

# BOWLING FOR THE BONG

## A TRAGEDY IN ONE ACT

### A SHORT OUTLINE OF THE TRAGEDY

RICHARD "BONG" FITZGERALD

The police station at Wallibong was a pretty little cottage stuck in the bush. Sergeant "Bong" Fitzgerald was the last person in NSW to run a one-person cop shop.

It appeared to everyone that "Bong" was simply a fossilized relic who liked the relaxed life of a country copper. However, "Bong" was running a rort.

The rort involved "Bong" setting up betting accounts for likely Australians. The bets were laid by "Bong". As well as collecting any winnings, the punters used their bets to decipher a post office box number. The PO box contained instructions which allowed the "punter" to dodge tax on certain traded items. The "punter" lost nothing. "Bong" creamed-off the money that should have gone to the tax office. It was only the ATO which was being short-changed.

The rort sounded simple. And it was simple.

The TOGA motorbike gang

"Bong" covered his arse. Every day he would open his "u-beaut" safe. The exercise of opening the safe door sent an electronic message to the fortified headquarters of the TOGA motorbike gang. In the event that "Bong" did **NOT** send a message, a warning light would

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indicate to members of the gang that they should destroy the cop shop and remove the safe from the Wallibong police station. They were to dump the safe at sea (contents and all).

The safe was hidden in the tiny kitchen in an area which masqueraded as a couple of cupboards. "Bong" accessed the safe from under the police station.

It is worth noting that none of the TOGA bikers (or their molls) knew about "Bong". They had their instructions and would respond to the call if it came.

The Tragedy Unfolds.
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"Bong" died suddenly.

His replacement was a stand-in police sergeant, Jared "Tazzie" Kerr. Jared was not intended to stay more than a couple of days in order to quickly work through the Wallibong paperwork. Then the station would be closed forever.

Part of the tragedy was that Jared was unexpectedly earmarked to serve the cricket team as a much-required spin bowler. Instead of moving on, Jared was asked to stay.

Now the death of "Bong" caused the TOGA bikers to flex into action (as instructed).

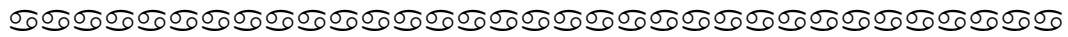
However, owing to an influx of extra people into Eagleby, there was nowhere for Jared to sleep. Thus (on the very night that the TOGA gang came to remove the safe) Jared was dossing in the police station.

Hearing the disturbance of several motor bikes roaring up, Jared opened fire on the motorbikes, aiming to disable. However, in the ensuing surprise and panic, one biker is knocked from his bike. He is run over by the TOGA bikes as they flee. The biker later dies, prompting a violent revenge against the person who is believed to be domiciled at the Wallibong police station.

The bikers need to know who it is who has taken out their comrade. Instead of looking up the latest answer on Google (which would have indicated Jared) the bikers go to their own database which has not yet been updated. Their revenge is taken out on the family of

"Bong" Fitzgerald. Two of his grandchildren are abducted, one with fatal results, and the son's house is torched.

This is the tragedy.



### CAST: TOGA BIKERS

BRYAN "MATTERHORN" JOHNSON	Vicious leader of the TOGA biker group.
JOHNNO BURGMANN	The lost soul who is "found". Turns his back on his former life of crime and violence.
ALEXANDER "LECKIE" JOHNSON	"Leckie" is short for Strezlecki. He is accidentally injured (fatally) outside the Wallibong cop shop. He was Matterhorn's brother.
FRECKLER KOZZIE MONGOL KHAN EVEREST (aka LIONEL TANKERAY) TROJAN	Other TOGA bikers who tried to destroy the Wallibong cop shop. They are later involved in the quest for retribution.
GWYNNE LOUGHBRIDGE SANDY	TOGA biker molls. Gwynne is the sister of Leonie George.

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TITTY-LOU	
SANTO, WAYNE & MARISCHO	External guards.

### CAST: ENSEMBLE

Police Sergeant JARED KERR	Nickname "Tazzie" (as Jared hails from Tasmania). He is a well set up young man, almost 30 years of age.
Senior Sergeant PAUL CLASSON	The well-established senior sergeant at the large Eagleby police station. He is also a "heavy" at the cricket club.
Sergeant NATALIE ROCHEVALE	Assistant to Paul.
Constable TERRY NAYLOR and Constable BRETT BARASS	Assistants to Paul and Natalie.
Investigator NEIL REDYARD	A social climber and ladies' man.
Mrs LORNA FERGUSON	Another member of the Eagleby staff, dedicated to secretarial and book-keeping duties.
MAX STRUDWICK	An officer from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) who is married with a baby on the way.
TANYA ANTONIO	From Sydney Central police station. Heads the "Bong Safe Drop" project at Eagleby.
FELICITY (FLISS) WARNER	Special operations (from Sydney Central).
WATT DORMOND	Special operations IT expert (from Sydney Central).
MARK KIERNEY	Special operations (from Sydney Central).

