Welcome To Spooktown – Stephen Bailey

[Spooky music]

ED EASTON: Ah! Ah! You – some ghost!

[Footsteps]

ED: Ay ay ay ay ay. Bit nippy now, isn’t it?

KATH HUGHESTEPHEN: It has gone a bit nippy, yeah. Who are we meeting?

ED: Uh, Stephen Bailey.

KATH: Stephen Bailey, oh, lovely.

ED: Yeah. We’re meeting him at the peach shop, I think. Yeah.

KATH: The peach shop. Oh, where they sell old – yeah, okay, yeah.

ED: Yeah. Be nice, innit? Finally get to go in there.

KATH: Yeah, I’ve just – it’s never been my cup of tea, old – old stuff. Old peaches. Off fruit.

ED: I’ve never – I’ve never just wanted old – old peaches. I’ve always wanted other stuff as well, so we should probably go to like Lidl, Aldi, um, Home Bargains.

KATH: Yeah. It’s quite niche, really, isn’t it? It’s quite like you’ve got to be very keen on peaches and old ones at that as well.

ED: Yeah.

KATH: But yeah. Yeah, interesting, though. Nice to go in.

ED: Yep yep yep yep yep.

KATH: Well –

ED: Have you, um, had any nightmares this week?

KATH: This week? Oh, yeah. Um –

ED: Really?

KATH: Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. Yeah. Uh –

ED: Oh god. That’s not like you, is it?

KATH: I know, yeah. Unusual. Uh, had one where I, uh, was looking in a mirror and all I could see was the back of my head in the mirror, but in all mirrors.

ED: No.

KATH: And I was like – I couldn’t tell if the mirrors were broken, my eyes were broken, or my head actually was on backwards. I didn’t know which one it was. It was one of them. Never found out. But it was really distressing, because every time I looked in a mirror it was just the back of my head. Didn’t hurt.

ED: Oh.

KATH: Which makes me think it wasn’t that my head was on backwards and all the mirrors were broken.

ED: You also wouldn’t have been able to see it if your head was on backwards.

KATH: Yeah, it’s really – it was a real mind fuck.

ED: Yeah.

KATH: Real mind fuck.

ED: Guess it was your eyes that were broken, then.

KATH: I guess, yeah.

ED: That was fucking horrible.

KATH: It was really quite distressing, yeah.

ED: Doesn’t it just – I heard that if you look in a mirror in your – in your nightmares then something awful happens.

KATH: Maybe.

ED: And that is – it’s pretty apt.

KATH: Maybe that was, uh, my brain trying to protect me, then.

ED: Yeah, maybe it’s lucid dreaming. Maybe it’s if you look in a mirror when you’re lucid dreaming, that’s when that –

KATH: Oh. Perhaps that’s what I was doing, then. Can you have a lucid dream – would I – lucid dreaming is – is when you just know exactly what was going on, right?

ED: You know you’re in a dream.

KATH: Yeah. Yeah, I don’t think I knew I was in a dream. I think I really thought that was my reality for a bit. How about you, any nightmares this week?

ED: Yes. Yeah, pretty – yeah. Pretty hairy stuff with the hire care, tbh.

KATH: Oh, really? Go on.

ED: Yeah. Well I don’t really want to say just in case Baron Travel listens to the podcast, do you know?

KATH: Okay, yeah. Yeah. Have they listened to others?

ED: I don’t think anyone’s listened to others. I don’t – yeah, I don’t think so. I don’t think – I don’t go in they’re like, ‘hey, welcome to Spook-Baron Travel,’ or anything like that, so I don’t think so.

KATH: Well you might be alright, then. That’s fair if you don’t want to risk it, though.

ED: No.

KATH: Okay.

ED: I don’t want to pay the excess. But suffice to say it was scary. And it was a nightmare.

KATH: Okay.

ED: It was a genuine fucking nightmare.

KATH: Oh god, okay.

ED: Really bad.

KATH: Well now I kind of do want to know, but – okay.

ED: Okay, I’ll tell you, I’ll tell you. Um, so I was in B&Q – is that Stephen?

KATH: Oh yeah.

[Spooky music]

KATH: Hey.

ED: Hello.

STEPHEN BAILEY: Oh hi, guys. What are you doing here?

ED: Well we thought we’d come and, uh, come and listen to your – we – somebody told us that you had a story about this here drag bar

KATH: Yeah, luckily you were here, to be honest. Lucky we bumped in to you.

ED: So we thought we’d come and –

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Yeah, thank god.

STEPHEN: I know, thank god I’m here. I mean what would you do without me? This is the Big Old Peach, read the sign.

KATH: Oh, is that what it says? The Big Old Peach?

ED: Wow.

STEPHEN: Yeah, the Big Old Peach.

ED: It’s just –

STEPHEN: I think it’s a play on bottoms because you know what the gays are like.

ED: They love peaches.

STEPHEN: Yeah, they love a big peachy bottom.

ED: Oh, like a perk bum-bum.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: I get you.

STEPHEN: Am I going to take – am I going to take you into the Old Peach at some point? Because Ed, I think you’ll get eaten alive.

ED: Like a peach.

STEPHEN: I mean I’m going to tell you something. It’s supposed to be shut down. It’s derelict. But you know the gays, we’ll find any way to party. And, you know, enough of our – enough of our bars are being turned into chains. So we’re keeping this one.

ED: Are they really?

STEPHEN: Even if you know about – yeah, because I know there’s the little problem, which I don’t know if you’ve heard the rumours –

ED: No.

STEPHEN: But, you know, we’ve got to keep our spirit high. Plus it’s only one pound for a shot and you get a free bottle of poppers, so –

KATH: Yeah yeah yeah I know.

ED: For every shot?

STEPHEN: Yeah, we’ve got to keep it going. Yeah.

ED: So many poppers.

STEPHEN: I like to call it ‘community-ran.’

KATH: Yeah.

STEPHEN: But things keep happening to people.

ED: Really?

STEPHEN: But, you know, it always has.

ED: Mate, this sounds awful, I had no idea about this. I didn’t even know this was here.

STEPHEN: Well that’s typical straight people.

KATH: That’s fair.

