

Last week on About Fucking Time: Tipara lost the Immunity Challenge, but Sylvain won a car he had no use for. Not a lot else happened. At least, not that we saw in the previews. But there are only twelve people left now, so perhaps we can finally sort out some of the non-entities.

Credits. Wow, some of these people don't look that good even when they aren't covered in dirt and mud.

Commercials. I can't believe they found a movie that's even worse about advertising Australia than this show is. I blame Nicole Kidman's giant nose.

Tipara, Day 13. Sciona climbs out of bed, shoes first, and the tribe walks to the water windmill. They are chased by a lizard-like thing. Attack, lizard-like thing, attack! It turns out that it's only tiny, because Lance picks it up with one hand. Damn. Joel confessionals that Knob tried to swing his vote away from Princess Jane and onto Jeff, which succeeded. As I recall, Knob voted for Princess Jane himself, so he can shut it. Knob confessionals that Joel wanted a pen to write some stuff down, because he thinks he may have gone against his conscience. Who would have guessed that a Survivor contestant could have a conscience? Not me, that's for sure. It turns out that he is having second thoughts, and is crying about it. Stay with me, please, you're one of my last hopes in this tribe!

At Kadina, the "Immunity Is Yours" rock from the Rock Mail for that donut-platform challenge has had the Y in Yours crossed out. Hee. Craig confessionals that getting up in the morning is difficult because they have nothing to do. Deb is talking about how her sixpack is almost showing, and we get a nice shot of her now-baggy pants, which are purple. PURPLE. Seriously, that's a bad colour to wear at the best of times, but here in a remote and dirty area that makes no sense at all. Deb takes the time to mock weight loss commercials, which, really, someone needed to do. I am amazed nobody's done it on the American version yet.

As Kadina walks down to the seashore (where She Sells Seashells), they notice some koalas hiding in nearby trees. Cool. When they get to the water, the waves are violent. Clearly, whoever's hosting Underwater Survivor was a little pissed with whoever got voted off last night. Caren confessionals about how dirty everyone is getting, and that the girls are thinking about cutting their hair off when they get back home, because it's THAT horrible. Never mind that Tipara are currently looking about ten times worse right now, she wants clean fingernails, and she doesn't care who she has to kill to get it! Craig confessionals that they were so lethargic coming down here that they had trouble putting their shoes on. Might want to try opening your eyes next time, then. I hear it's much easier to tie your shoes when you can see what you're doing. Deb confessionals that she's accepted that she's always going to feel bad out here, but Sylvain isn't coping very well. Sylvain confessionals that he doesn't even have the energy to think. NoMind rounds out this group of Kadina confessionals, saying that Sylvain was preparing to quit, even though he's one of the strongest people in the game. Sylvain adds to his previous confessional, blathering about how he's dead weight and is too tired and blah blah self-defeatismcakes.

At Tipara, Hatie and Sciona collect the mail, while Deb does the same for Kadina. It's attached to one of those typical seashells like you always see in cartoons, for no reason other than to prove those shells really exist, apparently. I'd like to thank the camera guys for getting shots of this one, because it's hard to make sense out of what's being said. It really reads:

*There's fish a-plenty in the sea,
But what if a crustacean delicacy it was to be?
It will take tribal balance and pull
To find the goodies in the pool
But if you're clever and quick with the pot
You could go home with the lot*

Craig immediately figures out that the reward is lobsters. Knob continues his run of Incorrectly Predicting The Challenges, this time thinking it involves balance beams and "bashing the other tribe over the head". Yeah, not so much. I can see the producers advocating physical contact, but not actual violence. Prick.

Commercials. Tonight in the Nein Newsroom, night makes it dark! This and other important things happening right now will be appearing on A Current Affair in about six weeks time.

