metre of hose we'd laid out.
- GERI It's true, it didn't matter what shape it was, it just depended how long the hose was. He didn't take any notice of the shape - he just measured the hose.
- GARY So we cut the hose in half and started again. And finally we got a pool we could afford.
- LARRY One you could borrow the dough to pay for!
- HAZEL Neighbours ? Yes, but not next door, we're diagonally opposite, number fourteen. Yes, ever since they moved in.. about six years ago
- HEC Just before we put in our pool.
- HAZEL That's right, Hec because Geri was pregnant with Robbie, the youngest. Lovely kids, they were little tykes for a while there but now ...Yes, oh, credit to them both.
- GERI It all happened so fast once we'd made up our minds
- GARY You imagine all sorts of chaos and delays and disasters. But the whole operation was almost military in it's precision. Day One, the hole is dug. I was expecting tractors, trucks, cave-ins. But not a bit of it, the hole was amazingly clean, sculpted exactly to the shape of the pool. He was an Artist with a Backhoe!.
- GERI This little front end Loader thing just carved it all out - including the steps and spa...

- GARY The next day the pool shape was lined with these steel reinforcing rods that sit out from the edge of the hole, about so far, cross-braced and tied. And the day after the truck arrives and this huge bloke stands in the bottom of the hole and he's got this...Hose over his shoulder which pumps concrete.
- GERI It was like a big hose full of wet concrete...
- GARY They spray it onto the sides of the bloody hole and it just sits there - thwack!
- GERI Like almond icing on a wedding cake...
- HAZEL A beautiful garden..So.. tropical, like a rain forest really. No Gary doesn't mind the leaves.
- HEC If he had listened to me about Palms. Yes, a lot of exotic varieties
- HAZEL I suppose he could put up some shade cloth, but look -you'd miss out on the view of the stars and the moon...
- GARY Then other blokes come behind and they smooth it out - roughly, then that cures for a few days. Then the next week, other blokes come around and install the pump and the filter. So in less than a fortnight you've got a pool.
- GERI Gary was asking him all these questions, about salt and chlorine and what not and he just said...
- GARY The real test of any perfectly balanced pool is you stand on the edge and you throw a twenty cent piece in ...
- GARY THROWS A TWENTY CENT PIECE INTO THE POOL
If you can read the date on the bottom of the pool, then- No Worries! Forget about the tests.
- GERI/GARY Just read that date!
- GERI See you don't really need to go to the Pool Shop unless you can't read the date.
- HAZEL Two - twins, nearly twenty. Oh, do you think so? I do try and keep fit, it helps...
- GERI Just after Christmas when Robbo started School- I love it, it's terrific to get out of the house.

- HAZEL Yes, both have left home..Our daughter's overseas - in Switzerland. No, but she is working at a resort.
- GERI Yeah, I am on my feet all day but I was before, and at least I'm talking to adults -I nearly said grown-ups, that's what happens to you...
- HAZEL There are lot of opportunities in the hospitality industry. Yes, go anywhere - very portable.
- GERI No it hasn't really changed, all the names of the colours are different and there's a couple of new perm techniques, but cutting stays with you. I've always cut all our hair.
- HEC Yes I spose they have transformed the place , it didn't look like ..this when they moved in. No siree!
- GERI I finish by fourish so it's not too bad. They go to After-School Care. No, it's very good, they love it. Thursday nights and Saturday mornings, Gary takes over.
- HEC Nothing like a garden it makes a place. Yes, beautiful bit of landscaping. No, Gary did it all himself. You'd think a pro had done it.
- GERI Really worth it- we can save now. And when we've paid off the pool, we can go away -I want to go to Phuket - in Thailand.
- HEC Yeah, they do set you back a bit, but then what an investment, definitely add value, worth every penny. And terriffic for the kids, only way to keep them at home .
- HAZEL Quite a large pool, Hec likes it deep for his diving.
- HEC It's less of a hassle now there's only the two of us. Maintenance isn't a problem, I've got a system. Yes, just throw that money in- eh?
- HAZEL Mmmm yes. I suppose it is a bit big for us now but, we still enjoy it. We can skinny dip in peace.
- HEC Friends? Half the neighbourhood. On a Saturday afternoon, it was wall to wall kids, all screaming!