ED: Yeah, sorry. I thought this was just a – I thought it was a peach shop.

STEPHEN: Yeah. No, it’s not a – Ed, it’s not a peach – don’t be so literal.

ED: I – yeah, fair. I didn’t know about the bum thing before.

STEPHEN: You know?

KATH: To be fair, I thought it sold big old peaches as well. But like big and old peaches, so I was like, ‘ugh, who wants big and old peaches on the turn?’

ED: Yeah.

STEPHEN: I’m telling you, there’s a few – there’s a few old, saggy peaches in here. I’m telling you, I mean, there’s – there’s stories that are – are spooky, but some of the scariest stories are some of the things that are still living in here, you know?

KATH: See and I’m actually thinking of a – of an actual saggy peach, which is – is an upsetting image. Like a peach sagging.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Yeah.

STEPHEN: Well either way it’s not an exciting image, is it?

KATH: No.

ED: I’m thinking about that – you know the bum in, um, in ‘The Shining’ of the old woman?

KATH: Oh yeah.

ED: That horrible grey bum.

KATH: Saggy peach.

ED: I’m thinking about that, yeah.

STEPHEN: Saggy peach. Grey bottom. And that’s the thing. If you let peaches go out of date, they will sag and they will go grey.

ED: That’s the rudest thing you’ve ever said about a person.

STEPHEN: Most fruit does.

KATH: Yeah.

ED: ‘He’s out of date, she’s out of date.’

STEPHEN: That’s it. And you know – you know what the gays are like. Or I should – I should make it more for the whole community, the – you know, the LGBTQIAs, you know what we’re like, we’re very judgy about age.

ED: Is that a thing?

STEPHEN: Yeah. Honestly, I’m basically dead to them.

ED: Fucking hell.

STEPHEN: And I’m only stage age 27. Well you know what BBC3’s like, they’re going to let none of us three on. Oh god. Does BBC3 exist in Spooktown?

ED: Yeah, it’s the only channel we can get.

KATH: Yeah.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

KATH: It’s exclusively BBC3.

ED: Yeah, it’s annoying. Yeah.

STEPHEN: Because I didn’t know if it was still here because it did die, but now it’s been resurrected. And I was like, ‘ooh, I wonder if it’s crossed back over?’

KATH: Yeah.

ED: No, we just got the dead – the dead ass version. We’ve got the one that’s on telly.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Not the weird internet version.

STEPHEN: Yeah. ‘Gavin and Stacey’ days.

ED: I went to that about, um, what’s – what’s, um, this isn’t – this isn’t anything but, uh, Pandora Box?

KATH: Oh, yeah?

STEPHEN: The drag queen?

ED: Yeah. No, imagine if I was like changing the subject massively. ‘No no no, the – the Greek myth.’ Um –

STEPHEN: Well that’s where I thought you were going, quite frankly, Edward.

ED: Um, she was saying that like what is she – she used to be a twink, but what is she now when she’s like an old twink? Or what is an old twink?

STEPHEN: I feel her pain.

ED: I thought it was very sad.

KATH: That is really sad.

STEPHEN: Yeah. When I was a twink, yeah, I used to be a twink. You get a lot of dick. Can we say that on this?

KATH: Yeah.

ED: No, this is universal.

[All laugh]

ED: Yeah, take that out for CBeebies. Um, are you not still a twink?

STEPHEN: No, I’m – Ed, we’re all too old on this call to be a twink.

KATH: Really?

ED: Fucking hell.

STEPHEN: I’m barely a twonk.

[All laugh]

ED: I always thought I was a – I’d be a twink. Am I not?

STEPHEN: You – you would’ve been back in the day.

ED: Right.

KATH: What am I?

STEPHEN: Yeah, but not now.

ED: What am I now?

KATH: Just what – what –

STEPHEN: Well you’re just a woman.

KATH: Okay.

STEPHEN: You could be a beard. You could be one of our hags, um –

KATH: Probably that one.

STEPHEN: Ed?

ED: Yeah.

STEPHEN: I don’t want to break your heart but maybe you’re a daddy.

ED: What the fuck?

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Are you serious?

STEPHEN: You’re the person that we get – yeah, we get with you to spend your money.

ED: This is the scariest thing that’s ever happened on this podcast.

STEPHEN: Yeah, exactly. I’m going to win this podcast. Yeah.

[All laugh]

ED: I’d be a fucking daddy? I’m not having this.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, you’re – you’re a daddy.

ED: What?

KATH: You don’t want to be a daddy? I’ve accepted that I’m a hag.

STEPHEN: Or a beard, Kath. Or a beard.

KATH: Or a beard, sorry.

ED: ‘Welcome to Spooktown presented by a daddy and a hag.’

STEPHEN: Which, to be fair, that’s what you want for someone driving this ship, isn’t it? You don’t want someone – like we want to be scary.

[Spooky music]

ED: Uh, I’ve got a couple of quick questions for you if I can before we go into the – the Big Old Peach.

STEPHEN: Please, please.

ED: Um, have you – have you eaten since you got to Spooktown, is my first question.

STEPHEN: I did eat, Daddy. I did. The Big Old Peach does, um, one pound chicken wings.

KATH: Oh, wow.

ED: That’s insane. That’s so good.

KATH: That’s – yeah.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Well it’s why my dad goes to the gay villages for the cheap chicken wings. I’m – well that’s what he says, but I believe him.

ED: What, uh, what sauce did you have on your chicken wings?

STEPHEN: I had buffalo.

ED: The classic.

STEPHEN: Yeah, obviously spicy because, you know, the thing is, because it’s quite dangerous in here, anything that gives you the shits might keep you safe.

ED: ‘Have you got anything on the menu that gives me the shits?’

STEPHEN: Well the shits in the gay community is not good, Ed, as you know.

ED: As I know, yeah.

STEPHEN: Stop things happening. Yeah, stop things happening.

ED: I don’t think there’s a community in the world where the shits is like top top –

KATH: Yeah, I –

ED: But I know it’s especially –

STEPHEN: Okay, well you’re going to have to speak to my friend Natalie at a different time about that.