Oooh, fish! Which will soon be seen as a reward in Underwater Survivor. We see lobster pots hidden underwater, as the tribes walk up to Link, standing in an absolutely beautiful area which has nevertheless been completely ruined by appearing on a reality show. Link introduces the area as "one of the most rugged and desolate coastlines in the world". And what do we do at a rugged coastline? Row crappy little boats, of course. They start out on the other side of the cliffs and row to a pair of buoys, then abandon the boats and swim to shore. When they get to their tribe flag, they pick up their first reward -- spices -- and follow a set of markers to the second reward, a pot. Then, they search a rocky and slippery area for a lobster trap containing a live Southern rock lobster. They have to take everything they pick up to their platform (appearing AGAIN), and transfer the lobster from the trap to the pot. Whoever does it first wins everything -- the lobster, the pot, the trap, and the spices. Tipara needs to sit out two people, and once again it isn't shown who they pick.

Survivors ready? Go! The tribes are completely incompetent rowers, not that that should surprise you at this point. But Kadina is slightly better. They reach the buoys pretty much together, and swim to shore, where Craig and Knob retrieve the spices. Everyone runs off in search of the pot, with a friendly reminder from Link about how the flags are pointing in the right direction. Thanks, Link! I don't think some of these people could have figured that out on their own. On the way to the pot, Sophie takes a fall, and it's officially the most interesting thing she's done in the last thirteen days. Kadina grabs their pot and reaches the final reward before Tipara even finds their pot. Which is "hidden" in a tiny narrow strip of water shallow enough that you don't lose much speed walking through it. Idiots. Sylvain and NoMind drag the large lobster trap up a rocky hill as Craig plonks the pot and spices onto the platform. When they get their trap onto the platform, they have no trouble getting the lobster in the pot, and they win, just as Tipara dumps their stuff on the platform. They celebrate as Tipara, and especially Knob, watches dejectedly (hee). Link hands them a few lemons to go along with the spices. Sylvain comes up with the brilliant idea to use their lobster trap when they go to the beach later that afternoon. At least that's what I assume he's referring to, but he might want to wash those lemons.

Back at camp, Kadina walk in with Caren and Deb singing a little James Brown, complete with high-pitched squeal. Heh. It turns out they also got given bread sticks at some point, because they're now talking about having lobster sandwiches. I don't think any of this stuff was actually in that first bundle they picked up at the challenge, because wouldn't the lemons have made more sense to stick in the sack while teams carried it through the water -- which got pretty deep towards the end -- than, say, salt (which would dissolve) or bread sticks (which would get soggy and horrible to eat) or those sauce jars (which only had hessian lids and which would get watered down severely)? I don't know. Caren and Deb want Craig to smell their bread (not an obscure euphemism... yet), but he's not going to until he can eat it. Meanwhile, Sylvain is crying about how beautiful it is.

Later, Craig and Deb walk down a track to the beach and discuss Sylvain's apparent breakdown. Craig mentions that you have to look at it from Sylvain's point of view -- working a couple of days a week, going drinking a fair bit, that whole deal -- and it helps to explain why his body and mind aren't coping. They get to the beach and set up their trap, then throw it in the water. They go home to "eat some of that stuff".

At Tipara, Lance eats rice. Actually, the whole tribe does. Knob bitches about how Kadina'll be too full to compete tomorrow. Yawn.

Back at Chez Kadina (which is totally the name of my imaginary French restaurant, so don't even think about stealing it), the sun is setting as Deb and Craig return. Kadina gathers around the fire to cook their lobster. When it's ready, it's too ready because they overcooked it. They eat it anyway. Craig offers to give either NoMind or Deb, it's not entirely clear which, \$50 for their piece of bread. They quite logically point out that he doesn't have \$50 to give them at the moment.

Commercials. What a weird place to put a commercial break.

We return to Kadina the next morning, where somebody forgot to do the dishes. Sylvain confesses that he was always going to take things day by day, and that yesterday was a bad day. Deb confesses that she rolled her ankle while she was setting up the lobster trap the previous night. Sylvain takes the highly logical position of calling her Hop-along. Classy. And necessary. She says she thought her busted ankle was a dream, but when she woke up in the morning it was still there and getting worse, so apparently not.

