

Last week on *Adventures In Kangaroo-Free Wildlife Stereotyping*: Emus. Lots and lots of them. Alliances and paranoia spread through both camps, but we didn't actually see much of it because everybody was too busy confessionaling about it. Tipara continued to be sore winners. Craig voted for Bald Spice and thought the game had just gotten fun. Probably unrelated, those two scenarios. Bald Spice was 86'd. Now, only thirteen remain. Psst, Kadina: Thirteen? Lucky for some. PLEASE help me. Oh, and also: Spellcheck failed me and didn't pick up on the non-word "kury". I'll get you, Microsoft Word! And your little paperclip, too!

When they get back from Tribal Council, Craig confessionals that he has to keep beating Tipara at the Immunity Challenges otherwise he has no way to win the game. He also mentions that he didn't expect to not put up a fight. Hmm. The team talks about how Bald Spice is probably gonna take them off his Christmas card list now, and Sylvain mentions that the tribe finally feels unified. Oh, good. Maybe now they can finally work together and help me get rid of some of the annoying fuckwits over at Tipara. I vote for Jeff and Rob first. Then... anyone except Joel. And maybe Sophie, because in the past three episodes she's gotten maybe... two lines, all up? Kadina sings their way into a Deb confessional in which she says they're going to make history. Well, only in the sense that they'll be the worst tribe ever. Until Ulong. [Spoiler!]

Credits. I love how no kangaroos bothered to show up while they were filming the opening credits. It's like even they realised they would be overexposed.

At Tipara, Joel uses his backpack as a pillow. Everyone else gives a half-arsed attempt to wake him up, and if they weren't dead to me before, they are now tightrope-walking on that fine line between Living and Corpsified. Rob, acting like a knob as always, confessionals that the only way anyone got any sleep was by dumping Jeff's head out of the tent. I guarantee you that if Jeff knew you were doing that he would probably keep you up all night long by farting. Lance confessionals that he and Knob are very similar, and he just made my List with that remark. Congrats, Lance! (The obligatory hate mail should be in your email inbox.) He thinks that because nobody has approached him to form any alliances, that there aren't any. Does he even realise what game this is? Knob confessionals some crap about how either Lance isn't a threat, or Katie's a bullshit artist engineering his downfall.

Over at Kadina, Sylvain confessionals that the challenges have made him do stuff he doesn't want to do. Like competing, apparently. Because I sure haven't seen anything which would justify any other explanation for what he just said, like lederhosen or a panto cow costume. Maybe they're doing that on Underwater Survivor. Deb confessionals that "[Sylvain's] a lovely guy, but he's not... mentally very strong... at all." Hee hee. And, yes. I'm really liking Deb's ability to say what we're all thinking. Especially since she goes on to say that Craig does have the smarts, in addition to the strength, the skill, and the hott. Except for those last three things. She thinks Sylvain needs to be told what to do and how to do it. Meanwhile, NoMind is giving her own confessional, in which we get told that Kadina's trying not to focus on the other tribe, but they are anyway. Oh, and NoMind? "We want to whip their arses" is not exactly the sort of thing a schoolteacher can usually say, so take advantage of it while you can. (My friend WhoreBoy, who watches these with me for inspiration -- he's mostly responsible for the Underwater Survivor idea which keeps popping up -- would like you to know that he was imagining NoMind in full-on dominatrix gear when she said that. Um.)

Everybody goes to check their Rock Mail. This time, it's on a piece of felt or kangaroo skin or something.

*All at sea for a treasure you'll be
It's a salvage job for the chest, you see
One must dive to the depths for the loot
Unlock your rewards and discover the booty*

So, apparently, they have not only given up on forming correct sentences, they have given up on real words too. "Looty"? But on the upside, we might be getting a crossover with -- you guessed it -- the Underwater Survivors. And for some reason, the mail appears to come with a little pirate figurine. (Yeah, I don't know either.) Caren confessionals that she's afraid of the ocean, and that she doesn't want to risk her fear for the team to win.