[All laugh]

ED: That’s – yeah, very good point, actually. There’s a very small, niche community where it’s triple thumbs up. Um, yeah, good. Good. Spicy old chicken wings. Uh –

STEPHEN: Should I have waited for you guys to eat? I just wasn’t sure what time you were showing up.

ED: No no no no no, it’s – it’s alright.

KATH: No, that’s fair. It’s okay.

ED: This will probably take long enough for us to – to grab a bite afterwards, if you want.

KATH: Yeah.

STEPHEN: Okay, great. Well if you get out.

KATH: Well if we don’t get out we’ll just have chicken wings for the rest of our lives, no problem.

ED: Very true.

STEPHEN: Yeah, well that’s it. I don’t know if you can have chicken wings in hell, but –

KATH: Okay.

ED: Oh. Oh.

STEPHEN: Guys, I’m not trying to put you off coming in.

KATH: It sounds like you are. Like loads.

STEPHEN: Are you – are you scared, Kath? Are you scared?

KATH: Of some chicken wings? Nah. Um, I don’t want the shits, actually, so – so –

STEPHEN: Yeah, so you’re spooked, you might say?

KATH: Uh, yeah, I would say, actually.

STEPHEN: So perhaps I’m the mayor of Spooktown.

ED: Are you the mayor of Spooktown?

STEPHEN: Well someone has to be.

ED: Someone does have to be.

KATH: You’re right, someone really does. We do need one.

STEPHEN: Is it – is it you, Ed?

ED: No.

STEPHEN: Daddy, is it you?

ED: It’s neither of us, son.

STEPHEN: No, well then maybe it should be me.

ED: You’ve really lost confidence in that.

STEPHEN: I’m willing to take that mantle. No, I’m willing to take the mantle.

KATH: Okay.

ED: Let’s, uh –

STEPHEN: Any thought of power, I’m into.

ED: Okay, okay.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Um, what’s, Stephen, the spookiest thing that’s ever happened to you, son?

STEPHEN: Um, I was once with a woman. That was terrifying.

[All laugh]

STEPHEN: Yeah, I would – oh, I actually have a real story. Do you want to hear it?

ED: I’d fucking love to, yeah.

KATH: Yeah, yes please.

STEPHEN: Okay, so my friend Natalie, I went to her house once, right? Uh, this – I was like, um, 18 so it was like five years ago. And, um, I go upstairs to have a tinkle, and as I – and she lives in a terrace, by the way, a terrace in the Stockport area. That’s, you know, that’ll get us through this. And then I was coming down the stairs and I saw a man with like, um, do you know like a mac like Inspector Gadget wore?

KATH: Yes. Yeah.

STEPHEN: But it was like a camel mac, picking up an umbrella, walking out the door. A man doesn’t live there. She lives with her mum. And I was like, ‘oh my god, oh my fucking god, what have I just seen?’ Like sorry I swore, but I’m scared. And I was like, ‘what have I just seen?’ And I went and I was like, ‘um, Natalie, I’ve just – I’ve just seen’ – and I described it, and she went, ‘oh my god, my mum saw him the other night, then she got choked and fainted and our’ – the name of her niece, who was at the time about six, also said, um, ‘Nat Nat, who’s that man with the – the umbrella? Who’s that man with the umbrella?’

KATH: Call the police.

ED: Oh my god.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Yeah.

KATH: What – why has everyone gone – why has everyone gone –

STEPHEN: I – I should have called the police.

KATH: ‘Oh, that – yeah, that bloke in the house that chokes me in the night.’ Like what? Why hasn’t –

STEPHEN: Do you know what, Kath? Some of us are just happy to have a man around.

ED: That’s fucking spooky as shit.

KATH: Yeah, that’s scary as hell.

STEPHEN: Yeah, but all three of us not spoke to each other. ‘Oh, sorry,’ and it’s – it was more like a vision than it was like a presence. It was more like, ‘oh, I’m just walking into your little past situation.’

ED: Did you get choked?

STEPHEN: I didn’t get choked.

ED: By the ghost?

STEPHEN: Which such a shame because I’m into it.

KATH: Yeah. Yeah. That’s terrifying.

ED: Man, that’s fucking –

STEPHEN: Yeah, yeah.

ED: That’s a – that’s a good one.

STEPHEN: That – that is a true one. That’s a true one. And then it – it was – at first I was like, ‘oh, here he is. You’ve been watching too much “Charmed.”’ And then –

KATH: Who hasn’t?

STEPHEN: Who hasn’t, babe? And then when you feel the two – when you’ve got the other two saying it, I was like, ‘this is fucked up.’

ED: Yeah.

KATH: Yeah, that’s mad.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Either way it’s scary.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: If it’s a ghost, it’s scary. If it’s a human, it’s fucking scarier.

KATH: It’s scarier. I thought it’s –

STEPHEN: I think it’s less scary. No, I think it’s less scary if it’s a human, because we can beat him, and we could win.

KATH: But no one did. Everyone just – everyone just looked at him and went, ‘cool, leave him to it.’

STEPHEN: Hey, and he doesn’t pay rent. I find that the scariest thing.

ED: Living rent free in your head and your house.

STEPHEN: Yeah, that’s it. That’s it. Isn’t that what every man does?

ED: Yeah. Take that, me.

STEPHEN: Bit – bit of feminism in Spooktown. Bit of feminism.

ED: Now then, we have a – a frosty issue to, um, attack – what? We’ve got a thorny issue to something? Basically, um, so we’re doing this podcast for the council, and they’ve said –

KATH: Oh, yeah.

ED: That, um, there’s not enough jeopardy, uh, so we’re getting –

STEPHEN: Not enough jeopardy?

KATH: Yeah. Yeah, right? We thought it was fine without it, but –

STEPHEN: I don’t know – I mean any gay bar has jeopardy, they’re very dramatic places. But this big old bitch, not enough jeopardy. You wait until I’m mayor, that council’s being replaced.

ED: To be fair they meant not enough jeopardy from our side.

STEPHEN: Okay, well what have I got to do to keep it? What have I got to do?

ED: It’s – it’s from our side.

KATH: Well it’s from our side more so, yeah.

STEPHEN: Oh.

ED: So –

STEPHEN: I’ll just sit back – I’ll just sit back and do nothing, then.

