

# A Moody Christmas



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# A Moody Christmas

How does an unsentimental family get through the most sentimental time of year?

Premieres  
Wednesday 31 October 8.30pm





# Synopsis

**Such is the ordeal Dan Moody must face when he journeys home from London to spend each Christmas with his overbearing family.**

Once a year, for six years, we visit the lovably dysfunctional Moody family as they come together to share this universally celebrated holiday, stuffed full of all the fun, fights, bad gifts, boring uncles, overbearing in-laws, shocking family secrets and bizarre eccentricities that any family who's experienced the melting pot of Christmas Day will relate to.

Each year, 25-year-old Dan Moody (*Ian Meadows*) makes the pilgrimage to celebrate Christmas with the family he travelled to the other side of the world to escape. While most families bask in the warm glow of Christmas spirit, the Moodys tend to crack under the pressure of forced civility and their own unique brand of domestic politics.

As with most families ... the eternal question is - what will happen this Christmas?

# About the production

Shot in Sydney, each half hour episode is set a year apart. Focused on the lovable, yet seasonally dysfunctional Moody family, **A Moody Christmas** is set against the backdrop of the one occasion that can bring out the best (and the worst) in people ... Christmas Day.

To air on ABC1 in the lead-up to Christmas 2012, **A Moody Christmas** is a Jungleboys production in association with ABC TV and Screen NSW. The series was created and written by the multi AFI Award-winning team behind the critically acclaimed comedy series *Review with Myles Barlow* Trent O'Donnell and Phil Lloyd. Directed by Trent O'Donnell (*The Chaser's War On Everything*, *Review With Myles Barlow*, *Laid*, *Woodley*), **A Moody Christmas** was produced by Andy Walker (*Woodley*, *Laid*, *Satisfaction*), co-produced by Phil Lloyd, and executive produced by Jungleboys' Jason Burrows and ABC TV 's Debbie Lee.

Starring Ian Meadows (*Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*), Patrick Brammall (*Hawke*), Jane Harber (*Offspring*), Danny Adcock (*Jesters*), Robina Beard, Tina Bursill (*Offspring*), Guy Edmonds (*Underbelly: Razor*), Darren Gilshenan (*Chandon Pictures*), Rachel Gordon (*Blue Heelers*), and creator/writer Phil Lloyd (*At Home With Julia*).

## PRODUCTION CREDITS:

**Executive Producer:** Jason Burrows

**Executive Producer ABC:** Debbie Lee

**Producer:** Andy Walker

**Co-producers:** Phil Lloyd, Trent O'Donnell

**Director:** Trent O'Donnell

**Creators:** Phil Lloyd, Trent O'Donnell





# Episode 1

WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 8.30PM ABC1

**Dan's first trip home since moving to London becomes yet another Moody family Christmas from hell.**

After his girlfriend dumps him at the airport, Dan returns home alone to Sydney for Christmas for the first time since moving to London two years ago. Jetlagged, depressed, and without an ally to endure his overbearing family, Dan's day goes from bad to worse as he's falsely accused of racism, he's roped into helping misguided brother Sean rescue a lawnmower, and he gets sick after eating some miscellaneous Russian delicacy made by Uncle Terry's new wife. If not for meeting his arrogant cousin's new girlfriend Cora, the day might be a total loss. Meanwhile, Kevin decides to put in a pool, Bridget and Roger announce they are having a baby, and after much pestering from Maree about not doing the lawns in time, Sean decides Christmas Day is the perfect time to steal his lawnmower back - with disastrous results.