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RHONDA FITZGERALD and family	Rhonda is the elder daughter of "Bong" Fitzgerald. She is estranged from her husband and has an enormous chip on her shoulder. The world owes her. She is the single mother of Lucy (5) and Tina (2).
BRENDAN O'CONNELL	Rhonda's ex-husband. He is kindly and caring. It seems incredible that Rhonda pushes this man away.
CLAUDINE ARMSTRONG -- daughter of "Bong" Fitzgerald.	Married to a man called Armstrong. They have a son (Laurie) who is 4 years old.
DENNIS FITZGERALD	Son of "Bong". Has connections with a biker gang which is a rival to the TOGA gang. Dennis is boarding with Tyson and Leonie George. Leonie is Gwynne's sister.
MARLENE TELBOT-HYTHE	Redyard's lady friend who is given the diamond to be set into a ring.
Funeral guy	Working from the Wesley Funeral complex.
TRUCKIE JEFF AINSTREE	Incidental comedy.
The LEWIS family	Tim and Diane. Their 3 teenage boys are: Leigh, Nathan and Taylor.
CLARRIE TOZER	A local self-important farmer.
LOU TONG	The delightful owner of the local supermarket in Wallibong.
MR & MRS CORBY DUNCAN	The elderly couple who intend to take on Matterhorn until forestalled by Johnno.
DUNCAN FAIRHOUSE	Eagleby solicitor.
Extra players	Extra police, newsreaders, funeral guests. Various "Housewise" presenters and staff.

# FULL SYNOPSIS

*Once the "Housewise" crew and presenters rock up, there will be intermittent snatches of their work.*



We start with one of Fitzgerald’s daughters (Rhonda). It is clear that her life is dysfunctional. It is quickly evident that she holds a grudge against her late father. The tragedy which unfolds centres on her daughter.



Police sergeant Jared Kerr is originally from Tasmania. This explains his nickname “Tazzie”.

After a really sour romance Jared signs on for a gig in rural New South Wales. The police station at a small one-cop-township (Wallibong) is being wound down. The clincher is that the incumbent sergeant dies.

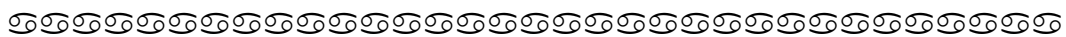
Jared will run the show in Wallibong until all the infrastructure can be transferred over to Eagleby (which is based on the large rural NSW city of Young). Jared’s job will be to sort out the accumulation of policework at the Wallibong cottage, transport it to the building at Eagleby and co-ordinate the investigation of any crimes occurring in Wallibong such that these will all be managed from Eagleby. Simple!

The ultimate intention was for the sale of the Wallibong cottage to some interested party – most probably to become a rustic café or trendy craft shop.

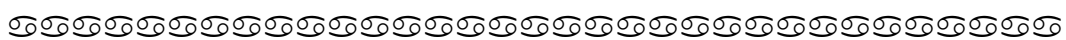


The “one-man-copshop” at Wallibong had in fact been an anomaly. It oozed into the 21<sup>st</sup> century on the back of one man: Sergeant Richard “Bong” Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald clung on while all the other similar police stations dotted around New South Wales were closed down. Fitzgerald was overweight, unfit and had high blood pressure. He was basically a secretive loner in the worst possible health.

Without warning, “Bong” Fitzgerald died of a massive heart attack. There was nothing at all suspicious about his death. Just as Jared turns up to man the Wallibong police station the funeral of Fitzgerald is in progress in Eagleby. The various Eagleby policemen gather at the wake, discussing the new man (Jared). They have had trouble in the past with new sweats. It seems very unlikely that senior sergeant Paul Classon will ask for Jared’s continued presence in Eagleby (after Jared’s specific clean-up job is completed). However, it is revealed that Jared is a handy cricketer: a finger-spin bowler. The Eagleby cricketers (paradoxically playing as “Wallibong”) are desperate for just such a player.



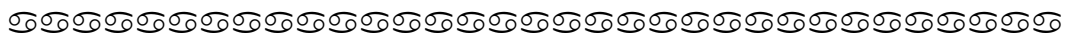
Apart from Paul Classon, the others who man the Eagleby operation are: Investigator Neil Redyard, sergeant Natalie Rochevale, constable Terry Naylor, constable Brett Barass and Mrs Lorna Ferguson who does the secretarial and book-keeping.