- HAZEL Great for entertaining- parties, barbeques...
- HEC It's still lovely to look at. The Queen Palms, I put in are fully mature now, they make a real picture. And there's nothing like a bit of water in a garden -to look at
- HAZEL Spas? Wonderful to relax in. Great after work - to wind down. No, actually Hec usually plays golf after work..
- HEC Now that we've heated the spa even Hazel uses it all year round .
- HAZEL Hec's building a Gazoobo - Gazebo from a kit..
- HEC I've designed it myself. The kits are very basic so I'm modifying it - extensively.
- GARY What'll you have ? Beer, white can, two white cans and a white wine and a dash of soda. What about you Hec?
- HEC Got my whiskey. Hazel could do with another Champagne, I put the Blush in the blue Esky , thanks Gary

PART 4.....

ENTER BLUE AND CRYSTAL IN THEIR DANCING GEAR, DANCING TO A THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE FROM THE OTHER GUESTS

- HAZEL You Won!
- GERI You didn't win?
- CRYSTAL We won!
- BLUE Scooped the pool, clean sweep, hands down, feet first.
- GARY Good on ya!
- HEC Experts like you two had to be champions.
- BLUE Rank amatchers the rest of them, not in the race.
- CRYSTAL The competition was stiff, but we won!
- BLUE The Latin American perpetual and The New Vogue inaugural, absolutely cleaned up.

- CRYSTAL And on points the best couple overall- Grand
Champions. We're in the National finals next
month! Free trip to Brisbane - all expenses
paid.
- BLUE Two nights at the Hyatt and then a week on
Daydream Island.
- HAZEL A second honeymoon. Congratulations!
A big hand for Blue and Crystal!
- GERI Come on, show us the style that won the night.
- GARY Move back everybody, make room for the stars.
- BLUE First things first- Happy Birthday Gazza!
- CRYSTAL Happy Birthday, Gary - something for you to lie
around your pool in.
- CRYSTAL HANDS HIM THE RIVIERA SUNSOAKER CHAIR
- GERI It matches yours, Haze
- HAZEL We did confab first.
- BLUE HANDS OVER THE POOL SHOP BAG OF SCUMBAGS
- BLUE For you mate, from one scumbag to another - a
years supply!
- GARY It takes one to know one.
- BLUE It takes one to sell one
- HAZEL Scumbags?
- GERI That's really what they're called...
- GARY Thanks Crystal, very thoughtful. And Blue, how
can I ever repay you.
- BLUE You'll think of a way
- GARY I demand an exhibition. It's my birthday -
- GERI I'll get the cake
- GARY So dance you two -show us how it's done!
- CRYSTAL We haven't got our music.
- HAZEL Oohh.....(DISAPPOINTMENT)

GERI You can dance while we sing Happy Birthday!

HAZEL There'd better be forty candles- I'm counting.

GERI There are four sparklers - that's enough

HAZEL It's a pool cake ...

GERI An Above-ground pool cake with blue icing on top. Well, no-one ever eats Birthday cakes.

CRYSTAL You've all got to join in.

NO-ONE NOTICES THAT FRANK IS DANCING BY HIMSELF ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE POOL, SUDDENLY THERE IS A SPLASH, AND LARRY RUNS AND DIVES IN AND RESCUES FRANK IN FULL ON LIFESAVER STYLE.

LUCIA Larry! It's alright , he used to be a lifesaver!

LARRY IS PERFORMING RUDIMENTARY MOUTH TO MOUTH

GERI I'll get a towel .

BLUE How long was he under?

GARY Put him on the Banana lounge.

HAZEL Thank heavens, Larry noticed. Anything could have happened.

HEC He was half stewed, he'd have no idea.

LARRY He's alright.

HAZEL The night might have all ended in tragedy.

GARY Easy does it, Mate!

BLUE Just make sure he's coughed up all the water. Let me have a go!

CRYSTAL Blue, your suit.

BLUE BEGINS VIGOROUS RESUSITATION

BLUE I learnt this in the Merchant Marine, Sylvester Broache technique, predates Mouth to Mouth, but it doesn't half get the water out.

CRYSTAL Careful Blue, he might be sick

GERI You're sure he didn't hit his head.