At Tipara, Joel says he had a dream about going to a Catholic school two doors down from his house and hearing the priest playing Metallica on the keyboard. Knob thinks the lack of food is making Joel crazy. I think having to put up with you and Hatie is making Joel crazy. Sciona had her own dream, about finding bathrooms with soap in it, and washing herself in every single one until she felt clean. Can we get a random drug test on these people when they leave the game? Because... seriously. Two people in such a tight group with such bizarre dreams in one night cannot possibly be normal.

At the beach, the waves are brutal. Wheel! Lance wants to look around for a safer place to fish. Knob and Hatie discuss that they couldn't get any food the last time they were here, and that was two days ago. So they're pretty much getting rice only for six consecutive days. No wonder these people are trying so hard for the rewards.

The waves are pretty, but the Underwater Survivors don't get to see what we do.

Sylvain and NoMind gather the Rock Mail, which this week is in the form of a miniature rope ladder. Uh oh.

*To win today will take a huge strain
It's a course that could very well result in some pain
Ropes and running, it has it all
If an individual falters, the tribe may fall
A true test of courage it will be
And the winner will sail to Immunity*

Knob snarks on how the tree mail makes it seem like the other challenges are easy by comparison. Kadina is more worried about Deb's gimp ankle.

Commercials. Apparently, Jeff got a job shilling some water at some market. I am never shopping there.

The helicopter overview of the challenge really makes it look huge. This one's going to be a bitch. Link grabs the Bell from Kadina (sniff), and reaffirms that the challenge is tough. Not that he would know. It's "a Survivor version of an obstacle course". Very simple, the first team to cross the finish line and unfurl their mast sail wins. And you've all got to finish one obstacle before you can move on. For once, we find out who's sitting out for Tipara, Princess Jane and Joel. Of course Princess Jane doesn't want to do anything that requires having to run around and get sweaty.

We get some more quick shots of the obstacle course, and the music over this whole thing is great, but completely inappropriate. Sort of sums up the entire venture, really.

Survivors ready? Go! The first obstacle is a rope swing. Everyone is still even for the next obstacle, climbing over a wall. They are still together for the next one, which involves basically crossing a tightrope while using a bunch of other vertical ropes to help get across. This time, if someone falls they have to go all the way back to the start. Tipara pulls ahead, mostly because it appears Kadina thinks they have to go one person at a time, while Tipara is all doing it together. They run to the next obstacle. One person has to get to the platform above, using only a steep wall to help them. Sophie does it for Tipara, and she throws the rope down for the rest of the tribe to get up. I have to be honest; Sophie wouldn't've been the first person I thought of if you asked me to tell you who the strongest person on Tipara was. Meanwhile, Craig gets up for Kadina. When Tipara gets up, they have to use the rope as a pole to slide back down to the ground from the other side of the platform. As Tipara leaves, Link reminds them that they must "go around the tree", complete with hand actions in case they were wasting time looking back at him for advice. Or possibly a warning of what they would have to deal with at Tribal Council. The next obstacle involves

climbing to and crossing a two-rope traverse. Very simple in practice, very difficult to do, if my past experience is anything to go by. Then again, I suck at any form of physical activity that doesn't involve nudity, so make of that what you will. Knob finally finishes as Kadina is about halfway through, and Tipara goes to crawl through a water-filled tunnel, easily the most inventive obstacle so far. It's much better than the next one, which is just climbing up and over a cargo net. After that, it's a straight run to the finish line, and Tipara unsurprisingly wins, with Joel cheering.

I'm not necessarily going to blame the producers for what happened there, but it should have been explained more clearly to the tribes that just because you all had to finish the obstacle before moving on, that it doesn't necessarily mean you had to do it one at a time. Seriously, I think given how Kadina almost caught up after that, they would probably have won if they knew they could do it at the same time. That sucked. And now, we have to lose another member of the likable tribe, thus ensuring that not only will I have to put up with more Tipara people for another episode, but that we will also be going into the merge with uneven numbers for what was then the only time ever. And you thought the Pagonging was gonna be bad before. Plus, between Joel's challenge cheering and Knob's jerkiness, we've already lost any advantage we got from booting Jeff last week. Ugh.