Paul Classon decides to accommodate Jared at the local motel for a couple of days. If things seem to be rocking along, then Jared will be billeted with the Lewis family on their acreage not far out of town. So Jared will enjoy the hospitality of Tim, his wife Diane and their 3 teenage boys (Leigh, Nathan and Taylor).

So far, so good. “Bong” Fitzgerald is dead, his replacement (Jared Kerr) is running the clean-up, and everything seems to be in order.

Everyone forgets (in the excitement) that a TV magazine show (“Housewise”) has booked-in for 4 days to film segments. Lots of ideas for trendy home-owners and married people about cooking and gardening and doing up their home. All this will happen in the Eagleby environs at a huge benefit to local entrepreneurs. However, this invasion means that there will be no vacant rooms nor any unclaimed beds during these 4 days.

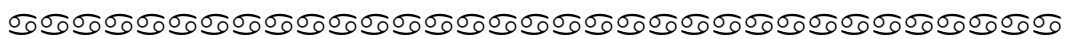


Directly following his arrival at the Wallibong cop shop, Jared encounters some strange, unsettling events.

Clarrie Tozer rocks up with the mail and delivers some esoteric advice to Jared.

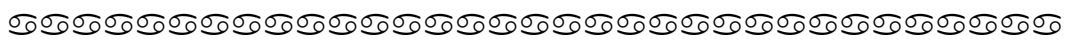
Lou Tang runs the local supermarket but spends time lugging weird goods over to the Wallibong cop shop (for Fitzgerald). Lou brings to Jared a few boxes of frozen fish.

Max Strudwick from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is looking for Fitzgerald. He appears gutted that Fitzgerald is dead.



Max and Jared are staying at the same motel and dine together in the restaurant. When they go outside, Max tells Jared of the reasons why he (Max) wanted so badly to interview Fitzgerald.

Later, Max and Jared investigate the fish. There are exquisite diamonds hidden in one carton of fish.



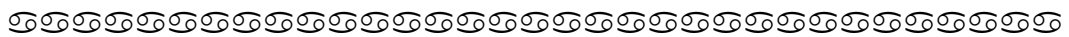
After these diamonds are discovered, there is a discussion between Max and Jared: we understand why Max was so keen to speak to Fitzgerald. A diamond has been trotted around by Fitzgerald. However, duty was not paid on that diamond. Hence Max’s interest.

The discovery of the diamonds in the small carton of fish has led Max and Jared to contact Paul.

Jared (to Paul’s surprise) is right on top of the “chain of command” over which Bong Fitzgerald held sway.

The 3 men try to put together a timeline of events since Fitzgerald’s death. Paul and Max open the letter which Clarrie dumped on Jared upon his arrival at Wallibong. Surprisingly, this letter uncovers a Lucky Strike betting operation which Fitzgerald was running.

Meanwhile, Jared manages to break into the kitchen cupboard (which is unable to be opened by regular means). This cupboard does not contain a water-heater (as expected) but a fancy electronic safe. Paul decides to bring in specialists from Sydney to deal with the safe in case a false step causes “disabling” messages to close down computer installations (or some such emergency).



Four police duly arrive from Sydney Central: Tanya Antonio, Felicity (Fliss) Warner, Watt Dormand and Special Operations Officer (Mark Kierney).



Paul interviews Lou who reminds Paul of the imminent influx of TV people from the “Housewise” show. The presenters and host of hangers-on will grab every bed in Eagleby. Appalled, Paul states that it is a prick of a time for them to show up. Jared offers to sleep at the Wallibong cop shop in a temporary bed.



In the Wallibong police station, Jared has been provided with an inflatable bed (which is propped against the wall). The large safe has been extracted from the cupboard and sits prominently in the middle of the floor.

Three police have arrived from Sydney Central: Tanya Antonio, Felicity (Fliss) Warner and Watt Dormand. Their brief is to work the safe opening without disturbing the intricate electronics setup. Although Max and Jared watch on keenly, Tanya, Paul and Terry head outside to discuss the current situation.

Watt and Fliss have to time the opening of the safe in such a way as not to cause the safe to send out warning messages. The idea is that the safe would not have been fitted out with such sophisticated electronic gear unless that was the ultimate purpose.

Finding the diamonds hidden in the fish seems now to be pivotal.

Tanya reveals why it was Jared who was sent to sort out the closure of the Wallibong cop shop. At Sydney Central there was a cluster of small “suspicions”. Jared tied these together. In fact, closure was the last thing that the police wanted: if the usual routine could be kept chugging along, then something might crack.