ED: The stories – the stories are basically, um, charlatans are coming in and making up stories. So basically if we don’t believe your story, we – we’ve got to off you. We’ve got to kill you, I’m afraid.

STEPHEN: Do I get a choice about like if I’d like get to like get buried or cremated as well?

ED: Yeah yeah, alright. You get to decide how your – your corpse is disposed, for sure.

STEPHEN: Okay, because I’d like – yeah, I’d like to be stuffed.

KATH: Okay, and sort of mounted somewhere?

STEPHEN: And put in the town – yeah, exactly, and put in the town square.

KATH: Okay.

ED: Okay.

KATH: Yeah, that can – that could be arranged.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: In what pose? Like how? Like in what way?

STEPHEN: Um, just like, you know, like – well it’s hard to show because this is a podcast, but like ‘ta da.’

ED: Okay, so like very –

KATH: I think that fully summarised it.

STEPHEN: That looks like – yeah, like, ‘he’s ready to tell some dick jokes.’

KATH: Yeah.

ED: So one hand up in the air. Do you want a microphone in the other?

STEPHEN: No, I don’t want a microphone.

ED: Sorry.

STEPHEN: Just – just hand in the air, fabulous outfit.

ED: Sure.

STEPHEN: Let me decompose a little bit so I can be thinner, um, and the way I’d like to die is could I have my blood drained by a vampire?

ED: No.

KATH: I mean, I don’t think that was on the – one of the options.

STEPHEN: Oh.

KATH: But I – I mean it’s a good one.

ED: No, you’ve got two – you’ve got two options, one choice.

STEPHEN: Oh.

ED: Yeah.

STEPHEN: I thought I could just choose anything.

ED: No way. No way.

STEPHEN: Oh, okay.

ED: Drained by a vampire? We’re not falling for that one, mate. Come on.

STEPHEN: I thought this was too easy. Oh god, I think that would be really sexy as well.

ED: ‘Can I die of old age?’ We’re not charlatans, pal. I’m onto – I’m onto you.

STEPHEN: Okay, what are my options for death? Do I choose now?

ED: I’ll give you the options and then you choose now.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: Pulled apart by the alt rock band Pulled Apart by Horses, or –

STEPHEN: Yep.

ED: Kath’s crowbar.

STEPHEN: I think I’d rather go Kath’s crowbar.

KATH: Aw.

STEPHEN: Because that’s how, um, Michelle Keegan went in ‘Coronation Street’. And I feel up between us –

KATH: Yeah.

STEPHEN: Not by Kath’s crowbar but it was a crowbar death.

KATH: It – it was a crowbar, yeah.

ED: Oh, was it really?

KATH: Yeah.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Yeah, it was.

ED: I thought you were saying that Kath – she was killed – she was killed by –

KATH: It could’ve been me. I lend it out. I lend it out. It was my crowbar.

STEPHEN: Well as we all know, I am star of two episodes of ‘Coronation Street’.

KATH: Yeah.

ED: Wow.

STEPHEN: And, you know, I think we should stay on theme.

ED: Great, I fucking love that.

STEPHEN: Okay, great. See, once again –

ED: Two – two episodes. That’s good because that means that they liked you enough to bring you back.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Exactly. That was it. I mean they didn’t give me a two year contract, but hey. I won’t – I won’t complain. The next day I went and filmed ‘Celebrity 5 Go Camping’ with Bobby Davro. What a treat.

ED: Wow.

KATH: That’s amazing.

ED: Kath’s got one question and then we’ll hear your story, I think.

KATH: The bloody ‘Top Gear’ lads, shag marry kill.

STEPHEN: Oh, great.

KATH: So I need to know that from you.

ED: Wait, who are the ‘Top Gear’ lads?

KATH: Uh, the classics.

ED: Classics I think, right?

KATH: Yeah, yeah. Oh god, yeah, they keep changing.

ED: Jazza.

STEPHEN: So Jeremy Clarkson.

KATH: I think Clarkson –

ED: The lad –

STEPHEN: That little thing called Richard.

ED: Yeah, and the OG daddy.

STEPHEN: Okay, and the OG daddy. Okay. And what have I got to do? Shag, marry, kill. Ooh, interesting. I think Jeremy Clarkson’s got the most money so I’m going to marry him.

KATH: Okay, yeah.

STEPHEN: Um – I’m going, um –

KATH: It’d be an unhappy marriage, wouldn’t it?

STEPHEN: Most are. And I’m going to, uh, so I’ve shagged – who – what did I just do with him?

KATH: Married Clarkson.

STEPHEN: I’ve married Jeremy Clarkson, I’m going to shag – is it Brian?

KATH: He has got Brian May vibes, hasn’t he?

ED: Is it Brian?

KATH: I don’t think – is it Brian?

STEPHEN: His name’s Brian, yeah. I’m going to shag –

KATH: I don’t actually know if it is.

STEPHEN: It is Brian.

ED: It’s May – it’s May. It is – May’s his surname.

KATH: It – yeah, that’s what I was thinking.

ED: James May.

KATH: Brian May.

STEPHEN: Okay, I’m going to shag May because people seem to like him and I feel like if I killed him, we’re going to get angry tweets, and I don’t need that. And then I’m going to kill Richard Hammond.

ED: Okay. Yeah.

KATH: Okay.

STEPHEN: And also he said something about like how coming out is not interesting dinner table chat, so yeah.

KATH: Did he?

ED: What?

STEPHEN: Revenge.

ED: Oh god, but what does he think is interesting?

STEPHEN: We’ll save that for a different time.

ED: Driving a car?

KATH: Oh god, yeah.

ED: ‘I’d much rather hear about driving a car than somebody coming out.’

STEPHEN: I don’t know how there’s like not a gay guy on ‘Top Gear’ because I drive brilliantly. I really do.

ED: Shall we –

STEPHEN: Do you want me to take you in or should I just tell you?

KATH: Whatever feels right, really.

STEPHEN: Um –

KATH: Whatever – whatever you feel.

ED: Yeah, do you want to take us in and show us around, or do you want to tell us the story and then take us in?