Tipara celebrates, Kadina cries. The same stuff we've been seeing after almost every Immunity Challenge, sadly. Link brings the Bell and the Bad News. Do we have to watch this every week?

Tipara returns to camp and puts the Bell "back where it belongs". Ugh. They talk about how they still have so many people left, and how Kadina is getting so small you could almost count them on one finger. (Speaking of, Most Of Tipara, I have one finger to show you right about now.) Sciona mentions how exhausting that challenge was, but she has this way of making anything at all sound extremely boring, and it really brings itself out here.

A slo-mo koala takes us all the way over to Kadina, where NoMind mentions the stupid ship again, and reminds us that if you have five cold and starving people and you give one of them food and a bed, you only have four cold and starving people left. Craig confesses that he thinks Deb let the team down, but Deb counter-confesses next to the fire that she thinks she didn't. I guess there's only one way to settle this: To the stenographer! Caren confesses that Deb had an injury, but she "did really well". Deb tells Caren that she didn't feel like she was slowing the tribe down too much. Presumably, she means this in the same way that a trip to the glue factory doesn't slow old racehorses down too much. Craig mentions that if that was as hard as she could have gone, even with her ankle problem, then it's time she left. On the one hand, I agree that Kadina especially should do whatever they have to do to get better at winning the damn Bell. On the other hand, if you're still voting on who is slow at this point, on your fourth visit to Tribal Council in five weeks, then you suck at this game. And Deb confesses that Caren's the weakest person left, which as far as I can tell is fairly accurate. I mean, in addition to generally being better at the challenges, Deb does more around camp than Caren, so the logic of voting Deb out at this point escapes me. Not to mention that just yesterday, as Deb reminds us because she and I are like *this*, Sylvain was wanting people to vote him out. Caren confirms in her confessional that she feels like she's the weakest in the team, but she still doesn't want to volunteer to go home like Lucindork did back in the first episode. See, Craig? Caren, not Deb. Don't get me wrong; I'm on your side, you're just wrong about this. Of course, I'd probably rather see Sylvain and his nervous breakdown go before either of those people, but still.

Craig straps on his inner Knob (ew) and mentions that the friendships he makes here are for game purposes only, and that he'd vote against anybody left in order to win. I totally agree about that second half of the statement, but in a setting like this you sort of can't help but get close to these people. I mean, you were almost accidentally fucking NoMind last week! Deb looks frustrated as she and Caren discuss how they'd like to know beforehand if they were getting voted out. Caren says she doesn't see any reason to vote Deb out. In what may or may not be an entirely different conversation at the same place (it sure looks like it), Craig and NoMind mention that they don't want to be voted for and don't want to have to vote, respectively. That's the sort of thing that really makes you notice who's actually playing the game strategically and who's trying to avoid strategy completely, and it's a shame we only got about eight seconds of it.

Commercials. Believe it or not (though you probably can't tell from the quality of these), these Australian Survivor recaps aren't the first recaps I've ever written. I should remember to drag those three X-Files episodes out of my hard drive and post them up, too.

But nobody cares about my past work, because the show is back. Eerie Wild West-style music brings us up to Tipara on Day 15. And, seriously, it's time to thank the Music Guys, because this show's music is better than any other reality show I can think of. Certainly better than Big Brother (fucking Potbelleez). So, according to the end credits of this episode, give it up for Jack "My Underlings Call Me Captain" Robin. Seriously, all the great music on this show? One guy. Wow.

Anyway, Sciona confesses that they cooked the day's rice and then drank the water last night, so they're not planning on eating much today. Mmmm, mushy old rice. Princess Jane confesses that they don't have to meet up with Link today, and can't go hunting for better food, so everyone's going to rest. Well, that was a fascinating visit to Tipara. Luckily, Princess Jane is the least annoying of the annoying people, and Sciona is the most omnipresent of the non-entities, so we didn't have to put up with any true dickweeds and under-the-radar flyers.