# Episode 2

WEDNESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 8.30PM ABC1

**Maree's attempts to have a more meaningful Christmas are derailed when Dan invites a homeless woman to lunch in order to impress Cora.**

Dan gets home Christmas Eve to find everyone heading to carols by candlelight to see Terry sing. The event is marred when Terry breaks down on stage over his split with Dashenka. In an effort to have a more meaningful Christmas, Maree drags Dan to a homeless shelter next morning, where she and Cora are volunteering. After reconnecting with Cora following their kiss last year, Dan makes a faux pas with a homeless woman, Linda, whom he subsequently invites to lunch to make amends. Maree's also invited her friend from work, Chris, in the vain hope her family won't argue in front of a stranger at lunch. Having set up an air-con business in direct competition with his father's, Kevin delights in Sean being called out to fix one of the dodgy units he's installed. Meanwhile Roger and Bridget try to capitalise on Bridget's ovulation window following her miscarriage earlier in the year. After Dan does Cora a favour by photographing her clothes for her application to a London fashion school, the day ends with the shock discovery that Linda has stolen all their gifts from under the tree. "So much for Christmas spirit", grumbles Kevin, unaware that they have made Christmas elsewhere for Linda and her pals an unforgettable one as they enjoy the spoils from the Moodys.





## Episode 3

WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 8.30PM ABC1

**An explosive family secret leaves Kevin's life hanging in the balance..**

When Dan lands at the airport with Cora, we quickly realize they've secretly been seeing each other since she's broken up with Hayden. They'll break the news at lunch since Hayden won't be there this year. But the secrets mount up when Dan learns Bridget and Roger have split. Roger has 'come out' and is now with Chris, Maree's colleague from Christmas last year. Bridget swears Dan to secrecy - she and Roger are pretending to be together to save face, and achieve Bridget's adoption plans. While Kevin tries in vain to convince Sean to join the family business, Sean's mate Scott, also there for Christmas, has a crush on Maree. Dan panics when Hayden suddenly shows up but he's unable to reach Cora. Meanwhile, Hayden and Terry seem haunted by a big night out after his breakup. When Dan lets slip about Bridget and Roger, Kevin sees red and finds Maree trying on lingerie that Scott gave her for Christmas. He has a heart attack just as Cora arrives. At the hospital, Sean promises to come work for Kevin if he pulls through. Meanwhile things are left in limbo for Cora and Dan who decide this isn't the best time to break their news.



## Episode 4

WEDNESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 8.30PM ABC1

**A family rift threatens when Hayden discovers the truth about Dan and Cora.**

Dan is met by his dad at the airport. Kevin wants to walk home since he's on a health kick. Kevin uses the time to lament how Sean has driven the family business into the ground since joining the company. At home Dan meets Sean's son, Cooper, the result of Sean's visit to Peggy's house to fix her air conditioning two Christmases ago. But Dan seems more preoccupied with the fact Cora looks like she is now back with Hayden, after Dan returned to London for work and she stayed in Australia. Bridget has found a new suitor, Elliot, a smooth-talking cad, twenty years her senior whose deliberately coy innuendos to Kevin severely test his patience. Terry also has a new love interest, Irene, the Russian nurse who cared for Kevin in hospital after his heart attack. He's almost as proud of her as he is of his new homebrew, rocket-fuel which sees Dan getting quite drunk and bolshie with Hayden and Cora, who are in business together now, with Hayden funding her fashion label. But when Hayden finds a photo of Dan and Cora kissing in London all hell breaks loose, leaving Dan with a bloody nose and more than one relationship in doubt. The day ends with the family sitting back watching a tape of the exposé on Sean from A Current Affair when he was revealed as a dodgy repairman.





## Episode 5

WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 8.30PM ABC1

**Sean's plans to propose are derailed when Uncle Rhys gets out on day release from prison.**

Dan arrives Christmas morning with his confident, precocious new girlfriend, Patience, a model he met through work. Hayden and Cora are back together, and despite Hayden saying last year is 'water under the bridge', they are sorely tested when all four end up stuck in a car en route to visit grandma. Meanwhile, Sean's plans to propose to Peggy are waylaid by Uncle Rhys, who's on day release from prison and has come to make amends as part of his rehabilitation. Roger arrives and we learn that Bridget is still planning to adopt a child with him. They need to create the façade that they are still a couple and want to document such happy family occasions for their application, despite Maree's lack of support for it. Rhys gives the family a painting depicting some of his wrongs from the past. It proves to be quite explosive, driving Rhys to snap and stab his own leg with a fork. Back in the car, tensions between Cora, Dan and Hayden rise, not helped when they get to the nursing home to find grandma missing. While Patience causes a stir by doing karaoke for the residents, they embark on a search, during which Cora and Dan make the uneasy decision to just move on and be friends. Dan eventually finds his grandmother at the bowling club nearby. She confesses that sometimes she needs a year off from the Moodys, a sentiment with which Dan can only agree.