STEPHEN: You know what? I’m going to take you in, I’m going to show you around. No one’s in. There might be someone in. okay.

KATH: Okay.

STEPHEN: If you get my drift.

KATH: Okay.

STEPHEN: But just don’t do anything to piss them off and you’ll be fine.

ED: I don’t get what you mean.

STEPHEN: Ed, I’m looking at you when I say that, Daddy.

ED: I don’t get what you mean there. I don’t get what you mean.

STEPHEN: Yeah. Just don’t piss off – you know what I mean.

ED: I don’t know what you mean.

STEPHEN: We’re going into the drag bar of days gone past. There’s a lot of queens there that you might not see, okay? So be careful what you say. None of this, ‘oh, I’m not a daddy.’ Just be a goddamn daddy.

KATH: Ed, for once in your life, just be a goddamn daddy.

ED: Okay, let me – let me try.

STEPHEN: Kath, just be fabulous.

[Spooky music]

STEPHEN: Okay guys, follow me. We’re going to come in and then I’m going to tell you the story.

KATH: Okay, great.

STEPHEN: Okay? Yeah, thank you. Um, Brody, can I get three shots of Jagerbomb please? Are you guys okay with the Jagerbomb?

KATH: I’m fine with the Jagerbomb.

ED: I’m paying.

STEPHEN: Yeah, Daddy will pay.

ED: Hello, I’m Daddy.

STEPHEN: Brody, make it six. Make it six. They’re going to need it for this story. I know, more council people doubting our existence. Come on, Brody. Oh, thanks, Brody.

ED: Thank you, Brody.

STEPHEN: Right, cheers, girls. Cheers.

[Glasses clinking]

KATH: Right, cheers.

ED: Cheers.

STEPHEN: After three, good elf. One, two, three.

KATH: Ooh!

ED: Oh!

STEPHEN: See, it just goes down. It just goes down.

ED: Yeah, it – it does.

STEPHEN: When you’ve spent as much time in this gay bar as I have, it just goes – it doesn’t – it doesn’t touch the sides. Maybe I’m dead. Maybe I’m dead.

[Disco music, people talking]

STEPHEN: Okay so guys, just come over here to this corner, okay?

KATH: Okay. Okay.

STEPHEN: Just quickly, do – do the cross to the Kylie poster. Do the cross.

KATH: Okay. Okay, thank you Kylie.

STEPHEN: Say a prayer to the Kylie poster. Okay. Now this is the Big Old Peach. It’s very unassuming, but it needs to stay around because someone passed us, you guys, over 100 years ago. Yeah, that’s right. We were still illegal, but the Big Old Peach was around. And yeah. And do you see – do you see this big pink, fabulous wig over here?

KATH: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, it’s pretty hard not to see it.

STEPHEN: Can you see it? Can you see it move? No – no, if you want proof, look at it move. It’s moving. It’s moving. It’s not attached to anything. Look.

KATH: I thought there was a fan. I thought there was a fan moving it. I thought there was a fan.

STEPHEN: No, there’s not a fan, okay? This is a true story. There’s no goddamn fan.

KATH: Okay, because I –

STEPHEN: The only us is – us, we are fans of the wig.

KATH: There might be air con, I don’t know.

STEPHEN: Guys, we’re fans of the wig.

KATH: Okay. Oh yeah, sorry. Yeah, we’re fans of the wig.

STEPHEN: I’m telling you, you’re – I’m telling you, you’re not going to regret disagreeing or – you know, just go with it, girls. Um, now this wig belonged to the old drag queen, I believe she was the first and worst drag queen of Ireland, okay? She was the first one. Her name was Marge O’Rine, and we won’t be seeing her on any seasons of Daddy’s favourite, ‘Ru Paul’s Drag Race’. Because she’s no longer with us, okay? Don’t say it too loud. She is stuck in purgatory. Now I don’t know what gay purgatory’s called because I’m still with us, so it could be gurgatory, I don’t know. And she got rejected by all the dance schools in Ireland because she couldn’t Riverdance. She couldn’t Riverdance. But then she was accepted by the drag community, and that’s when Marge O’Rine was born. And she wanted to do the ultimate combination of Riverdance and the death drop. But she died before she achieved it.

[Ominous music]

STEPHEN: And now anyone who puts on this wig becomes possessed by Marge O’Rine, okay? And they have to achieve the Riverdance death drop sensation, and if they don’t, they die. They die. Marge O’Rine’s spirit is trapped within the big pink wig. And until her destiny of doing the Riverdance death drop sensation is achieved, then she can’t move onto the afterlife, which is called Heaven. And I don’t mean Jesus’s heaven, I mean all the dead people go to the Heaven in Soho.

And she returns every year during pride month. Any gay that puts on this wig, she possesses. And I’m going to just tell you there’s a lot of bodies in this basement, because that dance has not been completed. I’m not brave enough to try. I’m not brave enough to try. My knees can’t take the drop, so I know I’m not going to survive. But I – okay, I’m not going to lie. Marge O’Rine pays me. She’s promised me a gateway straight to Heaven. I don’t have to wait – wait in gurgatory as long as I bring people to try on the wig. That’s right. That’s right. I groom people. That’s why you two are here.

KATH: Oh my god. You piece of shit.

STEPHEN: That’s why you two are here.

ED: Stephen.

KATH: You piece of shit. You piece of shit.

STEPHEN: I’m not sitting on the council.

ED: Stephen.

KATH: Mayor my ass, Jesus Christ.

STEPHEN: Yeah, we need you to –

ED: Mayor her ass, right now.

STEPHEN: I need you to do – I will mayor her ass all the way to gurgatory if she doesn’t do this goddamn death drop.

KATH: I can’t do a death drop. I can’t Riverdance.

STEPHEN: Well neither could Marge O’Rine and look what happened.

KATH: Well exactly, so I’m not putting the wig on.

STEPHEN: Well then I’m going to have failed her today, and I don’t want to make Marge O’Rine angry.

KATH: Well what happens?

STEPHEN: She’ll cut off my Botox supply for a month.

ED: Shit, man.

STEPHEN: I know, serious business here. It’s really serious business.

ED: I mean, I’ve got plantar fasciitis, I can’t Riverdance.