GARY Let's get him on the Banana lounge

CRYSTAL Wrap him in that towel, and give him a stiff Brandy.

HEC Ooh, don't know if that's a good idea. How are you feeling mate?

FRANK Awful, bloody shocking! .

HAZEL Strong tea, with sugar is what you need. No, Geri I'll go and make it.

HAZEL HEADS UPSTAIRS TO MAKE TEA FOR FRANK, LARRY GOES OFF TO GET A TOWEL AND HE AND BLUE HEAD UPSTAIRS. GERI IS PREOCCUPIED WITH THE POOL CAKE AND PICKING UP THE ABANDONED PRESENTS. GARY IS TRYING TO WORK OUT HOW IT HAPPENED IN HIS POOL

GARY He must have slipped. It can't be these pavers-they're non-skid. What did he have on his feet?

GERI Why did you invite him? This sort of thing always happens..

GARY What sort of thing? Fatalities?

GERI There are towels upstairs, Larry

LUCIA Check on her sweetheart, I think I heard her

HAZEL I'll put the jug on and give you a hoy when it's ready.

LUCIA I'd better go and check on Chiara, with everything happening, I completely forgot about her.

HEC You're a very beautiful woman, Crystal and a sexy little devil too!

CRYSTAL I beg your pardon, Hec

HEC I said you're a sexy little devil and when you throw your head back in that dance...I

CRYSTAL I heard you Hec, I just hoped that when you said it a second time, you'd realise how stupid it sounds.

HEC Alright, alright forget the sexy little devil till later. You're a beautiful woman and all woman I can see that, Blue's a lucky man

CRYSTAL Blue's not lucky, Hec. He's my husband.

HEC I know that, Blue's a good Mate.

CRYSTAL Have you been drinking, Hec? Not that it's any excuse.

HEC No more than usual

CRYSTAL Then, usual is more than you should

HEC You and Blue really do do it, couldn't dance like that if you didn't

CRYSTAL What about Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers?

HEC What about 'em?

CRYSTAL They weren't married and look at the way they danced.

HEC He must have had it off with her.

CRYSTAL Hec, do you know why we are here together? Because we have just helped save the life of a man who almost drowned in our friend's pool.

HEC He's out to it, he can't hear us.

CRYSTAL Hec, you are propositioning me over a... almost a dead body. He could have drowned, we might all be watching the doctor pulling the towel over him now.

HEC He was very down in the mouth- his wife's just left him.

CRYSTAL It must make you think, Hec.

HEC Hazel wouldn't leave me.

CRYSTAL Wouldn't she?

HEC I'm a passionate man, Crystal..

CRYSTAL You might be Hec, but what are you passionate about?

GERI Probably time for a coffee all round, I think.

GARY I reckon we could all go an Irish Coffee, Darl. We've all had a bit of a jolt. I just can't understand how it happened. Thank Christ, he didn't hit his head.

BLUE AND LARRY LEAN OVER THE VERANDAH AND CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION, LATER HEC JOINS THEM.

BLUE Four years in the Merchant Marine.

LARRY See the world?

BLUE From the Boiler Room. Really always wanted to be a plumber. When I was growing up, the only people with the flash cars were the doctors and the plumbers.

GARY Does anyone remember that story a few years ago about the couple who came back from holidays and found a body in their pool?

GERI No Gary, that's awful, it couldn't be true.

GARY There was so much leaves and stuff on top no-one had noticed it, been there for weeks...

CRYSTAL Gary! What about that drink you promised me?

HEC So how did you get in the pool game, Blue?

LUCIA Gary, I forgot, Congratulations - Manager eh? You must be in line for the city branch next?

GARY They're on a par- just that the city's got more clout.

LUCIA Geri's very pleased. What about you though?

GARY Na, you know me Luce, I'd rather watch things grow, be outside, in the dirt.

LUCIA Larry says there's still a lot of openings in exotic flowers - for export.

GARY Helleconias- I know. I still read the ads for blocks - one day ...Luce, one day ..

GERI Anyone for a snag?

CRYSTAL No thanks Geri, Gary have you forgotten about my drink?

GARY Its on its way.

GERI Does it twirl? Show us!

CRYSTAL TWIRLS AROUND IN HER BALLGOWN

GARY Better late than never, Crystal. A Champagne for a Champagne lady.