## Episode 6

WEDNESDAY 5 DECEMBER 8.30PM ABC1

**Dan rushes home in a last ditch effort to win Cora back.**

After declaring he won't be home for Christmas this year, Dan mistakes a text from Cora as a confession she still wants to be with him. He rushes back, only to have Sean work out his mix-up, leaving Dan feeling like an idiot. He gets home to meet Max, Bridget's 8-year-old adopted son who talks like an adult, and with whom Sean has a weird competitive rivalry. Uncle Terry gets embarrassed when his new date Oksana turns out to be an escort, and Kevin is thrilled to finally unveil the new swimming pool as his Christmas present, only six years after he began. Roger comes to lunch with Chris, and Bridget discovers that despite going to a lot of gay marriage rallies during the year, Roger isn't sure he wants to get married. Meanwhile, Sean's new business - 'Dying High Funeral Fireworks' causes a stir. Sean takes Dan to Peggy's house to show him why he should go after Cora - because he'll miss out like Sean has otherwise, since Peggy is back with her ex, Brian. Dan points out that Peggy used him and told him he was Cooper's dad when he wasn't. When Brian puts an axe through the car bonnet, Sean stays to take him on and spurs Dan away to Cora's house. But in the throes of confessing his feelings, Dan discovers he's too late - Hayden and Cora are engaged. Gutted, he goes home - and in his anger decides to chop down the banner which has been a painful reminder of his romantic failings for six Christmases. After a rousing guitar duo with Sean for the family, Dan's day ends sadly with grandma passing away - and falling into the pool. After the funeral, where Sean has packed her ashes into fireworks, we see Dan at the airport once again. And that's when an unexpected visitor arrives...





## Key Cast

**Dan** - Ian Meadows

**Sean** - Patrick Brammall

**Cora** - Jane Harber

**Kevin** - Danny Adcock

**Gwen** - Robina Beard

**Maree** - Tina Bursill

**Roger** - Phil Lloyd

**Hayden** - Guy Edmonds

**Terry** - Darren Gilshenan

**Bridget** - Rachel Gordon

## Guest Cast

**Elliot** - Rob Carlton

**Peggy** - Helen Dallimore

**Rhys** - David Field

**Irene** - Annie Maynard

**Linda** - Mandy McElhinney

**Chris** - Chum Ehelepola

**Patience** - Georgina Haig





# Dan Moody

The youngest of the three children, it's primarily through Dan's eyes that we experience Christmas with the Moodys, journeying home with him each year from London where he now lives and works as a photographer. Though he loves them dearly, Dan's always felt a little different to the rest of his family.

## Ian Meadows is Dan

Ian Meadows's television credits include season 3 of *East West 101*, the telemovie *Underbelly: The Man Who Got Away*, miniseries *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*, the HBO series *The Pacific* and Southern Star's *Rush*. Ian has also appeared in the telemovies *The Shark Net* and Rowan Woods' *3 Acts of Murder*.

Ian was nominated for a 2012 AWGIE Award for *Spirited*, along with Alice Bell and Jacquelin Perske. Ian's further writing credits include the second season of Channel 10's *Offspring*, and Fox 8 series *Slide*. In 2011, he wrote and co-directed the play *Four Deaths in the Life of Ronaldo Abok* at Riverside Theatres Parramatta and his play *Between Two Waves* will close out the Griffin Theatre Company season of 2012.

# Sean Moody

Sean was the guy at school who was pretty good at sport, fairly popular with most people, and got in plenty of trouble for being the class clown. As a result, despite having a lot of potential, he can make some rash and misguided choices, usually driven by his desire to make a quick buck or have a laugh. Sean's entrepreneurial spirit can never be defeated, no matter how many times he declares bankruptcy. Every year has a new business venture, promising to be bigger and better than the last.