KATH: I’ve got a hernia.

ED: Um, uh, yeah, Kath’s got a hernia.

STEPHEN: You’ve got – never mind Marge O’Rine stuck in gurgatory. Stuck in gurgatory but you’ve got a little hernia. Sort out –

KATH: It’s – I can’t use my core. It’s above my belly button and I can’t use my core.

STEPHEN: Okay, well Dad’s – Daddy’s going to have to do it.

KATH: I feel like Riverdance, you’ve got to be really like stiff upper body and like flaying your legs around, but obviously make it look good. That’s –

STEPHEN: And then straight into death drop.

KATH: And then straight into death drop. I mean I don’t think – do you need your core for death dropping?

STEPHEN: Brody, they’re going to need more shots. Brody, we’re going to need more shots over here. Guys, if you shut this place down – if you shut this place down –

KATH: No, no one’s saying we’re shutting it down.

STEPHEN: Marge O’Rine’s destiny is never going to be fulfilled. She will not move onto gay Heaven in Soho. And she will be stuck in gurgatory because you two shut this place down.

KATH: No.

STEPHEN: Which means I can’t bring other people to wear the pink wig to get possessed and therefore try their Riverdance death drop combo sensation, and either die or help her go and move on. This is on you two. It’s very irresponsible.

KATH: Alright, how is this – how has this become anyone else’s problem other than Marge O’Rine’s? This is insane.

ED: Have you tried it?

STEPHEN: No, I’m still alive.

KATH: Why have you got a get out, though? Why has she gone, ‘it’s fine if you’ – why –

STEPHEN: Because she needs someone to bring her the people to try it.

KATH: Yeah, but why’d she pick you?

STEPHEN: And also if I put a pink wig on with my pink skin, I’ll look like a salmon.

KATH: Same. Same, I’ve got rosacea.

STEPHEN: Okay, okay Kath. Well make – make Daddy do it.

ED: I’d look great in a pink wig.

KATH: You’d look good in a pink wig.

STEPHEN: Yeah. And if you survive, the story completes itself, we all move on, and I’ll get the Buffalo wings in.

ED: Has Brody tried it?

STEPHEN: No, because we need someone to serve the drinks.

ED: Oh yeah, yeah, stupid. Sorry. Um –

STEPHEN: Stupid question.

ED: Right, I – I think I could probably smash the Riverdance element of it. You know when you’ve just got an inkling?

STEPHEN: Yeah. Yeah.

ED: But the – the death drop is where I’m a bit –

KATH: I reckon I could do the death drop.

ED: Shaky.

STEPHEN: Well you can’t do – it’s not a joint destiny, it’s one goddamn destiny.

ED: Can I swap – so we can’t swap the way Kath –

STEPHEN: It’s like the sword in the stone. One person pulls the sword, one person does the death drop.

KATH: Well –

ED: How – how did you convince other people to do this? Because obviously we – we’re big fans of you, so obviously we’re more inclined to do it. But just a – a stranger off the street that you’ve dragged in, how did you – how did you convince them to do it?

STEPHEN: It was very simple. Many strangers I’ve found, unlike you two, are big old queens. And they – all you have to say to them is like, ‘oh look, a pink wig.’

ED: Right.

STEPHEN: And they’re like, ‘oh my god, a pink wig, I wonder what I’d look like in a pink wig,’ and it’s on. And then it’s too late for them.

KATH: Okay.

ED: Right.

STEPHEN: Marge – Marge O’Rine gets to have a go, and it works or it doesn’t. The problem is it’s not you guys doing it. Marge O’Rine is using you to do it.

ED: Oh.

KATH: So she’s getting practice in.

STEPHEN: So Marge O’Rine is doing it, it’s if your body can take it.

KATH: Yeah, well obviously not. Well –

STEPHEN: Yeah. So she’s had a bit of practice. She’s been here for years.

KATH: But she’s been –

STEPHEN: I only took over the job 20 years ago, there was someone before me. Yeah.

KATH: But if she’s been doing it that long –

STEPHEN: Yeah.

KATH: Accept that she’s not skilled in either Riverdancing or death dropping. Like you can’t keep going like, ‘oh, I’ll give it another bash.’ Like accept – move on. Find another hobby.

ED: Do you think that – I’m genuinely scared about doing it. Like genuinely scared about doing it. Do you think this is the one? Do you think she’s got this in the bag this time?

STEPHEN: Do I think she’s got it in the bag?

KATH: To be able to do it?

STEPHEN: Wait, the problem is, Ed, I think – okay, come in closer, guys. Come here, closer.

ED: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah.

STEPHEN: Okay, I don’t think Marge O’Rine can do it.

ED: Fucking –

STEPHEN: I think she needs to find someone – she basically needs to find like Stavros Flatley, you know? Someone that can fucking do it.

KATH: Then find Stavros – find someone and don’t bring us here.

STEPHEN: Or Cheryl Hole. Or Cheryl Hole. You two –

KATH: Why did you – you decided to bring us in here.

STEPHEN: Okay, well I brought you two in because you invited me for a nice day out, and I thought, ‘well, this is my chance.’ Do you think star of ‘Britain’s Got Talent’ Stavros Flatley is taking my call? No. I only did two episodes of Corrie.

KATH: But you – you’ve literally – you know you’ve brought us in here, then, to dance badly to our deaths. Like you know that.

ED: Dance to death, yeah.

STEPHEN: Yeah, and I’ll tell you why. Because then you can’t shut down my goddamn gay bar. So who’s the real winner?

KATH: No, who was shutting it down?

ED: We’re not going to shut down the –

KATH: We didn’t even know it existed.

ED: We’re not going to shut down the gay bar.

KATH: We didn’t know it existed until now.

ED: We’re not going to shut down the gay bar.

KATH: We said we thought it was a peach shop.

STEPHEN: I – well I heard – I heard if you didn’t believe me, I had to die. So guess what, bitches? You’re dying first.

ED: That’s fair.

KATH: Right, well that’s the council –

ED: Yeah, that one’s fair.

STEPHEN: Yeah, that’s right.