At Tipara, Sciona and Hatie retrieve their tribe's mail, and we are "treated" to another reading of the message, this time with a clear shot of the actual message. Yawn. Wake me up when something interesting happens over there again.

We get shown some impossibly blue water, a row of keys attached to bent nails, and a treasure chest underwater. Guess where this challenge is going?

Commercials! During this commercial break, Sam Beckett leaped into Link's body and tried to show some semblance of personality. He failed dismally, and his current whereabouts (whoabouts?) are unknown.

We're back, just in time for the Token Sweeping Helicopter Shot of the Week. Blech. For some strange reason, it takes us to even more Challenge Preview Shots, which include a snorkel, floating pontoons, and the same crap we saw before the commercials. The teams walk up to Link, in what looks like an extremely fake shot. Link mentions that the Southern Ocean is home to a whole bunch of food, including whales, apparently. Screw you, whaling treaties! But that doesn't matter, because the teams are only playing for a snorkel, facemask, and flippers. Oh, and assorted lollies. Each team has to swim out to a pontoon, and haul a treasure chest onto the pontoon, untie the knot attaching the chest to the pontoon, and get it back to the platforms on shore. Boy, those platforms turn up a lot for no real reason. Anyway, once the chest is on the platform, one person from the tribe runs over to a "key tree" and chooses a key. The first tribe to get the key that opens their chest wins the reward. So, basically, it's a combination of brute strength and random luck. I'm thinking Kadina's screwed even more than usual. Tipara has to sit three people out, and they choose... well, once again, they don't ever actually tell us. Or even clearly show who's waiting at the start line. And I'm not invested enough in most of these people to tell who they are from their rear end. Anyway...

Survivors ready? Go! Everybody runs out and swims. Tipara gets their chest up first, but stuffs up the knot and both tribes get their chest free together. Once again, Tipara gets a lead as soon as they start swimming. This challenge is not even close, given that Tipara manage to unlock their chest with their first key. Ugh. Oh, and judging from the hugging, it looks like Joel, Sciona, and Rob sat out, if anyone cares. They open their reward, and we get some nice product placement shots of the chocolate. Yawn.

We run back to Kadina, where Sylvain is lying in a hammock and everyone bitches about missing chocolate. Craig even confesses that he'd kill for chocolate. Might I suggest he start with some of the people over at Tipara? Because... really. Kadina has NoMind and Deb and Caren, all of whom I like (plus Sylvain), but Tipara has Hatie, Knob, Jeff, Lance, Princess Jane... basically a whole bunch of people I would prefer to live without. Deb confesses about how Craig has different methods for consuming each different kind of chocolate but that "I just like to eat the stuff". Hee. The Slow French Horn Music Of Isn't This Funny? Isn't It? cuts us to a Craig confessional in which he explains that you only give Fruit & Nut to old people and some random other stuff. Coulda done without that entire scene.

At the beach, Tipara goes fishing and swimming. Hatie confesses about the alliancemongering. Knob and Hatie talk about how "black dogs" can be their code, and... huh? Why would you need a code? At least Hatie pretends to bark, so we might finally have real proof that she is a bitch. Sophie confesses (I know!) about how it feels bad to have to be in an alliance, but that she's got to do it if she wants to stay in the game. And one point for her for understanding that. Alliances are a necessary evil. Knob and Hatie are talking about getting Sciona into their alliance, and for some reason we cut to a reaction shot of Sophie from the previous scene, even though she's not in this conversation. On the one hand, that's poor editing, but on the other hand, at least she's getting some more airtime. Someone (Lance, I think) dives as we head into...

Commercials! Tonight in the Nein Newsroom, Nein reveals plans for an Aussie version of The Amazing Race. Luckily, Link is not scheduled to host.