## Patrick Brammall is Sean

Patrick Brammall's television credits include *Rush*, *The Librarians*, *All Saints*, *East West 101*, *Canal Road*, *Home and Away*, *At Home With Julia*, *The Alice*, *Lowdown* and the sketch comedy, *Some Say Love*. In 2010, he portrayed Kim Beazley in the Australian telemovie, *Hawke*. In 2011, Patrick made his feature film debut in *Griff the Invisible* opposite Ryan Kwanten.

Patrick has performed in many short films, most notably the 2010 Tropfest winner, *Shock*, and *dik*, which has received a number of international festival awards. A prolific stage actor Patrick most recently played Biff in Belvoir's critically acclaimed *Death of a Salesman*. Patrick starred opposite Miranda Otto in Sydney Theatre Company's *The White Guard*. Patrick was awarded The 2006 Philip Parsons Young Playwright Award with John Leary for co-writing.





# Cora Benson

Fun, with a wicked sense of humour which she'll use to cloak the fact that deep down beats a serious heart. Cora's still finding her place in the world, figuring out what she wants to do, but has found she has a talent for fashion design. As for her relationship with Hayden, she's not even sure herself yet whether it's just a rebound affair or something more substantial. And then she meets Dan. Only problem is, Dan lives in London - and he's her boyfriend's cousin.

## Jane Harber is Cora

Jane Harber is well known for her role as Zara Perkich in Network Ten's popular drama, *Offspring*. Jane's other television credits include *Lowdown*, *Underbelly*, *The Secret Life Of Us*, *Neighbours*, *Raw FM*, *The Micallef Programme*, *Blue Heelers*, *Full Frontal* and the telemovie *The Last of the Ryans*.

Jane has also appeared on stage in *Four Little Girls* for Handspan Theatre Company, *Lakme* for the Victorian State Opera, *Gossamer* for the Writers Festival and the musical *City Of Angels* for fortyfivedownstairs Theatre.

In 2012, Jane features in the Nine Network's new series, *House Husbands*.

# Kevin Moody

Kevin is proud of his family, his home, and his business - all of which he's worked very hard for and sees as a mark of a successful life. Starting from scratch he built up his air conditioning business declining the chance to sell it to a much bigger franchise operation, dreaming the company would one day be a legacy to be taken up by his sons. The only problem is, neither of them seems interested in doing so. Kevin can be something of a miser too, always doing his own renovations or handiwork. The result being that it often takes three times as long for the work to be completed.

## Danny Adcock is Kevin

During Danny's distinguished career he has starred in a host of major theatre, film and television productions. His television appearances cover the history of Australian TV drama from *Homicide*, *Division 4*, *Cop Shop* and *Matlock* to *Skyways*, *A Country Practice*, *Prisoner*, *Rafferty's Rules*, *Blue Heelers*, and most recently *Rescue Special Ops*, *Jesters*, *Home and Away*, and *Tough Nuts 2* playing George Freeman.

He will also be seen this year in *Redfern Now* for ABC TV. Danny appeared in landmark Australian films including *The Cars that Ate Paris*, *We of the Never Never*, *Kitty and the Bagman* and *Death in the Afternoon*. His most recent stage performances have been in Sydney Theatre Company's *Blood Wedding*, *The Removalists* and *The Pig Iron People*. Prior to this he played the pivotal role of *Malcolm Boyce* in Griffin Theatre Company's acclaimed *Boyce Trilogy*.





# Gwen Dawes

Gwen found moving into a retirement home came as something of a relief, having endured living with the Moodys for a year or so after her husband's death twelve years ago. A quiet, easy going soul – at least compared to the rest of the family – Maree's mother might be mild-mannered, but she will be blunt when pressed about her views on the world. As far as she's concerned, she's earned the right to say what she likes. Like most grandmothers, she cherishes her grandchildren dearly. It's hard to know if she's just kidding or if she's harbouring hopeful resignations when she quips every year that this Christmas could be her last. For the most part, she's just happy to sit back and watch everyone enjoy themselves, or argue, either of which she finds amusing.