KATH: That’s the council’s fault, though. You just –

STEPHEN: Oh, well this is Marge O’Rine’s fault. This is Marge O’Rine’s fault, isn’t it? If we’re all just passing blame to everyone else. We’re all the same here, guys, maybe we’ll all die if we don’t, you know, Brody, get some more shots. Daddy’s paying.

ED: This is so expensive and then I’m going to die.

STEPHEN: Oh, well thank god you’ve got a hip podcast.

ED: Right.

STEPHEN: It’s one pound a shot. It’s one pound a goddamn shot.

ED: Yeah, but you’d think it’d be like 3 for £1.50.

STEPHEN: Well maybe it was if – no, it’s not that.

ED: I know it’s not that, that’s why I’m getting angry about it.

KATH: It’s – it’s full round, poppers included. Come on.

STEPHEN: It’s student night. It’s student night. Yeah, come on, Ed. If you’re going to leave here today, you’re at least going to leave with some – with some bottles of poppers.

ED: It’s not – oh god.

STEPHEN: We’ve accumulated nine. You get one free bottle with every shot.

ED: Okay. If I can do some poppers, I’ll give it a shot.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: But if I die I’m going to be so angry.

STEPHEN: Do it please. Well who gives a shit? We won’t know about it.

ED: And I’m going to look like such a dickhead.

STEPHEN: Well you’re doing that yourself by coming into a drag bar, putting on a pink wig that I’ve told you is haunted.

KATH: But have also actively encouraged us to wear it.

STEPHEN: And then doing it and dying.

KATH: Like – like don’t –

STEPHEN: Well yeah, that’s my job.

KATH: Don’t change tune now like, ‘well you’re the one putting the wig on.’ Like no, you brought us in here to put the wig on.

STEPHEN: Well excuse me. Because that’s my job and Marge O’Rine will let me sleep at night. You came here and asked me to survive by telling you a true story. Now I’ve told you a true story, which has guaranteed my survival, and you guys don’t want it. Now who’s really messing this up, guys? Is it me or is it you? Because I’ve done my bit of the deal. If you don’t want to take the risk –

ED: I’m on board.

STEPHEN: Then – well then do it and die.

ED: Wait.

KATH: Wait, what?

ED: I don’t have to die if she does it properly.

STEPHEN: Ed, I’m telling you now looking at you, you’re not going to be able to do it.

ED: This – this is fucking horse shit.

STEPHEN: Michael Flatley came through – Michael goddamn Flatley. Do you know why you don’t hear of him anymore? He tried on the wig.

KATH: Oh, god.

ED: What?

KATH: I guess he failed with the death drop.

ED: I –

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: I don’t understand – I’m now the only person who seems to be on board with me doing this. Even Stephen, who wants me to do this, is telling me not to do this.

KATH: I think, uh, I don’t know if you’re flexible enough to do the death drop bit.

STEPHEN: I think he’s flexible to do the death.

[Spooky music]

KATH: Actually, well I forgot, in Spooktown the sort of – the ritual of becoming the mayor does it require luring someone to their death?

STEPHEN: Brody? Brody, we’re going to need another shot. I think we’re about to make me mayor. But if you could just get the case, Brodes.

KATH: Well, I mean –

ED: Well I think Kath and I are just going to have a conflab really quick.

KATH: We’re just – yeah, we’re just –

STEPHEN: Hold on, Marge O’Rine. Marge O’Rine’s asking me a question. Marge? No, I know. No, I know. No, okay. I’ll let these two go but then I’ll bring you four. Yeah, okay. Don’t worry, I’ll talk to Aloe about it. Okay. Okay. Me and Marge have an agreement.

KATH: Okay. Is that going off of her?

STEPHEN: Yeah. You don’t – you don’t need to know what – you don’t need to know it is.

KATH: Well you spoke really loudly. I didn’t hear her side, but you just spoke really loudly.

STEPHEN: Yeah, but you don’t need to know what it is.

KATH: I kind of got the vibe.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: It’s not something insane like you’re going to bring four next time, is it?

STEPHEN: No.

ED: Okay, great. Great, should we go and have a conflab?

KATH: Yeah, we’ll have a – we’ll have a little conflab.

STEPHEN: No, I know, okay? Okay.

KATH: He’s having a conflab with Marge O’Rine.

STEPHEN: Marge O’Rine, okay, I promise. I mean you don’t even want these two. I’ll bring – I’ll bring James Acaster and Jordan Brookes. Yeah, yeah. Well it’ll be worth getting rid of them. Honest to god, if I get rid of one of them, there’s more room on a panel show. Yeah. Okay. Right, fine. Right, okay, we got it. Sorry about that guys, that was ever so rude. Marge O’Rine, stop being rude.

ED: No, it’s okay. It’s fine. We’re – we’re going to go have a conflab.

STEPHEN: Where’s Brody? Yeah, okay, sorry. Okay.

KATH: We’re going to go have a really quick conflab just over here, um –

ED: Over by the, um, toilets.

STEPHEN: Oh, when you go to the toilet, will you bring me some lube back? Thank you.

KATH: Um, well, I believe him.

ED: I fucking believe him, or he’s mad.

KATH: I – well yeah, it’s – I think it’s probably both.

ED: I believe him and he’s mad, yeah.

KATH: Yeah.

ED: I’d buy it. Let’s make him mayor, as in let’s vote – vote him in, I guess.

KATH: Yeah, I’m up for the mayor. I’m happy with that.

ED: I think the ‘Ru Paul’ thing’s a really, really, really good shout.

KATH: It is, because it is overwhelming. It’s really – I’ve got a really bad memory, and it’s really hard to keep on track.

ED: Yeah. Yeah.

KATH: I know that’s my issue, not theirs, but, um –

ED: I – I 100% agree. And when – when I’m watching more than one series at a time, say there’s, uh, an ‘All Stars’ and an English version at the same time –

KATH: Yeah.

ED: I get so confused as to who’s in what one.

KATH: Yeah yeah yeah. Yeah.

ED: So every time I watch it I’m like, ‘who are all of these people now?’

KATH: ‘Yeah, where – where have they gone? Oh wait, they’re not in this one’. Yeah.

ED: Yeah, ‘where’s the one that I like? Where’s the one that I hate?’