At Kadina, they do have to do stuff today. But instead, we get a Sylvain confessional about how he's feeling much better than he did a couple of days ago. The tribe walks down to the beach. As you may remember, this is the first time they've been able to retrieve their lobster trap, but they can't see the buoy attached to the trap anyway, because the waves are so bad. Sylvain says they should wait till low tide to get it, and Craig calls the trap a bastard. As you do.

The water windmill spins, but Tipara sleeps and Hatie takes notes, apparently trying to figure out the advanced calculus of What Happens If I Get Voted Out Next Time. She explains her complicated plan to Knob, based clearly on the assumption that the next round is the last one before the merge. Lance is the first boot for the tribe either way, but whether he goes next or in seventh place after the remaining Kadinas depends on if they win the Immunity Challenge next time. Princess Jane gets her information from Sophie and is not important, so goes after Lance. Joel "knows nothing", and is another pawn who doesn't get to be in the Knob/Hatie Alliance Of Overplanning. So the final four under this plan is Knob, Hatie, Sciona, and Sophie. She tells Rob she's figured out what to do then to get them to the final two, but doesn't want to tell him. Well, that makes complete and utter sense. I mean, she's totally not The Bad Guy Who Exposes Their Entire Plan, Therefore Allowing For It To Be Undone at all! Not at all! She says "it makes [her] sick" to plot against Sophie or Sciona, which sort of appears as though she hasn't thought out that far ahead, even though she just told Rob she did. Unless she's got a huge-arse case of indigestion right about now.

Hatie then goes to talk to Sciona about her Alliance Of Overplanning. Lance walks around. Sciona mentions that it's time for the game to really start. She confesses that the basic premise of Survivor is "Trust No One", and she's been watching too much of the British version of this show. Seriously, that was their version of "Outwit, Outplay, Outlast". Which reminds me, why doesn't this show have some sort of catchphrase like that? Sigh. She goes on to say that you have to position yourself, presumably so that people can trust you and get voted off because they are, as the French would say, le dimwits. Hatie tells Sciona she hasn't even considered forming an alliance with Knob or Sophie yet. Somebody get the fire extinguisher, because I think I see some pants on fire. Not impressed enough with lying to one person, she tells Sciona what she didn't say to Rob, that Sophie finishes fourth in her plan because she's just a number. Which really makes it seem as though she's getting booted for the same reasons as Princess Jane and Joel under the plan, but okay. Sciona confesses what would undoubtedly form the episode title if the producers named them based on mildly witty things said during the episode like they do over on The Amazing Race: "I didn't come out here to play tiddly winks [...] I came out here to play a game, and that's what I'm doing." Besides, a windswept coastline is not conducive to the fine art of flicking coins around. (Yes, I haven't actually seen or heard anything about tiddly winks since I was six years old. And that's including spellchecker's non-recognition of the word "tiddly". Don't email me. At least, not about this.) Now with Sophie, Hatie asks if they're "happy to vote this person out now", with all three -- and the editors -- seemingly forgetting that Tipara doesn't actually have to go to the stupid ship, as NoMind so eloquently put it.

Commercials. It's hard to believe so much has happened in 2008. According to a commercial actually airing on my television while writing this, Heath Ledger died and his stalker Britney Spears got even crazier, and Sarah Palin was responsible for the Not-So-Great Depression. Or something.

Time-lapse clouds and waves bring us to the shore, where Kadina has finally decided to start trying to get food. Or, rather, Deb has, with Sylvain telling her to be safe and to not get swept away to become an intruder over on Underwater Survivor. Except for that last part. Sylvain is apparently under the impression that he is not in danger of going home, otherwise he would almost certainly be trying to do something to avoid getting votes, like Deb currently is. NoMind confessionals that she doesn't want to get used to losing, but sadly gradually is. I think. Craig confessionals that it's interesting to see what happens when you don't have food or sleep, and he's liking what he sees. So am I. Mmmm. And I can't believe this is the first time I've noticed this (especially since I commented on his smile last week), but: Holy crap, his teeth are white. Like, blinding white. Snow white. Blake and Paige white.