## Robina Beard (OAM) is Gwen

With a lifetime in entertainment, Robina began her career as a dancer working for JC Williamson before moving into starring roles on stage and on variety television in Australia, Canada and the US. Robina has worked extensively as a choreographer and director. During the 1980s and 1990s she was casting adviser and resident director on many of the big musicals produced in Australia and New Zealand including *The Sound of Music*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Oliver*, *Sugar Babies* and *42nd Street*.

Robina worked with many comedy stars including Graham Kennedy and international comedians including Stan Freburg and Benny Hill. She was also an amusing low key Weather Girl at GTV9 in Melbourne for some time, and starred in one of the first situation comedies made in Australia – *Barley Charlie*.

Nationally recognised as Madge the Manicurist and identified with the phrase – 'You know you're soaking in it?' from the twenty-year-long series of commercials for Colgate Palmolive.

# Maree Moody

Strong, down to earth, organised but with a sense of fun and a spirit for adventure, Maree lives for her family, and loves getting into Christmas because family is what it's all about. Married for thirty years she and Kevin have their moments, but they are still very much in love. A survivor of breast cancer, Maree is no pushover, and she doesn't like to be the object of pity. She's the bonding agent that holds the family together – and keeps Sean and Kevin from killing each other.

## Tina Bursill is Maree

Tina Bursill is an Australian actress usually seen on television playing sophisticated and coolly self-reliant women such as Louise Carter in *Skyways*. Det. Sgt. Anne Burke in *Hey Dad!* and Sonia Stevens in *Prisoner*.

Other TV credits include: *Matlock Police*, *The Unisexers*, *A Country Practice*, *The Flying Doctors*, *Heartbreak High*, *Murder Call*, *Farscape*, *All Saints*, *Always Greener*, *MDA* and *White Collar Blue*. In Home and Away she played schoolteacher Lois Crawford in 1992, then Stella Patterson in 2001-2002. Tina also features in season 2 of ABC TV's popular series *Rake*.

In 1988, Tina won the Australian Film Institute award for Best Supporting Actress in *Jilted*. Other film roles include *Three Blind Mice*, *Son of Mask*, *The Goddess of 1967*, *Billy's Holiday* and *Spider and Rose*. Tina's latest role was in the Australian independent feature film *Wish You Were Here*.





# Roger Quail

Roger is Bridget's mild-mannered husband. A bit of a doormat, he slavishly does whatever Bridget tells him, and while it's because he loves her, it's also because he can't be bothered arguing. Suburban, conservative, a bookworm and wine connoisseur, Roger enjoys his job as a town planner for the local council. While he does find the Moodys a bit overbearing, Roger is very good at fitting in. He has become so good at it that it can be a private source of frustration for him - he sometimes feels he's losing the sense of who he really is.

## Phil Lloyd is Roger

Phil Lloyd is an actor and writer perhaps best known for his portrayal of existential critic, Myles Barlow, in the critically acclaimed comedy, *Review With Myles Barlow*. The role earned him the AFI Awards for Best Performance in TV Comedy and Best TV Comedy for two years running. The show was also nominated for a Logie Award.

As well as being co-creator and writer of *Review*, Phil has had roles in *Rake*, *Woodley*, *Laid* and *Wild Boys*, and has written for a vast range of TV formats including sketch, drama, and branded entertainment. Phil was also co-creator and writer of the top-rating, controversial ABC sitcom *At Home With Julia*, in which he played a lead role as *Tim* Mathieson, and his work as writer and performer of the hapless Toby Withers in Qantas' *The Great Crusade* (branded entertainment) won a *Cannes Gold Lion* and was nominated for a 2012 *International Emmy*.

# Terry Moody

Kevin's only brother, Terry is a hopeless romantic. He has been married several times - never afraid to take the plunge despite the pain it causes him when the next one fails. A genuine, gregarious bloke who delights in life and will give you his complete attention, he also takes his work very seriously and can be officious at times. A customs officer at the airport, he often brings along items as gifts that have been seized from tourists. They'd only be destroyed otherwise, and he hates waste. Every year it seems Terry turns up to Christmas with a new bride on his arm, seeing himself as a bit of a playboy. And while he may not have the style to truly claim such a title - he still wears his mobile phone on his belt and pulls his pants up a bit high - nobody can deny his infectious joy and charm.