More beach shots. Princess Jane and Hatie are making small talk about how Princess Jane doesn't do any housework, presumably because she is such a Pretty Princess. Riveting television. Elsewhere, Knob is talking about how Sciona looks like an "Amazon woman" because she's carrying a giant stick. But Amazon women are tall, big-

breasted, and willing to get naked for chocolate and peanut butter. So... not so much there, dipwad. Sciona reckons she's more like Xena, and that's the same problem, only without the gratuitous nudity. Anyway, Sciona confessionals that she knows how to deal with bees, because she is Sciona, Wannabe Princess. Everyone else covers up as much as possible so Sciona can attack the bees (Joel, in particular, looks like he's going trick-or-treating as a scarecrow), and we get some really out-of-place music over that entire scene. What is up with the music this week? Sophie confessionals that it was really dangerous, and how Joel was scared, and OH MY GOD I LIKED YOU BETTER WHEN YOU WOULDN'T TALK AT ALL. Everyone else is talking about bee stings and whatnot, and Hatie actually takes the time to point out that the honey-like substance they spent all afternoon trying to get was... honey. One point for the genius. (Actually, can you imagine Katie with her hair sticking out like Einstein? Hee.) Everybody talks about how great the honey is. And with all those damn bee stings you got between you, it had better be.

At Kadina, Sylvain tells us that Craig is "snuggling up to" NoMind, while he's getting close with Caren and Deb. Well, whatever I say about NoMind's actual intelligence, she sure has good taste. Mmm, Craig. In what is perhaps the editing highlight of this entire season so far, Sylvain comments that the five of them are getting somewhat incestuous, with a shot of Craig's gigantic (and adorable) smile forming right as Sylvain says that last word. HA! Caren confessionals that none of them have any inhibitions, and that they pretty much have to dry hump in order to stay warm. Well, not in those words. The five of them are discussing the close sleeping arrangements and mentioning that if they were naked, they'd be doing something very similar to The Nasty. Unsurprisingly, Sylvain brings up the concept that they'd probably accidentally have sex. He would. Oh, he would. (And not just because I suspect that Craig isn't going to try anything with any of the women here, if you know what I mean, and I think you do.) (Hey, I was talking about how he seems like the kind of guy who would respect a woman, rather than blather on and on about how he respects women and how that makes him a better person than everyone else, while doing the exact opposite. Not that any Big Brother contestants who look like they have a permanent case of hayfever would do that, BEN. What did you think I meant?) Craig confessionals that he's "got two blondes on either side" [sic], and he's not going to complain. He thinks that he "got the good straw". There are so many dirty-minded ways to respond to that, I can't decide which one to use. Take your choice, or make one of your own: "So he got lucky out there?" "They would know!" "Notice he didn't say the SHORT straw."

I'm sorry, was I supposed to be writing some sort of recap?

NoMind confessionals about how getting rid of the old people means everyone left is under 30, and wonders what the old people think about it. No, really. Maybe her nickname wasn't so inadequate after all. Deb confessionals that she almost wishes they had kept the others. She mentions that if they lose another immunity challenge, there's a snowball's chance in hell anyone from Kadina can win this game.

Right on cue, assorted wildlife shots -- including a seal, a koala, and yes, kangaroos -- bring us to Tipara's tree mail, where Knob and Hatie are eloping from their tribe to retrieve the clue, acting even more like crazy fools than usual:

The gear you shift is not as it seems
The drive to win splits your teams
Run with your wheels over the rough
In this giant's game of Blind Man's Bluff

Token Challenge Teaser. This week: poles, poles, and more poles.

Commercials. You know what movie almost didn't suck? House of Wax. The world needs more films where Paris Hilton dies.

The now-familiar helicopter swoop over the water and cliff brings us to the challenge, where there are two four-wheel-drives waiting. The tribes walk up and we get some more shots of poles. And not the fun kind the women of Kadina are almost accidentally experimenting with. Link takes the Immunity Bell from Joel. He explains that this

challenge is different from usual, because not only will one tribe win Immunity, but someone on the winning tribe will also get a new car.