Further, Jared was onto the Lucky Strike mail-out: it was a means of sending out instructions via betting accounts and locked post office boxes. This method left the perpetrator without any obvious links to the “worker ants”. Hopefully, the contents of Fitzgerald’s safe will support this theory.

Still, Fitzgerald’s gift of a diamond to a girlfriend looks like a mistake – and Fitzgerald did not make mistakes.



At this stage all the people involved in Bong Safe Drop meet. There is a huge amount of activity surrounding possible repercussions from the safe warning system, and the contents of the safe.



It is apparent that Fitzgerald had to perform some definite activity on a regular basis (related to the mysterious safe) and then all was well. No warning signal would be emitted. However, Fitzgerald did not perform that regular activity, and the safe sent out its message. And then **that** message was picked up by the biker gang who came to destroy the cop shop (as was their instruction).

That night, 8 bikers from the TOGA gang rock up. They attempt to firebomb the Wallibong cop shop. Their activities awaken Jared, who successfully fires off 3 shots at the bikers' wheels in an effort to disable them. In the ensuing panic, Leckie is run over. Johnno hoicks Leckie up behind him and the disorganized bikers speed off. Jared is able to send the licence numbers for the 2 disabled bikes to the authorities.

Later the bikers will mourn for Leckie, who has died. All kinds of violent retaliation is promised. The bikers had been acting as instructed and **this** has happened!

*One of the bikies (Mongol) has been captured and will be questioned on the following day.*



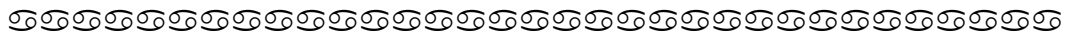
Tanya holds another meeting for the relevant police officers. Their main concern is that Jared's actions have not compromised the situation. He is warned that he may possibly have to step back.

Firstly, Tanya tries to think ahead. She types a question into Google on her phone. The answer (to the question as to the current caretaker of the Wallibong cop shop) is "Jared Kerr". In fear of retribution from the TOGA gang, Tanya organizes for Jared's family in Tasmania to receive 24-hour police guard.

However, when the outraged, angry bikers quizzed Google, they did not phrase the question correctly and received misleading information. As a second line of enquiry, they question their own database: they are told that Richard Fitzgerald is the current custodian (their database not having been updated since Fitzgerald's death).



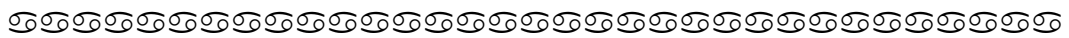
Interspersed in the action are various “visits” to the Housewise shoot.



Max reveals that the ATO had been investigating the diamonds scam for some time. Trading in diamonds attracted tax. Fitzgerald was avoiding that tax by importing his diamonds (hidden in foodstuffs, cosmetics and so on). Paul is very doubtful about the story that Fitzgerald had swanned off to Sydney to play golf and hand over a superb diamond to a beautiful woman.

The upshot is that Paul and Natalie fly to Sydney in order to interview Marlene Telbot-Hythe at the Royal Sydney golf course. Marlene (soignee and sophisticated) describes her romantic fling with Fitzgerald. However, when shown photos, it is in fact Neil Redyard whom she identifies as her Lothario.

Further, Natalie and Paul begin to understand that many of the emotions and behaviours that they had associated with Fitzgerald were all in fact put on to give him credibility.



At the well-protected headquarters of the TOGA gang, the bikers arrive one by one. There is much thrashing around due to the apparent stitch-up.

The bikies think just as Tanya had done: who is in charge of the Wallibong cop shop? However when the outraged, angry bikers quizzed Google, they did not phrase the question correctly and received misleading information. As a second line of enquiry, they question their own database: they are told that Richard Fitzgerald is the current custodian (their database not having been updated since Fitzgerald’s death).

On discovering Fitzgerald’s name and contemplating his treachery, Matterhorn swears revenge on both Fitzgerald and his kin.

The upshot is that the house of one of Fitzgerald’s children is torched. Further, 2 of Fitzgerald’s sleeping grandchildren (a girl and boy, cousins) were abducted from their beds.



Mongol revealed this to the cops when questioned:

That there were clear instructions. It was supposed to be some sort of honour thing. They were obligated to keep an eye on this u-beaut electronic apparatus that had been installed. Green flashing light every so often. And if it changed colour to red we had specific instructions. They were to torch the Wallibong cop shop and then follow up with a van to get rid of a safe. The safe had to be drowned at sea.