## Darren Gilshenan is Terry

Darren's film and television credits include series 1 & 2 of *Chandon Pictures*, *Liebertmans in the Sky* (nominated for a 2009 AFI Award for Best Short Fiction Film), *Gristle*, *Idiot Box*, *Dark City*, *Swinger*, which was the winner of the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize, *Police Rescue* and *Full Frontal*.

He also wrote, co-directed and starred in *Derrick*, for FOXTEL's Comedy Channel. Darren recently completed work on the international television miniseries *Top of the Lake*, shot in New Zealand and directed by Jane Campion.

Darren has also taught extensively for Australian Theatre for Young People, Bell Shakespeare and NIDA and has directed for NIDA, Spirit Entertainment, Pork Chop Productions, Bell Shakespeare Company and Foxtel's Comedy Channel.





# Hayden Roberts

Good looking, intelligent, funny, and on paper, a pretty good catch. Maree's sister's son, he works in finance but he's not totally consumed by it, and can joke about the wankers he works with. He actually likes to socialise and mix with people who don't work in his world so spending every Christmas at his relatives' house is fine - it's entertaining if nothing else. He can come off like a bit of a snob at times, but Hayden is actually a smart, passionate person. When it comes to marriage, he has a quiet plan to be married any time in the next few years, with the first of three children well and truly in motion by the time he's 30 ... all plans he has yet to share with Cora ...

## Guy Edmonds is Hayden

Guy appeared as Greg Gaffney in Screentime's highly successful *Underbelly: Razor*. Other recent television credits include the comedies *At Home With Julia*, *Double Take* and *Cupid*, as well as the dramas *Home and Away*, *Kangaroo Gang*, *Tough Nuts 2*, *All Saints* and *Hammer Bay*. Guy's feature film credits include the lead role in the thriller *Bedlam* which is set for release this year. His other films include the thrillers *Tumblegum* and *Rapid Fear*.

As a producer, his short film *It's a Treat* won Best Comedy at NYC Film Festival and his most recent work, *Silver Stiletto*, had its world premiere in San Francisco and is due to be screened at many more festivals around the world. Guy's next project is director of the feature film *Super Awesome!* which he also co-wrote: it begins production later in the year. He is also a professional musician and voice-over artist.

# Bridget Quail

A real estate agent by trade, Bridget's always been headstrong and independent, at least until she settled for Roger, a safe bet for a husband after her torrid twenties. But despite protestations to the contrary Bridget likes a bit of drama. Perhaps on some level it's a cry for attention. She doesn't always get on so well with her mum; in fact, there's almost a kind of rivalry with her at times. Even the fact that Bridget is now so focused on having a child is, in some way, an act of rebellion. Maree always told her kids to go and live their lives, don't rush to settle down - which is precisely what Bridget has done. Will she get what she wants?

## Rachel Gordon is Bridget

Rachel's television credits include *Blue Heelers* playing Detective Amy Fox for several years. She has also had re-occurring roles on *All Saints*, *Home and Away*, *Neighbours*, *White Collar Blue*, *Backburner*, *Big Sky*, *Never Tell me Never* and *The Cooks*. Her film credits are *Razzle Dazzle* and *Thunderstruck* alongside Sam Worthington and Stephen Curry.

Rachel's theatre credits have included *King Lear* and *Macbeth* for Bell Shakespeare, *Concussion* and *Don Juan* for the Sydney Theatre Company, *Let the Sunshine and Ninety*, both co-productions for the Melbourne and Queensland Theatre Companies, *Wit* for the Ensemble Theatre and *Boeing Boeing* for the New Theatricals. She has also starred in *All Things Considered*, *Death Defying Acts*, *Last Nights of Ballyhoo* and *Crimes of the Heart* for Marion St Theatre, *Light Particles* for Griffin, and *Out There for Hair of the Dog Inc*, *Taming of the Shrew* for EHJ Productions and *Big Hair in America* for the Hot House Theatre Company.



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