

By George

The Rise of a Chip Shop Empire

V 3.3.2

A new musical from Richard Sykes

Script edited by Maria Sykes

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Cast of Characters

PAULINE BOOTH	A wife and mother *
GEORGE BOOTH	Old-School chip-shop owner *
HARRY CONNOLLY	George's best friend and landlord of The Crown
SAM BOOTH	Put-upon son and heir *
LILLIAN 'LILL' BISHOP	Pauline (and Marjorie)'s best friend.
WILL DIAMOND	Delivery man
MARJORY 'MARGE' BRACKENRIDGE	Outwardly vampish, predatory divorcee
CHLOE	Brash fitness instructor and lifestyle coach
BARBARA SALT	Clueless, but well-meaning customer
ALEX	Customer
JORDAN	Customer
JENNIFER BILLINGSLEY	Customer with a disaster-prone daughter
JANET	Stressed bride-to-be
DEBBIE	Hen night attendee
CATH	Hen night attendee
CLIVE	Ever-present bloke
BARMAID	
BACKING SINGER 1	
BACKING SINGER 2	
BACKING SINGER 3	

** See Director's Note appendix for further character details, suggested set layouts, props and lighting guides.*

ACT I: Scene 3 The Gym

LILL is in Zumba gear planting down her towel and waterbottle. CHLOE, the instructor, is getting her over-ear mic system set up. She is controlling the music with her phone and running through the class by marking steps. CATH, JANET and DEBBIE are in lycra chatting – there is a concern between them. One solitary man, CLIVE, is trying his best not to look awkward, and failing.

CHLOE Alright everyone. Starting in 5.

PAULINE enters dressed in Zumba gear. She sets her towel and water bottle by LILL's.

PAULINE Hiya Lill. Just in time again.

CHLOE *(checking her mic)* 1... 1... 1, 2... 1, 2, 3, 4... check check.

LILL Tonnes of time. Chloe's been testing that mic since I got here.

CHLOE 1, 2, 3, 4... 1, 2, 3, 4.

LILL She's not got to five yet.

PAULINE She's a dancer. She can only count to four. Any sign of... you know who?

LILL The Merry Widow? She's gone for a swim. There's that sexy new lifeguard.

PAULINE Ugh. As long as she doesn't fake a seizure like last time. It's undignified - someone of her age being hauled out like the catch of the day on the off-chance she'll get the kiss of life.

PAULINE notices JANET

Oh Janet, it's your do tonight intit?

LILL *(trying to warn PAULINE)* Erm...

JANET It's not 'my' do anymore. 'You-know-who's coming.

PAULINE Oh.

JANET She cornered me. I told her “Just a quiet night out. A few friends”. She sat me down. (*impersonating Marge*) “At the end of every story, traditionally, every woman is either married or dead. This is the most important night of your life. And I will not let it pass without occasion. Yes? Yes! Good.”. I mean, I couldn’t say no. Then she had this idea for a massive ‘surprise’. I dread to think what’s comin’.

PAULINE I’m sure she won’t let things get out of hand.

JANET She’s inviting everyone. She’s had t-shirts made.

PAULINE Right... (*feigning a smile*) It’ll be lovely.

PAULINE turns back to LILL rolling her eyes.

LILL I should’ve warned you.

PAULINE She’s a terror. Fancy hijacking the poor lass’s hen-night.

LILL She’s invited us.

PAULINE What? Nooo. We don’t know Janet.

LILL I said yes.

PAULINE is speechless.

Well, she said it was the (*impersonating Marge*) “social event of the year”, “once in a lifetime”, “the more the merrier”. “Yes? Yes! Good”

PAULINE Oh God.

MARGE sweeps in.

MARGE Morning Chlo! Sorry I’m late. Real drama in the pool. I thought I was choking on a contact lens, it turns out it was only someone’s varoocah.

She greets PAULINE and LILL somewhat dismissively

Lill. Pau.

LILL Are varoocah's still a thing?

PAULINE No.

MARGE *(to PAULINE)* Has she told you?

MARGE heads over to JANET who musters a weak smile.

In spite of the late notice, due to the rather underwhelming organisational skills of *(casting a withering glance at Debbie)* whomsoever was doing the do before, we've decided to shove some Semtex up the evening. Haven't we? We've got a stretch limo taking us into town, picking up as we go. Food's at Wong's Palace. And then 'The Vixen' and *(looking pointedly at Pauline)* I've arranged a huge surprise that'll keep me in gossip for weeks. You won't forget it. *(beat)* None of us will, if we all survive the night. Ha! I'll be 'round with your t-shirts this afternoon. Are you ready for the social event of the year? Yes? Yes! Good.