No, seriously.

It's a Ford Escape, and they'll be using two of them in the challenge. Each tribe must choose a designated driver for the other tribe. Those two people will be blindfolded, and their teammates must direct them across the clearing, going through a series of gates. If they hit a gate, one person must run to a nearby "penalty area" and retrieve a coloured flag. Then, they've got to get back and stick it under the windshield wiper like a parking ticket before their driver can start driving again. The first team to get across the finish line gets Immunity, and gets to play for the car. This is a nice twist on the usual See No Evil challenge because rather than listening to one person and getting annoyed that they aren't telling you where to go, you've got a whole bunch of people telling you what to do, making you annoyed because none of them have any idea what to do. Coincidentally, this is exactly what finding a car park is like during the festive season.

We get shots of the tribes huddling and discussing who they'll pick to be the other tribe's driver, and Sophie hilariously thinks that women suck at driving. Way to challenge those stereotypes there. Link asks Tipara who they've decided on, and Joel, looking like he's more than a little unfit to be a designated driver, says they've chosen Caren. Caren does not look particularly happy. Caren shares the news that Princess Jane's driving for Tipara. As pissed as Caren looked, multiply that by about 46 and you'd get Princess Jane's bitchface at this point. It's probably because she usually has a driver taking her places.

In a shot that makes me think of Grease, Link stands between the two cars as he gets ready to begin the challenge. And now I need to go get the horrible chain-reaction mental image of him in spandex and singing Let's Get Physical out of my head. Ewww.

...Okay, I'm back. Survivors ready? Start your engines and... GO! We get a lot of shots of people maneuvering cars and trying not to yell at each other. They both get through the first gate without a problem, but Princess Jane knocks down the second gate. Both Hatie and Joel run to get the penalty flag, apparently not realising that one gate does not equal two penalties. This isn't a kayak slalom, dammit! As Knob yells at Princess Jane to stop, she asks how Kadina are doing. Sciona tells her not to bother worrying about the other team, which as we all know is code for "whomping your arse, baby, so hurry up and lose already".

It appears here that Craig is giving Caren the majority of her directions, and he's doing it so well compared to Knob's spazzing out that not only does Caren not knock down the third gate, but she goes clean through the exact centre, with plenty of room on either side. Woo! As the tribes head towards the shared gate, we see a wide shot of the car, with Link in front of the team looking off into the distance and possibly thinking "Oh my God, get me AWAY from these freaks." Hee. As Kadina crosses the last gate, someone tells Caren to speed to the finish, which she does. KADINA WINS. And it's about fucking time. That was the most incredibly non-suspenseful low-speed driving scene in the history of forever and ever and ever. But Kadina winning, of course, means we will get rid of either an annoying person like Hatie or Knob, or a non-entity like Sophie or Lance. And in either case, it makes for one mildly less unhappy recapper. Plus, it evens up the competition a bit more. So this can only be a good thing.

And in the "Better Things" filing cabinet, right between Doctor Who and Naked Craig, Link explains that now Kadina gets to play for the car. It's simple and very anti-climactic. Just choose the right key out of a bucket. If your key opens the car, you win. Yawn. It's no wonder the American version gives these away near the end of the game, when you can actually afford to use up a challenge idea on the car, rather than a tacky add-on like this. Anyway, in an ironic twist of fate, Sylvain -- who doesn't have a licence -- wins the car. Link superfluously congratulates him.