At the Eagleby police station there is a high-speed meeting where all the threads of the situation are covered.

The trap for the Lucky Strike betting operation (that is tax scam) is in place. The Neil Redyard diamond issue is discussed.

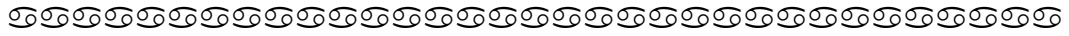
Leckie’s body has been discovered at the bush truck stop. This puts Jared’s involvement into jeopardy. It is decided that Jared will remain on the case until official confirmation is received from Sydney Central.

The decision is made to give top-level protection to Fitzgerald family members.

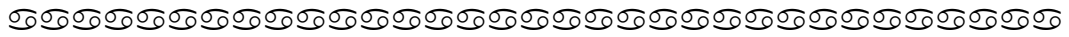


Events now move at a rapid pace. The house where Fitzgerald’s son has been boarding (along with Tyson George and his partner) has been bombed and torched. Two of Fitzgerald’s grandchildren (5 year old Lucy and 4 year old Laurie) have been kidnapped. A pet dog has been shot dead. This

information is directed to Brett who relays it to Paul. The police who are local to these incidents are now on red alert.

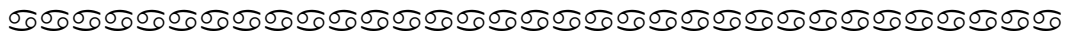


Now the ugliness of Matterhorn is revealed. In his urgent search for revenge Matterhorn decides that Gwynne (whose sister is the partner of Fitzgerald’s son) will murder Lucy. They are both ushered into a room within TOGA’s quarters. The upshot is that Gwynne is savagely stabbed and the child is carried from the room near to death.

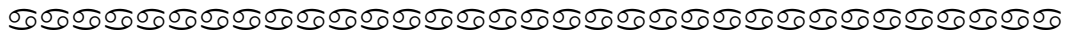


Sandy and Johnno have an in-depth conversation related to the kidnapping of Laurie, along with their plans for the future. They plan to dump the boy at a cop shop then go into hiding (after Johnno deals with Matterhorn).

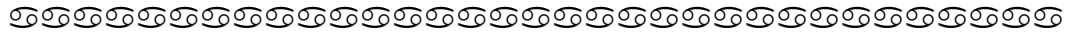
Consequently the young boy Laurie is found safe and well at the Angel Nest cop shop.



An elderly man and wife (who have had first-hand experience of Bryan Johnson (aka Matterhorn)) take defensive steps as they fear that Matterhorn is hiding out in their back yard. The old man is forestalled by Johnno, who suddenly appears on the scene. Johnno executes Matterhorn with a knife, striking 10 times in honour of the 10 victims.



Jared is now comfortably billeted with the Lewis family and enjoying a racy video game with the boys.



Early on Monday morning, several commuters board a train. They find Lucy’s body.



The three policewomen (Fliss, Tanya and Natalie) all evidence acute emotional distress on seeing the TV news report of the discovery of Lucy Fitzgerald’s body. The 3 women escape to weep in private: Tanya into the garden, Natalie at her desk and Fliss in the Ladies. Max is also too upset to continue (for the time being) so the remaining men soldier on. They are of course distressed but hide that fact manfully.

As to the TOGAs: Mongol Khan is in custody, Leckie Johnson dead (an accident), his brother Matterhorn Johnson murdered (that is to say executed) and one of the TOGA molls (Gwynne Loughbridge) seriously beaten enough to be on life support. Gwen is the sister of the woman whose house has been torched. Violent reprisals have been threatened.

To this end, the intention is to invade the heavily-fortified HQ of the TOGA Gang. Assistance from a more amenable biker gang is expected (shoot to maim, not kill).

The details of the betting scam are also coming to light. And there is an explanation for Neil Redyard’s activities.

The next planned moves are to sort out the Fitzgerald money with the lawyer (in order to deliver the bequests to the heirs and beneficiaries.) Also, special efforts have been made to clear Jared of all

culpability regarding the Leckie death. As the men break out from the meeting, Paul and Max find out from Jared about the bad romance in Tasmania.



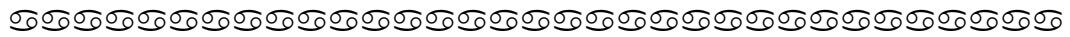
The TOGA HQ is ambushed successfully.



The solicitor explains to Mark how the Fitzgerald inheritance can be divided up.



The funeral of the 5 year old girl (Lucy) is very moving.



As the movie concludes, we discover that Tazzie is a successful spin bowler for the Wallibong team (Eagleby).

FINIS