

Song: "The Choice"

Album: Reckonings (2023 Release by Eric Kilburn)

I'll greet each customer with a smile and say, "What can I get for you this fine day?
I've got some nice flank steak, cut an hour ago
And some sausage to make your man's hair grow"
Sometimes they ask about my twisted fate, about the Olympics in '68
How their butcher was the second fastest man on earth
And the aftermath and what it was worth

(Chorus)

Whatcha gonna say? Whatcha gonna do?
When the choice of a lifetime is handed to you
When the road forks between the easy and the true
Whatcha gonna say? Whatcha gonna do?

I ran the race of my life, that's all I can say
But no one was beating Tommy Smith that day
I beat John Carlos by just the width of my hand
For a silver medal on the honoring stand
Smith and Carlos told their plan to me, about making a statement the whole world would see
They asked if I believed in God and brotherhood
I said I would help in any way I could

(Chorus)

I wore a human rights badge, pinned to my chest
As Smith and Carlos raised their fists
And the world was shocked to have to open their eyes
To see these proud Black men with the skinny White guy
Back in Australia, Apartheid was the way
There was no confetti, no welcoming parades
They froze me off the team in '72
And I had to admit that I was through

(Chorus)

"We're not hiring you" I heard again and again
I couldn't coach, I couldn't teach 'cause of what I'd done
Smith and Carlos had their hard times too
A butcher's an honest trade; it was something I could do
38 years later God opened the door and Welcomed Peter Norman, only 64
Smith and Carlos bore the coffin down the aisle
"My brother from another mother" Carlos said with a smile

(Chorus)

Whatcha gonna say? Whatcha gonna do?
When the choice of a lifetime is handed to you
Sometimes you only get a moment or two
Whatcha gonna say? Whatcha gonna do?