Tipara walks back to camp. Knob confesses that winning had gotten to be a habit (aside from those two reward challenges you lost, Knob?). He says he thinks the challenge taught them to lose. Given which football club he played for (and who he later spent much of his winnings making a documentary about), I'd say he's pretty damn used to losing by now. And the fact that he looks really sad like he missed his one chance of getting a car -- as if he couldn't get one on a professional athlete's salary -- makes it doubly hilarious. When they are sitting around the...

can (where is the fire, people?), he self-flagellates some more about how the instructions must have been what let them down, since Princess Jane was such a good driver and only crashed into one pole. I could watch this all day. Watching fools blame themselves is entertaining. We cut to a confessional in which Jeff says that "[Princess] Jane drove like shit". True. But your tribe also made the wrong choice for Kadina's driver, didn't understand how the penalty system worked, and provided bad directions. As much as I dislike her, you can't blame losing the challenge on Princess Jane when the entire tribe was as incompetent as George W. Bush. Jeff adds that her age is a problem, because her best isn't good enough. Then you should have tried doing something in the challenge, fuckwit.

Kadina returns to their camp with the bell. Deb confessionals about how it was reenergizing to win. Caren confessionals and says basically the same thing. Craig's silhouette rings the bell over-enthusiastically.

Commercials. If someone can explain to me exactly why the wrappings on Ferrero Rocher chocolates are glued to the little cupcake-holder base things they have, I will be eternally grateful. And so will the horses.

Ominous music and twangy... other music brings us back to Tipara on Day 12, where Lance and Joel are doing their yoga. Clearly, they are enjoying near-sexual sleeping arrangements too. Joel confessionals that surviving Tribal Council is important (or something), but I am distracted by the fact they could not find any other way to describe his occupation than "university graduate". Company director Lance confessionals that people seem to enjoy him in the tribe, so he's hoping that hopefully he'll hopefully survive the vote, hopefully. On cue, Knob confessionals that he needs to see Lance gone ASAP. Hatie and Sciona are talking that the obvious choice is Princess Jane, but that that makes no sense from a strategic point of view. Hatie, whose confessional caption implies that she also does not have a job but did at some point take on the persona of an entire city (and not just Tittybong or Mooloolaba, but Melbourne, which if my high-school geography is right is the largest city in the world in terms of sheer area), implies that she's thinking about this objectively, even though Sciona was the one who just told her to do that same thing. Boy, there's some revisionist history if ever I saw it. It's like she just assumed this entire show would be confessionals (and in most cases, she'd be about right). As a representative of the lovely city she ate, Shut Up, Katie, or I will give you such bad indigestion you won't know which end to aim over Tasmania. (Note to Tasmanians, including the wonderful WhoreBoy: I kid because I love.) (Note to non-Tasmanians: No, I don't.)

For no reason at all, we get an emu shot as Tipara walks to the beach. Jeff confessionals that he's trying to get Hatie to notice Why Princess Jane Sucks. Which she does, but not enough to justify getting voted off. Hatie confessionals that Jeff was working her over about how Knob felt, and that she was pretending to listen. Jeff confessionals AGAIN, this time about how it's not over until the fat lady sings. I think I hear her warming up.

...No, wait, that was Hatie impersonating a banshee. Carry on.

At Kadina, Sylvain wakes everyone up with the Bell. And you just know he's going to be the next Kadina voted off now. Craig confessionals that he's not letting go of the bell without putting up one hell of a fight. With his leg raised like it is in the confessional tree, the branch is looking hilariously inappropriate right about now. Sylvain brings the Bell to the rest of the tribe, still sleeping, and dumps it between Craig and NoMind so that any accidental or deliberate contact is stopped immediately. Caren points out that this is the only day so far where they can relax and not have to deal with Link. For no reason, we get a shot of Craig taking a photo of Caren's chest with that camera they got on Day 1. Craig mentions that today, they're going to get water and try and make their bed more comfortable with some rosemary bushes. NoMind confessionals that they're enjoying not having to go to "the stupid boat". True.