BLUE They offered me this real cushy job. All I had to do was drive this bloke around who'd lost his licence for drunk driving.

LARRY Could have been anyone, what was he?

BLUE A Pool Doctor with a big company- Kleer Pools. He said if you wanta come in with me and learn something, you're welcome or you can sit in the car. Well, I wasn't going to sit on my arse, was I? So I used to go in with him, as if I was his assistant.

HEC Can't see you as anyone's assistant for long...

BLUE Too right you are, Hec. We came to an arrangement, after we'd got the job list for the day I'd drive him to his favourite watering hole about ten, about four I'd come back and pick him up. Lovely system, suited us both.

GERI It does get better, Luce. A lot of them don't sleep - much. It doesn't mean there's anything wrong with her.

LUCIA It's just that I'm so tired, and I never seem to get dressed anymore. When Larry came home yesterday, I hadn't even had a shower and it was six o'clock!

BLUE I felt sorry for him, you had to, absolutely pathetic, but he was unable to stop himself..

HAZEL Coffee's ready Geri , which cups do you want?

GERI Not the mugs- the little ones in the back of the cupboard

BLUE Who should I meet in the pub carpark but the boss - wanted to know why I was coming out of a pub at ten o'clock in the morning .

HEC Did you lose the job?

BLUE No way, they fired the other bloke, gave me his job and car and upped my salary. All executive benefits.

- HAZEL I could only find four littlies, so I used these.
- CRYSTAL Ooh, just what I need..
- HAZEL I've finished off Hec's bottle of whiskey - tipped the lot in!
- GERI Oohh!! Thanks Haze.
- HAZEL Move all those empties, make a bit of room
- BLUE So I quit Pool Doctoring and came up here. I was just getting going with this Master plumber when he came down with some terrible fever he'd got in Bali, ended up in hospital with Malaria. He wasn't going to be able to work outside for six months, so....
- LARRY And you still weren't a plumber.
- BLUE All I could do, was doctor pools, so I scored a job with old Bryson- Wright- Pleasure Pools.
- HEC Pretty shonky contractor wasn't he? A week never went by in the Small Claims without someone suing him.
- LARRY Chuck us up my clothes- will you Gary!
- BLUE Yeah welll I'm not surprised. He was in debt up to here- hearing him on the phone was like listening to Disneyland ...
- HAZEL I'm sure he's not just a ski instructor, Megan definitely said he was studying...
- GERI The slopes?
- HAZEL I don't know, I trust her. Hec is so hard on her. In Hec's eyes, Mikey can't put a foot wrong.
- GERI It must be hard when she's so far away.
- HAZEL If I were Hec I'd be more worried about Mikey- not his studies. He hasn't got a girlfriend, and he's obsessed with this body building. Hec can't see anything weird about it. I think it's a bit extreme don't you?
- GERI Mikey always was a bit of a loner.

HAZEL This is different.....I'm sure Megan said Jean Carlo's parents had a chateau

BLUE Biggest liar I've ever come across- fabulous tales.

LARRY Pool contractors make Used car Dealers look like ... Bank Managers

GARY What's that about Bank Managers?

BLUE Dreaded the phone ringing -you had no idea what story he'd spun. So I left him and picked up a job with Horrie Fine.

HEC A gentleman and a scholar, old Horrie.

BLUE And a genius when it came to pools, absolute genius.

LARRY You must have been wanting to go out on your own?

BLUE No! But he wanted to move down South, sold me his business- the pool contracting side.

LARRY But the shop , the retail side, what made you take that on?

BLUE That's all Crystal's doing , Crystal is the shop, it'd be nowhere without her. If it was left to me, there'd be no business. Crystal's the people person -aren't you Pet?

CRYSTAL Blue calls a spade a spade, but I've always liked people. Most of them.

GERI But how did all the Ballroom Dancing start? Who taught who?

HEC SIDLES UP TO HAZEL AND TRIES TO

HAZEL I wish you wouldn't do that, Hec, you only do it when you're full. Leave me alone Hec. Sit down, I'll get you a coffee

HEC I don't want a bloody coffee, Woman. I want another whiskey.

HAZEL Get it yourself then.

HEC What's happened to my Whiskey?

HAZEL Gone, Hec, gone..