After setting her matching towel and water bottle, MARGE goes into her pre-gym routine, stretching ostentatiously. LILL and PAULINE look resigned.

The more the merrier. *(to JANET)* It's once in a lifetime.

PAULINE It wasn't for you.

MARGE (mid warm-up) casts PAULINE an acid glance.

What was it? Five husbands? We all thought you were addicted to wedding cake.

MARGE ignores the sleight and concentrates on her warm-up.

MARGE Pelvis exercises are what kept Gordon with me for so long.

PAULINE *(to LILL)* Which one was Gordon again?

LILL *(to PAULINE)* The one before she nicked my Len. Number four. Left her three years ago to travel. Didn't get very far, she slashed the tyres on his Mazda.

MARGE Fantastic for sexual function, bladder leakage and water retention.

PAULINE (to **LILL**) Just not Gordon retention.

CHLOE One... one...

MARGE (*side thrusting*) Number one was Steven. A real crush

LILL What happened to him?

MARGE I just said. Crushed. He took me to Spain and he was trampled by a bull in Pamplona.

CHLOE Two... two... check... two...

MARGE Number two was Luke. Rebound. Didn't 'Luke' both ways and rebounded off an oncoming Ford Transit.

CHLOE Three... three...

MARGE (*stopping to daydream*) Ahhh... three... Alfie. Alfred the Great. Died doing what he loved doing most. Me.

PAULINE and LILL are disgusted.

CHLOE One... two... three... four...

MARGE 'Flat Pirelli Gordon' of course. And then there was Len.

LILL and PAULINE look uncomfortable.

Oh poor Len. God rest his soul. Of course, you knew him first didn't you Lill? Didn't you have a small thing with him before he moved in with me?

LILL A six year thing.

MARGE Six was it? Mmm... (*she turns to Pauline*) You did well first time didn't you Pau? I've always been fond of George. He's so...

PAULINE Tight?

MARGE No... so ...

PAULINE Thick?

MARGE No... dependable.

PAULINE 'Predictable' 's a better word for it. I'll tell you this Marge... right now, today, and every Saturday, he'll be wedged in The Crown on his throne, with his duffle on its peg, boring the pants off poor Harry for three hours.

MARGE Yes?

PAULINE It'll be 'Town' this, and 'council' that. A strong 30 minutes on immigration and then another half an hour on the pointlessness of recycling.

MARGE Yes. He doesn't like change does he? Maybe that's why you've stayed together.

PAULINE turns away.

PAULINE He'll be there thumbing through his Racing Post, like a high-roller at Monte Carlo but the only thing he ever blows is the day's take. He never dips into his own money.

MARGE has a flashbulb moment.

MARGE Re-eally? Doesn't he? With his own money...Yes? ...Yes! ... Good.

PAULINE ' Course not. He's as tight as Chloe's face after that last batch of botox.

MARGE That's shocking! I mean, judging you on your appearance – which I always make a point of doing - I'd assumed you were both struggling. But George has got money of his own has he?

PAULINE You'd never guess. But mention his bank balance and he shifts from one cheek to the other like his pants are on backwards. Or like he's sitting on...

MARGE ... a fortune. Yes? Yes! Good.

CHLOE prods vaguely at her phone and the right music starts.

**Music Cue 07: Pump It Out
(CHLOE, CLIVE, CATH, JANET, DEBBIE, MARGE,
LILL & PAULINE)**

CHLOE Ready everyone? Ready Janet? Big day next week isn't it? Is the dress still tight under the arms? Shaun'll never notice – he's a bit of a bloater himself, isn't he? Right ladies. And Clive. Let's do this.

MARGE leaps into position. The others are more reluctant.

CHLOE Now remember, if you feel the burn, burn through it. Punch through the pain, you'll get the gain. If the fire alarm goes, ignore it. They're doing safety awareness in studio 3. Right, usual warm up. Cath, how's your chafing? Hmm.

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

GO AND STAND BY YOUR MAN
FOR AS LONG AS YOU CAN.
GET YOUR FELLAS FEELING JEALOUS
IT'S ALL PART OF THE PLAN
IF YOU'RE STRESSED OR DEPRESSED
AND IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM
NEVER MENTION ALL YOUR TENSION,
GET YOURSELF TO THE GYM
AND PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Low impact girls – and Clive.

CATH, JANET, DEBBIE

AND CHORUS PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Don't forget to breathe. Pretend you're alive.

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

THERE'S A DIET, YOU CAN TRY IT,
FOR A BRAND NEW YOU.
YOU'VE GOT RED DAYS. YOU'VE GOT GREEN DAYS
AND YOU'RE ALWAYS BLUE.
A VIGIL ON THE TREADMILL'S YOUR ADRENALINE FIX
YOU'LL BE TRIMMER. YOU'LL BE THINNER.
BUT YOU'D KILL FOR A TWIX.

PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Now can you feel yourself losing that weight...?

**CATH, JANET, DEBBIE
AND CHORUS** PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE No?... ramp to high impact. ...come on... 7. 8...

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE PUSH IT, BUST IT, POWER-THRUST IT

Janet has a slight 'wardrobe malfunction' (See Director's Notes)

KICK IT, THROW IT, CAMEL-TOE IT
HUMP IT, JERK IT, BUMP IT, TWERK IT,
PUMP IT OUT

CHLOE Shake it out... Not that much Clive... Reminds me of the pendulum on our Deidre's hall clock. *(beat)* Janet... pop it back in. It came out while you were thrusting. Didn't you know... *(laughs)*... really? It's big enough to have its own postcode....

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE
WE'RE THE SAME, WE ALL BLAME,
EVERYTHING ON BEING FAT
BUT THE SIZE OF OUR THIGHS,
DOESN'T CHANGE WHERE IT'S AT
I WOULD STRUT, BUT MY BUTT,
DOESN'T SYNC WITH MY RACK
I'LL TELL YOU RIGHT, IT'S CELLULITE
THAT'S HOLDING ME BACK
PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Heel back now... it's hamstring curls

**CATH, JANET, DEBBIE
AND CHORUS** PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Riiiiighht...another 8. here we go girls....! 3...4...

**CATH, JANET, DEBBIE
AND CHORUS** BELT IT, CHANCE IT, BELLY-DANCE IT
BEEF IT, BUFF IT, BETO SHUFFL' IT
HUMP IT, JERK IT, BUMP IT, TWERK IT,
PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Just a suggestion, next time could you perhaps wear loose fitting clothes for this class?

LILL (*aside to PAULINE*) If I had any loose fitting clothes I wouldn't need the chuffin' class.

CATH, JANET, DEBBIE

AND CHORUS IT'S HARD TO SHIMMY WITH A BUST THIS SIZE
ONE JUMPING JACK AND I GO BACK
WITH TWO BLACK EYES
A GRAPE-VINE STEP-'N'-THRUST WITHOUT OUR BRAS
WILL LIKELY MEAN THAT CLIVE'LL SEE
OUR CHA-CHA-CHAS

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

WHEN FRUSTRATION GETS YOU HOT
COME AND GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT
PUMP IT OUT

CHLOE and CHORUS PUMP IT OUT, PUMP IT, PUMP IT OU-OU-OUT

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

TURN YOUR BITTER INTO SWEET
WITH THE MOVEMENT OF YOUR FEET
PUMP IT OUT, PUMP IT, PUMP IT OUT

CHLOE and CHORUS BIG IT, ON IT, REGGAETON IT
SLIP IT, STACK IT, SALSA BACK IT
STRETCH IT, TONE IT, SUCK IT, OWN IT,

CHORUS PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE Back we go... 7... 8...

CATH, JANET, DEBBIE

AND CHORUS THE MOVES LOOK GOOD IF YOU'RE SEVEN STONE
BUT IF YOU'RE PLUMP,
YOU'D BETTER PUMP IT OUT ALONE
IF SHE TELLS ME TO MERENGUE STRADDLE
ONCE AGAIN
MY BITS'LL STILL BE WOBB'LIN' DURIN' NEWS AT TEN

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY AT YOUR MAN
AND YOU'VE TAKEN ALL YOU CAN
PUMP IT OUT.

CHLOE OU-----UT

CHORUS PUMP IT OUT, PUMP IT, PUMP IT OU-OU-OUT

CATH, JANET & DEBBIE

IF YOU'RE PERMANENTLY VEXED
AND COMPLETELY UNDERSEXED
PUMP IT OUT
PUMP IT OUT, PUMP IT, PUMP IT OUT

CHLOE and CHORUS HUMP IT, JERK IT, BUMP IT, TWERK IT,
STRETCH IT, TONE IT, SUCK IT, OWN IT,
ALL TOGETHER, FETCH A STRETCHER

CATH, JANET, DEBBIE

AND CHORUS PUMP IT... (BREATH)
PUMP IT... (BREATH)

CHLOE Suck in!

OUT.

Everyone sucks in.

CHLOE Well that got everything moving.

CHLOE nonchalantly goes back to prodding her phone. She realises everyone is still sucking in.

CHLOE And rest.

EVERYONE except CHLOE collapses. There is an audible fart. EVERYONE shoots an accusing stare at CLIVE. The fire alarm goes off which everyone acknowledges before turning back to CHLOE.

CHLOE (knowingly) Studio Three! Pub?

All exit.

Suggested Layout Overview