Crashing waves bring us to Tipara, where Knob and Princess Jane are acting like school children during recess. Princess Jane confessionals that everyone is vulnerable, and that everyone contributes to the tribe. Jeff is trying to work over Rob, and confessionals that he thinks Rob thinks he's more important than Princess Jane. Knob struggles to make a fire and gets annoyed again at his own ineptitude (hee). Sophie confessionals that she likes having Princess Jane around because it feels like an "honest friendship", but that she thinks people are going to vote against her. Princess Jane asks Hatie if she's going to vote for her, and Hatie says yes. Does she not know that lying is the point of the game?

As Sciona asks Princess Jane if she wants some fish, Joel confesses that Pretty Jane is the obvious target because she's the weakest. Oh, and something about Jeff. Princess Jane confesses that Lance and Joel are going to be the swing votes, and that either her or Jeff will be booted. Out on a rocky outcrop, Knob tries to find out what Joel's going to do. It's really the same exact story we've seen during this entire segment -- person X was going to vote for Princess Jane, person X saw Princess Jane trying harder, person X is now considering Jeff. Yawn. The thunder clouds are approaching.

Commercials. Every time I see Schindler's List now, I think of people with gas masks fused to their heads and asking "Are you my mummy?" Another film successfully ruined by Doctor Who.

As Tipara gets their first look at the Tribal Council ship, I realise that there's a second shipwreck behind where Link stands. How incompetent must its drivers have been to not see the first giant shipwreck only a few metres away? Link leads Tipara through the torchlighting ritual we all hate. He points out that Kadina is familiar with this routine, but that they stood him up tonight, so Tipara has to fill in for them. Or something. Joel, is Tipara a unified tribe? Joel thinks so, but apparently he didn't see all that vote-mongering down by the sea. Also, he calls Link Link, and I am taking that as a shoutout, even if these recaps are being written almost seven years after the show finished airing. Hatie, how did you decide who is the most worthless person here? By making a tough decision. Princess Jane, does being the Youngest Survivor Ever change how the tribe treats you? No, because age doesn't matter out here, and the rest of the tribe won't let her sit out challenges just because she's not tall enough to ride most rollercoasters. Jeff, does your incessant snoring piss people off? People laugh, and Hatie fields the question by saying that it sucks but that they're coping. But they "love Jeff all the same". Sure you do. Knob, are you missing your family? Does your family even know you're out here? He's missing his little son, who's probably going to take his first steps any time now. Why did you even apply if you knew you were going to bitch about something like that?

Time to vote. Joel votes for someone whose name starts with J. Knob votes for Jeff because he wants his beauty sleep. Not that it'll do him any good. Sciona votes for Princess Jane because she's getting anorexic. But it's nothing personal. Sophie votes. Hatie votes. Princess Jane votes. Lance votes. Jeff votes for Princess Jane because he thinks she needs to be at home not doing housework.

Link goes to gather the votes, and everyone looks like they need a clown to come in and start making balloon animals. Unfortunately, only Link returns. First vote? Jeff. Jane. Jeff. Jane. Link reminds us of the score, in case we can't count to two votes. Jane. Jeff. Another reminder. Jeff. Jeff. And so Jeff gets to go and sleep in a real bed. Jeff grabs his torch and is snuffed. Wow, look how tiny the snuffer handle is. Link's almost snuffing Jeff with his bare hands. Link provides a head count, in case Tipara did not learn that $8 - 1 = 7$, and sends them back to camp.

Next week: The waves get so big that the teams can't eat any food. Craig is wandering around like a zombie, and not in the fun Thriller kind of way. The castaways compete in that army assault course Knob wanted last week. Sylvain considers quitting, and sleeps on it.

Jeff says that they didn't get any food from the producers and that this was a lot tougher than he thought it would be. He says he still likes the other seven people in the tribe even though five of them voted for him. Interestingly, the only three who voted for Jane were Jeff, Knob, and Hatie. Which is good, because it means that one of those two will hopefully be booted next if Tipara lose again. And I for one can't wait.