THE OTHERS HAVE A LAUGH AT HEC'S EXPENSE

CRYSTAL Blue learnt on board ship from a bloke who had
a book...

GARY You can't learn dancing from a book.

HAZEL It would have had diagrams -little pictures of
feet

CRYSTAL Blue had a stack of those old Fred Astaire and
Ginger Rogers movies.

HAZEL Oh, I love those films- Top Hat- "putting on my
top hat, puttin' on my shoes..."

BLUE Did you ever hear that joke about Fred Astaire?

CRYSTAL Blue!

HEC Did you hear the one about the Golfer?
His wife wanted to know why he played so much
golf- To keep fit, my dear. Why? She said-
To play more golf, he said.

HAZEL That'd be right, swinging wildly...
and no follow through, eh Hec?

CRYSTAL And ever since we've been side by side ,
in the shop and on the dance floor

HAZEL I've always been amazed at couples who work
together day in and day out, Hec and I couldn't
Could you Geri, Gary?

GARY No, we'd drive each other mad.

GERI Up the wall!

CRYSTAL Oh, we do that, but then there's always the
dancing and you can't be at cross purposes if
you're doing a routine together.

BLUE Or flogging Water Polisher to somebody who
reckons his pool isn't as sparkling as it could
be.

HEC I'll pay that

BLUE And you did.

LARRY HAS WANDERED OVER TO SEE HOW FRANK IS....

FRANK Why did you save me?

LARRY Because you were drowning , mate.

FRANK Why jump in? I didn't ask you to.

LARRY Instinct- someone's in trouble, you go after them.

FRANK I've been drowning for years. No-one's ever gone in after me before.

LARRY It's a reflex. You've hit the water before you've even registered what's happened.

FRANK My life's been drowned like a poor little kitten in a sugar bag. Now Lorraine's left- what's the point of pretending?

FRANK BEGINS TO CRY

LARRY Come on mate that's just the grog talking. Cheer up! Want another drink? What are you on?

FRANK Bundy OP .

LARRY Bound to be some Bacardi somewhere...

FRANK Fuckin' Jamaican Rum- forget it.

LARRY I'll see what I can do- just stay where you are...

FRANK I'm not going anywhere....

LUCIA APPEARS FRANTIC ON THE VERANDAH

LUCIA Larry, Quick! Come up here. She's making a strange sound. I think something's the matter. Quick!

EXIT LARRY UPSTAIRS

HAZEL All I want to know is where you got the names- I mean Blue and Crystal Pool- it's perfect.

BLUE The Pool part's true, I was born Albert Poole, but I was always called Blue

CRYSTAL Gail's my real name, but Blue said I reminded him of a crystal- clear and sparkling

BLUE And brilliant, Pet -so Crystal it had to be.

HAZEL Ooohh, isn't that just lovely?

GERI Lovely....

LUCIA AND GARY REAPPEAR WITH THE BABY IN THEIR ARMS

LARRY Looks like we'll be off, she just won't settle.

LUCIA Of course she'll fall asleep in the car on the way home, we'd love to stay but...

HAZEL Don't apologise, you're among parents.

GARY Hey, Ger I was just thinking about our old Clam Shell- our first wading pool. We've still got it- haven't we?

GERI Yeah, it's in your shed

GARY Let's pass it on to Luce and Larry, it'd be just the right size for Chiara.

GERI Yeah, it's their turn...

GARY GOES AND GETS THE PLASTIC CLAM SHELL WADING POOL.

GERI It's all you want when they're little.

FRANK IS SLOWLY WALKING INTO THE SHALLOW END OF THE POOL WITH A BOTTLE IN HIS HAND, HE GOES SLOWLY TOWARD THE DEEP END LEVERS HIMSELF ONTO THE RIVIERA SUNSOAKER FLOATING CHAIR AND GOES TO SLEEP. THE BOTTLE BOBBING ALONG BESIDE HIM...

GARY Whatta ya reckon Larry , Luce -ready to take on the responsibility of a pool?

LARRY Seems pretty minor compared to this...eh Luce?

LUCIA Owning a pool wasn't part of the five year plan...

GERI But plans are made to be changed. That's why you have kids- isn't it?

GARY It won't take long to put up - should only take a coupla weekends, if you've got the right tools.