He's sitting with Caren as Sylvain brings over the fish Deb caught, and appears to claim them as his own. Blech. Caren confessionals that they're stuck in a horrible position, because there isn't an obvious target for the boot, there are two, what with Sylvain's breakdown and Deb's ankle. Except for that last part. It sort of surprises me that we aren't seeing any attempts to form alliances on this tribe, especially compared to what's happened over at Tipara in the last few episodes.

Kadina arrives back at camp and gathers their torches, then leaves straight away. If that's what passes for entertainment these days, I'd hate to see the stuff that didn't make this episode.

At Tribal Council, Link reminds them that it's windy. Thanks, Link! I'm only getting my face half burned off by my torch, but thanks for telling me that! This week's addition to the I Never Seen That There Before gallery is a big fishing net way up the top near what I assume is the voting platform. From what I can see underneath it, it looks like it's only there to hide a camera guy. Might want to try finding something without big holes in it next time, producers. Link astutely observes that nobody's wearing their party hats and clown noses for their date. Nice pick up, dude. Sylvain, you won the reward but lost the Immunity, even though Tipara sucks at life and is living off of rice at the moment. Why? He puts it down to not being given the luxury of being able to sit out of a challenge, which is almost... logical? No, that can't be right. In other news, I have been going through a big TAR4 rewatch recently and have discovered that Reichen + Long Hair = Caren in the shot of her inserted here. It's downright freaky. But enough about mannish chicks, let's talk to a somewhat chickish man. Craig, how did you plan to do the obstacle course? He points out exactly what I did earlier (wool), which is that they did that stupid tightrope obstacle one at a time rather than all rampaging across it together, and that was why they lost. Deb, your body's had it. Do you think you're still fit enough to continue? Deb says she is. Caren, how much do you want to not suck as bad as you have been for the last five episodes or so? She doesn't answer the question, but instead riffs about health, and how you can't continue if your head's not in it. Plus, it's cold and it's miserable and it makes Link laugh. Apparently, global warming has not hit this place yet. NoMind, how does it feel knowing you're going to be voting to subject three other people to these hellish conditions for another three days at the very least? She doesn't know, apparently having not spent much time talking to the others today. I think it's a little weird here that we saw literally NO discussion of who was going tonight, when we even got some talk when Lucindork got booted unanimously.

Time to vote. Deb votes for Caren, thinking it's between those two regarding who stays. Caren breaks her promise and votes for Deb, hoping for "no hard feelings". Craig votes. Sylvain votes for Caren because she's weak. NoMind votes.

Link goes to collect the votes. Collect, Link, collect! Shots of Kadina looking nervous, and of Craig looking hot. The first vote is for Deb. Caren. Surprisingly, Link does not remind us of the current vote tally. I guess we've finally found the one way he is better than Probst. Another vote for Caren, and he does remind us. Another for Deb, and he not only reminds us of the score, but tells them that one of them is going home, lest someone gets the impression the last vote is worth three points or something. It's for Deb, and she gets booted. Damn it. How did whiny, quitting Sylvain, who seemingly hasn't done anything to justify being kept around, not get a single vote then? Deb is snuffed and looks sad. I would be too, if I was in her position. And not just because of the snuggling Craig. Link reminds them that Immunity Is A Good Thing, and sends them back to camp.

Next week: Giant barrels are involved, and Sciona carries a dinky little flag. It appears as though Tipara wins the reward and gives it to Kadina or something. Which I hope it is, because if the past five weeks has taught me anything, it's that whoever wins the reward loses Immunity, and I want to get rid of some of these people so bad I feel like hijacking a TARDIS and snuffing them myself. Sophie threatens to show some sign of personality. Joel and Sylvain test out Link's new favourite BDSM device over a split screen. Switch Sylvain for Craig and remove their clothes, and I would be all for that.

Deb's post-snuffage confessional. She's had an amazing time, but self-congratulatorially says she wasn't surprised to get as far as she did. She's pissed about how she got booted, and how Caren was weaker than her and how she only got booted because of her injury. Well, of course, silly. It's not like this tribe would vote out people who still wanted to be there over the sick and injured. Just ask Lucindork. Oh, and "it's just a game". Sure, it's easy to say that NOW. (Sniff.)