KATH: Yeah yeah yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

ED: ‘Oh, it’s in the other one.’

KATH: ‘Oh, we’ve already done the snatch game. Oh wait, no, we did that in the other one.’ Yeah. Yeah.

ED: Very confusing. Yes. Yes.

KATH: Yeah, it’s really – I think – I believe him, uh, I think we should avoid the wig, um, even if it is just him chatting to a wig at this point. We don’t know. We couldn’t hear her side of things. But, uh, I think – grab some lube, get a couple of packets, cheers him to mayor, get out and dodge. Yeah.

ED: Vote him in, yeah. And then I think I’m going to try and do – I’m going to try and do it without the wig anyway.

KATH: That’s fair.

ED: Let’s go back to Stephen. Let’s go back to Stephen.

KATH: But don’t do it in front of the wig, because it’ll get jealous. Do it in your own time.

ED: Hello, Stephen.

KATH: Hello, Stephen.

ED: Um, we are going to swear you in as mayor.

KATH: Yeah. So should we –

STEPHEN: [gasps] That was the gay gasp, did you hear that?

KATH: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

STEPHEN: That’s the noise we make. Yeah.

KATH: Oh, I’m so honoured that we heard the gay gasp.

STEPHEN: Okay, what should I do? Do I put a hand up?

ED: Yeah, you put a hand up.

KATH: Uh, hand up.

ED: And then you put a hand on this copy of ‘Last Exit to Brooklyn’.

STEPHEN: Oh yeah. Do you believe me then?

ED: Yeah.

KATH: Also to – to swear you in a think a cat needs to sort of be in the room. Uh, which I believe it is. So – so that’s – that’s fine, yeah. Yeah.

ED: Can you hear that too?

STEPHEN: Yeah.

KATH: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

ED: Yeah, good. I think it’s 36 minutes past the time when that particular cat gets fed.

KATH: Yeah.

ED: And that’s why it’s in the room.

KATH: Yeah. But it worked out lovely.

ED: Um, okay, repeat after me, Stephen.

STEPHEN: Excuse me, it’s not about the goddamn cat. I’m about to become the mayor.

ED: Sorry sorry sorry sorry.

KATH: Yeah but it’s part of the thing. It’s part of the ceremony.

ED: Um, I’m – so repeat after me, Stephen. I.

STEPHEN: I repeat after you.

ED: Yeah.

STEPHEN: I.

ED: Stephen Bailey.

STEPHEN: Stephen Bailey.

ED: Am hereby.

STEPHEN: Am hereby.

ED: Mayor.

STEPHEN: A strong independent gorgeous mayor with free reign.

KATH: That was roughly it, wasn’t it?

ED: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

ED: You’re mayor with free reign.

STEPHEN: I love it I love it I love it.

KATH: Well done. Well done.

[Clapping]

STEPHEN: Okay, I’m going to start by taking some episodes down. I mean if James Acaster could only show up for 30 minutes, get it off.

ED: Um, thank you so much. I’m going to – we’re going to say goodbye but I’m going to try the Riverdance into a death drop now.

KATH: Yeah, he’s got it in his head now. Yeah.

ED: Um, if you want to stick around.

STEPHEN: Okay. If you don’t make it – do you want to try it with the wig on?

ED: No.

STEPHEN: So it’s official?

ED: No no no.

STEPHEN: Okay. Don’t want to take the risk.

ED: I want to – I want to do that like, ‘here’s what you could’ve won.’ And see whether I would’ve survived or not.

STEPHEN: Okay, got it.

ED: Okay.

STEPHEN: You’re such a wimp.

ED: You’re a wimp, you’re not doing it either.

KATH: You can’t say that to the mayor. Don’t call the mayor a wimp.

STEPHEN: My job’s –

ED: Fuck.

STEPHEN: Yeah, don’t – off with his head. Off with his head.

KATH: No no no no no, no no. He didn’t mean it. He didn’t mean it.

ED: You’re thinking of a queen. You’re thinking of a queen. You’re mayor. You’re just mayor.

STEPHEN: Okay, I’ll let you have one strike. I’m going to let you have one goddamn strike, but again I’ll be off with your head.

ED: Thank you, mayor. Okay, here we go.

KATH: Okay.

ED: [grunts, mumbles]

KATH: That’s pretty good. That’s pretty good. You can get your knees quite high.

ED: And that’s it, yeah.

STEPHEN: What’s he doing with his mouth?

KATH: I think he’s all the instruments.

STEPHEN: Oh, okay.

ED: How was that?

KATH: That was pretty good.

STEPHEN: That wasn’t – it – I mean it was fine. It wasn’t like –

KATH: I don’t want to alarm you but I think your leg’s not meant to bend like that.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

KATH: As in like that looks painful. I don’t know if it’s registered yet because you’ve not looked at it.

ED: I’m so full of adrenaline.

STEPHEN: I’m not going to lie, Ed, after that performance I have to say, Ed Easton, sashay away.

[Spooky music]

[People talking]

KATH: Alright. I’m going to hang out and have some more shots, then.

STEPHEN: Yeah.

KATH: Will you drag yourself out, Ed?

STEPHEN: Yeah, I’ll – Brody, get the Buffalo wings.

KATH: Oh yes, yes yes yes.

STEPHEN: Brody, could I have some more of those Buffalo wings? Kath, do you want Buffalo wings? Do you want chicken or do you want cauliflower?

KATH: Uh, cauliflower please.

STEPHEN: Yeah, she’s one of those. Get her a cauliflower one.

ED: I’m going to leave you both with my card but I’m not happy.

KATH: See you later, Ed.

STEPHEN: Bye.

KATH: I’m going to hang out with the mayor.

STEPHEN: Bye, Ed. Bye. Yeah. Honestly it’s nearly happy hour, babes.

KATH: Great.

[Spooky music]

This has been a Little Wander production. Music from Rhodri Viney. Local artwork from Suze Hughes. Voice by Melanie Walters. With special thanks to Beth Forrest, Steve Pickup, Sam Roberts, Henry Widdicombe, and Jo Williams. Other podcasts from Little Wander include Here to Judge and I Wish I Was An Only Child. Subscribe now on iTunes, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts.