

Okay, so here's the deal. WhoreBoy and I broke up (for good this time ...probably), so he wasn't here when we recorded the audio track I use when deciding which snide asides to add to this recap. And EmoHunk's about to go backpacking across Europe for the next few months, so this is his last one as well. Sniff. To recap: After this one, I'm completely on my own for the first time in, like, four months. Which is probably going to result in the worst recap in, like, four months. But that's for later. Now, the real episode...

Previously on *I'm Not As Dumb As Thinkle Peep Me Isn't*. That big tall tower that wasn't important in the Sydney episode two weeks ago also wasn't important in the Or Clend episode last week, but it got included in the previouslies again anyway. Eight teams leapt over The Ditch, and almost managed to walk the entire way back while searching for something about two hundred metres away from where they started looking. Except for Team Idiot, who got random locals to drive them everywhere. SanFran decided to check the children's section in a library, which as it turned out was where Team Idiot had not spent enough time learning to read. Antsy left everyone else to run around town like... well, not "idiots", because they didn't run, but... whatever other metaphor works there. Three teams refused private rides, one of which may have also been an offer for some free sex, but Team Idiot did not. WuWho claims that "athletic prowess" was tested at the Detour, but it was really just a case of simply paying attention. Just like the rest of the episode. The teams climbed a different giant tower, and everyone except Cirran got to see Phil Keoghan's house from where they were standing. He even left the lights on for the people like Team Idiot who got there after dark! Then, they got auditioning for *The Hobbit* mixed up with impersonating Or-Tay Doze-Cray in *Mission: Impossible*. The lovely Sharon and Melody were the last team to arrive at the Pit Stop, but were saved because Team Idiot got a long-overdue elimination. They left, incorrectly ranting and raving about how awesome they were compared to everyone else. Idiots. Now, only seven teams are left. Who will be eliminated... TONIGHT?

Credits. Did Ernie just slap Jeena? [BAM!]

WuWho welcomes us back to Or Clend, where, as it turns out, the camera effects people didn't get fired after last week, and show us a cool little shot where somehow the Sky Tower turns into the Hulk and is all "Hulk No Like Idiot!" In this week's Little-Known Fact, a third of all New Zealanders call Or Clend home, and they probably all have a favourite fush and chup shop. (Relax, Kiwi readers, I didn't mention sheep! Aside from that last sentence! And the rest of this recap!) The history of New Zealand, as it turns out, is so expansive that it has to have an entire building to explain it. That building was recently demoted from "Reminder Of Cultural Heritage" to "As Seen On A Glorified Game Show!". And it's where we pick up, a few hours after Idiotgate.

As you may remember, Handy and Laura were first last time, and they get to leave at 4:30 in the morning. As always seems to be the case with the show these days, you are right to expect bunching in the form of another set of flights, and this week the teams must use said Flights Of Much Bunching to get themselves to Dunedin. Dunedin is, per WuWho, "the second-largest city in the South Island of New Zealand". Which reminds me that we've never seen Christchurch on this show, and yet we've seen Rotorua and Queenstown twice each, and Auckland five times, the first city to reach the Overusage Milestone (though Bangkok has since joined it, and Hong Kong is only one visit behind). Where's the justice? Ahem. Anyway, when they arrive in Dunedin, they get the next clue, handily located in a group of waiting cars. As Handy and Laura leave, we see a Handy confessional about how they can still win, if they can get lucky. He also explains that they don't want to be the first team Yielded. Damn it. After the last episode's recap, I swore to try not to use the word Foreshadowing, but... bend over, here it comes again. Foreshadowing!

4:48am. Antsy leaves. Admiral Whynypants threatens violence or something. Whatever.

4:58am. The wonderful Zabrina and Joe Jer depart, and Zabrina takes the time to check whether she's pronouncing Dunedin (approximately, "Deh-knee-d'n") correctly. Awesome. If only someone could have taught WuWho to say half of the places the race visits. Joe Jer confesses that she's harder to please than Zabrina is and is more "analytical".

5:13am. Howard and Cirran. They have \$115 American for this leg of the race, which will undoubtedly help Howard when he arrives in "Dunny-den". He also takes the time to correct which is helpful, because even his second alternative ("June-d'n") was way off. Heh. Cirran confesses that they were going to try and "do the best [they] can do". Which I'm sure you're proving, considering in the last three legs you've quit one RoadBlock and considered quitting the other two. Shut up, Cirran.

The three lead teams are at the airport, and learn that the first flight to Dunedin is booked, so they'll have to wait for an 8am flight, getting in at 10:45am. Which, really, isn't *too* bad, given that will still give you most of the day to finish the leg. It's not like you have to wait until three in the afternoon or anything. And it's only a 45-minute loss, and none of the other teams will be able to get on the flight ahead of you. So there's no reason to be annoyed here. Of course, Syeon is. Figures.

Howard and Cirran get tickets without a fuss.

6:22am. SanFran. Fran voices over that the race really isn't for the money until it gets down to the last few teams. They are shocked to learn that cabs have more important things to do than wait around for them. Shocked, I tell you!

6:33am. Super Marsio Bros., who opt to call their destination "Doona-d'n". They point out in wacky voices that they don't know where it is. Well, obviously. They laugh in a confessional about how they need to start using their heads more, because their legs have had it. I'm not sure they're able to do that, unless they're expert acrobats and can walk on their heads or something. Which would be cool to watch, come to think of it.

6:40am. Sharon and Melody are last to leave, and they show their ability to not be the worst performing team remaining by... butchering Dunedin worse than anybody else, and doing it several times to boot. Ouch. They voice over that they take the race "very seriously", but they've been "lady-like, perhaps, and very civil" during the race, and not competitive at all. So shove that in your Pink Team Generator, Van Munster! (I kid because I care, but you'll notice these guys have already made it further than most of the Pink Teams from the past, in what is, really, a tougher field of competitors, and they haven't tried convincing themselves that whoring themselves out will be an effective strategy.)

All the teams catch the same flight. Boy, that was an exciting and tense five minutes and 32 seconds, wasn't it? I know my own heart can barely keep up with the excitement. ["You... might want to get that checked out." -- EmoHunk]

When they arrive in Dunedin, Zabrina asks a taxi dispatcher if he's seen seven identical cars parked somewhere. Yeah, the taxi rank? They find the cars first (woo!), and pick the red one, because it's easiest to remember. The clue tells teams to drive to Queenstown. WuWho complies with the Queenstown Tourist Bureau mandate and mentions the adventure sports, accompanied by shots of paragliders. Not that we'll see any in Queenstown or anything. When they get there, they have to find a particular [Shell] service station and fill up their cars. Wow, exciting. This episode is sure getting off to a wonderful start. Except not.

There is running, and tense music, and it looks like Syeon almost gets runs over by Zabrina and Joe Jer. Damn. I'll leave it up to you whether I mean "Damn, she almost got hurt!" or "Damn, they missed her!"

Handy and Laura leave in second place. Antsy are in third, and there's a nasty sequence here in which Admiral Whynypants and Handy compete to see how many times they can mention the sponsor company. Ew. San voices over, sounding a bit like he's drunk, that they got a local on the plane to lead them to their car. Fran seems excited but not surprised that they're heading to Queenstown. The other teams get to the cars.

Zabrina asks about the speed limit (Fore...Fore...Fuck it. You know what I'm thinking.), and Joe Jer says someone on the plane told her it's 100 kilometres per hour. So, the drive to Queenstown, assuming you don't get lost, will be about three hours. Which isn't overwhelmingly bad, as far as drives on this show go.

SanFran's guide gives them directions, but Sharon and Melody drive off in the meantime. Marsio holds the sponsor credit card up to the camera. Ugh.

Laura tells Handy that he "must obey all New Zealand traffic rules", and that "by driving the vehicle, [he] accept[s] any fines or traffic infringements incurred". Somehow, they take these clear instructions to mean "Don't speed *too* much!" In Zabrina and Joe Jer's car, a shot of her speedometer shows that she's "going 110" (which, you'll note, is ten over the speed limit anyway), as Handy and Laura pass her. And they pass her extremely fast, so this isn't your average couple-of-kilometres-over situation. Zabrina says it "sucks" when other people pass you by doing the wrong thing, but at least she doesn't see fit to turn it into a morality play like so many others on this show would. So I guess I have that to be thankful for.

Howard bitches at Cirran because he's not providing directions. As if he's going to get lost on a straight road. Handy and Laura are lost, which serves them right. Cirran reminds Howard that they "just need to get to Queenstown", as though he had forgotten. Howard says he's "just keeping to all the speed limits". Are you sensing something's about to happen? Are you?

Zabrina and Joe Jer realise they still have about two and a half hours of driving left. The Super Marsio Bros. are driving too.

Suddenly, Zabrina and Joe Jer are in front of Handy and Laura, and Laura is shocked. Turns out speeding doesn't make a difference when you're going in the wrong direction. Who knew? Zabrina fills the role of Exposition Fairy during this sequence, explaining what happened in the last minute or so of the episode, and adding that they're probably "going to try and overtake us again". In other news, Zabrina's accent makes the words "hauling ass" sound peculiar. Not necessarily funny, just... unusual, you know? Handy and Laura do indeed try and overtake again, and Laura looks extremely self-satisfied. Zabrina tells us they're now in an 85 km/h zone. Laura says "it'd be silly" for Zabrina to try and overtake them again.

Mardy provides this week's Weather Report. As it turns out, the roads are slippery, which would make speeding an even stupider idea, would it not?

Zabrina and Joe Jer cross a bridge and marvel to enjoy the natural beauty of New Zealand. As an Aussie, I feel compelled to ask, "What natural beauty?", but there is some. So I'll leave it to EmoHunk. ["What natural beauty?" -- EmoHunk]

Suddenly, we cut to a closeup of Handy's face, as police sirens blare in the background. Oh, good. Not just because it's happening to someone I don't like, but because it's happening. For too long, Amazing Race contestants have been driving unsafely with no consequences. Compared to the second season, where teams actually did get penalties, now it's like the producers are all, "just don't make us deliver your decomposing corpses to your families". And the fact that this might wind up being a crossover with *Motorway Patrol* is even better. Anyway, Handy looks shocked to learn that he was driving at 146 km/h. ONE HUNDRED and FORTY-SIX. Forty-SIX kilometres. Twenty-nine MILES. That's, like, the speed limit, which was high to begin with, and half of it again. How do you not notice going that fast? Handy tries to use "we're in a hurry" as an excuse, but the cop is definitely not buying it. Handy tries to claim that he doesn't "want to embarrass [him]self further". Oh, it's a little too late for that. For some reason, Handy seems to think that being caught driving almost fifty kilometres over the speed limit means you can still be legally allowed to drive. Delusional fuckwit.

Commercials. ["Yeah, this is where the whole section about Raceguy's Celebrity Hunk of the Week was normally going to go. Unfortunately, I had picked Andy Hallett, who passed away from heart failure on March 30th of this year, right as I was in the middle of writing the recap. My condolences go out to his family and friends. I don't feel right keeping him as the Celebrity Hunk of the Week, but I think it's disrespectful to his memory to replace him. So, this week, there is no Celebrity Hunk of the Week, and from here on out the award will be renamed the Andy Hallett Memorial Award. The alternate title wasn't particularly great, but this isn't the sort of thing I particularly want to make fun of." -- Raceguy]

Zabrina and Joe Jer come across Handy and Laura, still pulled over, and are suitably... not overjoyed, not impressed, not even really that happy about it. I don't quite think they're vindicated, either, but that's as close as I'm going to get to saying the right word here. So, unless EmoHunk has a better word, vindicated it is. ["Don't disturb me, I'm too busy calming down from the edge-of-your-seat excitement of those first five and a half minutes." -- EmoHunk]

Handy is still trying to avoid NZ\$600 in speeding fines, which is... really not the thing he should be doing in this situation. Granted, I don't drive (because, dang it, there are enough idiots on the road without me joining in the fun), but it seems to me like you can't exactly flirt your way out of something like this. Especially when you're a straight guy caught by a male cop. Even EmoHunk agrees with me on this one. Which is weird, because we almost literally NEVER agree on anything. Aside from the fact that the Village People are seventeen kinds of squicky.

SanFran are somewhat more excited to pass Handy and Laura than the girls were. As they're entitled to, given that SanFran have been behind them at pretty much every single route marker so far. Fran mentions that the Kiwi police aren't going to put up with Handy's bullshit, and she's right, because we snarkily cut to Handy trying to tell the cop that his speed gun must be faulty or something. The cop brilliantly points out that this isn't England, despite all claims the Queen might make to the contrary. Handy wants him to overlook how dangerous his driving was. So, because he's a tourist, he expects to weasel his way out of responsibility for his actions? Fuck that shit.

Joe Jer explains that she's happy if the other teams get stopped for speeding. Okay, NOW they're feeling vindicated. The Super Marsio Bros. are also happy.

Handy confirms that all his skilful manipulations have resulted in... an immediate loss of licence. And he checks to make sure what happens if he gets caught, which would imply to me that he's thinking about driving again. Which: I hope not. I couldn't care less about him or Laura, but there's two poor crew members who have to travel with them, and I don't

think they should have to take that risk again. After a brief cut to the Super Marsio Bros., in which literally nothing of importance happens, we find out that Handy's fine is a paltry NZ\$510. Pfft.

Yeah, driving is repetitive. We get it. Moving on.

Soon afterwards, we're back with Handy and Laura, who try to justify their speeding ticket as "bad luck" (of course), by claiming that "all the other teams were going faster than that". Aside from the TEAMS YOU PASSED, you whiny fool. Handy whines about Laura driving right on the edge of the road, and she tells him, "Darling, don't tell me how to fucking drive when you've just lost your licence." I love her for that remark, just a little.

Guess what? Driving is still repetitive, and it's so repetitive it even got fired from the Department Of Redundancy Department. It doesn't help that there's a product placement. So you'll hopefully excuse us if we just zzzzz out for a little while here, and wherever else this episode needs it for us to keep our sanity. Sure, if you're watching this as an actual episode, it's a good one, as EmoHunk pointed out after it finished. But the problem is that I'm pausing every few seconds to recap, and it's starting to feel like watching paint dry. And I'm only just a little bit over ten minutes into the episode. Don't get me wrong, I loved this episode. The scenery is wonderful. The people are wonderful, especially now that Team Idiot is gone. But the problem is that the tasks this week are dreadful, and that's what's making this a pain to write, and partially why this has taken so long to get up -- I just haven't been able to muster the enthusiasm to go back to this episode before now. So, there's stuff missing whenever you see "Zzzzz." Got it? Good. And I'm very, very sorry. For the not caring, for the skipping ahead, for the rant, and for letting you all down.

"Zzzzz." (42 seconds skipped.)

The Super Marsio Bros. are first to get their clue from the [BP], and it's the Detour. You know the drill, hopefully. Two tasks. Pros. Cons. Nothing neutral about 'em. This time, it's a choice between Luge and Ledge, and WuWho introduces the task from a little platform overlooking Queenstown. In either option, they need to ride a big, tall chairlift to get to the task. In Ledge, each of you perform a canyon swing, which is basically a bungy jump. And, in fact, if you pause during the intro, you can see the word "Bungy" on the side of the jumping platform. Didn't we just have another basically-a-bungy-jump task last week? The task is scary, but you only have to do it once. In Luge, you complete a tag-team relay of a "luge" course, riding along on what are basically go-karts. I use the quotation marks because (1) where is the damn snow?, (2) the course is vaguely open plan and isn't an actual chute dealie, and (3) no, really, where is my snow, you heartless tools? WuWho mentions completing the track, "going four times around", but does not tell us whether that's four times each or four times between you.

Okay, even aside from the bungy issue, I have problems with this Detour, but I'll try and detail them quickly:

- Both tasks function like the Gravity-Is-Your-Dominatrix RoadBlocks I hate so much. The best tasks are either the ones designed to be intentionally confusing or physically difficult, or to force interaction between the teams and the locals or the landscape. Both of these, frankly, suck. They'd be great to do, sure, but watching it on TV? Yeah, not so much with the fun there, guys.

...Wow, that was a little more quickly than I expected. The Super Marsio Bros. pick Ledge.

Fran voices over that everybody drove into Queenstown in a convoy. It sounds like in addition to being boring, this bit's out of order, because she says that she and San were in

the front car, with six behind them. Which would mean that all seven teams were there, and the Super Marsio Bros. couldn't possibly be on their way to the chairlift yet, right? I am confused. Sigh. At this point in the show's development, I should really just sit down and wonder why I'm still trying to make sense with it, and just sit back and try to enjoy. Not doing this are the teams behind SanFran in the convoy, who take this opportunity to overtake them.

Soon, everybody pulls into the [Chevron] Product Placement Petrol Station, and they fill their cars. Laura, already inside the store and waiting to pay, has to yell at Andy to put their pump on the bowser correctly. Would have been fun if he didn't. "That'll be \$45.00... \$45.01... \$45.02... \$45.03..."

We get a bunch of quick shot of clue receiving and reading. What we learn: Admiral Whynypants thinks "Luge" rhymes with "bludge", which, ironically, would be a completely accurate description of the task if the Ledge task was something that was at least moderately difficult. Also, Cirran is still afraid of heights. Perhaps he should have auditioned for Survivor or Big Brother or another show of their ilk. Also-also, Joe Jer thinks the description "this is fun, you just go around like a, you know" will adequately explain the Luge task to Zabrina. And, Joe Jer honey, we don't know. Do you mean like a... tambourine? Like a.. zucchini? Like a... six of clubs? Also-also-also, Handy and Laura, Antsy, and SanFran are joining the Super Marsio Bros. in doing Ledge, while Howard and Cirran and the two all-female teams are doing Luge.

The Super Marsio Bros. are already at the chairlift, and Marsio explains to Mardy that the Not!Bungy makes you go "wooo-oooh-oooh" like a fire engine. Or something along those lines. I tend to discount what people actually mean as soon as they start making funny sounds. It's why I can never watch Robin Williams in anything dramatic.

Howard and Cirran cut in front of Zabrina and Joe Jer when they get a car to lead them to the chairlift. While Joe Jer complains about Howard's move, Cirran whines about how he knows the Not!Bungy task is a bungy jump, because some guy on the plane told him so. Why would a guy on the plane tell Cirran about something three hours drive away from where the plane was headed? Wouldn't the obvious assumption, especially after the way the five previous legs have been structured, have been that the tasks were within the basic Dunedin area? Howard tries to combat this argument by asserting that "it won't be high". I thought he was the one that read the bit on the clue mentioning that it was four hundred metres up. Right?

"Zzzzz." (15 seconds.)

As the Super Marsio Bros. get off the gondola, Howard and Cirran are inside, and Howard is trying to pressure Cirran into doing the Not!Bungy. Cirran predictably breaks down into a blubbing fool at the very prospect that he might be forced to do something he isn't one hundred per cent comfortable with.

Joe Jer interviews in their gondola cabin that people are acting like dicks in the "heat of the competition".

Mardy appears to have hurt his knee or something while walking to the Not!Bungy. Uh, that's not good. Marsio tells him to take his time walking. He does not offer any assistance, but is happy when they get to the Not!Bungy first.

Howard and Cirran see the Not!Bungy from the gondola, and Cirran once again refuses to do the task. Which is helpful, considering they never actually picked the thing to begin with.

While the Super Marsio Bros. harness up, Zabrina and Joe Jer run down to the luge. When they get there, Cirran once again has to make everything All About Him, and bitches that the chairlift to the top of the luge (which looks somewhat like a stereotypical skiing chairlift, as opposed to the ferris-wheel-cabin-on-a-wire gondola setup) better not be high. Shut up, Cirran. It's like having to endure Flo all over again. Except Flo never actually tried to get Zach to quit a RoadBlock. After some brief shots of nothing important happening, Joe Jer begins her first luge run. She and Zabrina voice over that they knew the luge would take longer, because they had to do four laps each (thanks, girls!), but that Joe Jer was didn't want to Not!Bungy. She reaches the bottom, and we learn that it's basically a tag-team relay they're completing.

Marsio voices over that the reason they chose to Not!Bungy, plain and simple, was that they were in first place and didn't want to lose their lead. Mardy is moved into position.

At the bottom of the luge, Cirran and Joe Jer are talking about how scaaaaaary the big, mean swing is.

Mardy's screams echo through the valley. So much so, in fact, that you can't tell that the luge track is farther away from the swing than the swing platform. Which I would have to think it is. Cirran is in awe that someone would dare to live a little, and Handy (now suited up and ready to go) laughs merrily. As SanFran run to the Not!Bungy, they too laugh, and if you listen closely, you can hear one of San's trademark "Whoo Hoo Hoo Hoo!" in the background of Mardy's enthusiastic whooping.

Howard and Melody both start their first luge run. They somehow manage to finish before Zabrina, and as Joe Jer leaves for her second run, she runs straight into the stunt whores. Oops. Sorry, stunt whores!

Marsio is safely lowered into position, and to quote him, "so far, so good". Oh, he doesn't know the half of it.

Cirran wants a luge for home. My Deity, does every whiny contestant on one of these shows want some wacky souvenir? Remember Adam with his manual sausage-grinder? Or... whoever it was with the tuktuks? Still, they would beat BJ and Tyler and their ugly TTOW! t-shirts.

Marsio swings like a pendulum. He even provides a "clock striking one" noise. He soon returns to the platform, and they get the clue. Marsio seems surprised that they aren't heading to the Pit Stop yet. After two tasks? Which have already been stretched out into insomnia-curing territory, and we're only about twenty minutes in? Fool. Instead, we learn that the next destination is a place called Arrowtown, and that teams must "self-drive" there. Do anybody aside from the overly-obsessive Amazing Race timeline geeks actually use "self-drive" as a verb? Or at all? WuWho informs us of the useless information about Arrowtown's gold-mining history, and an Exposition Hand (tm Miss Alli) informs us that clue boxes contain clue envelopes. Of course! It all makes so much sense now! Doi. WuWho's useless information takes care to mention the Chinese migrants, which makes me think the producers were worried someone would get pissed if a major discovery took place without the Chinese interfering. Possibly an angry Tibetan. (Dear China: Not an endorsement of Tibet!) (Dear Tibet: Not an endorsement of China!) (Dear Tibet AND China: **NOT** an endorsement of violence!) Also, he does not take enough care to not pronounce "make their way" as "wake their way"

Marsio realises that they drove past Arrowtown on the way to the chairlift, which sort of takes the fun out of driving there. Getting lost the first time is understandable, but getting lost the second? That takes pure talent.

Handy rubs Laura's back as she prepares to swing. He has a huge smile on his face that she can't see, but as soon as he makes the tiniest aural suggestion of laughter, she starts bitching. Right around here, WhoreBoy would probably have made a "...Women!" remark. Handy points out that he has to jump too, which doesn't work as an excuse for either party in that situation. A drum beats mercilessly as we see a close-up of Laura's scared face.

Commercials. You heard it first on Facebook: Queen Elizabeth II wants to revoke America's independence in the wake of the last decade-or-so. Except for Utah, which she apparently "does not fancy". ["Mormons to Queen: Fuck you too." – EmoHunk]

The stunt whore asks Laura if she's alright as she gets buckled in, and she laughingly says she isn't. But you know who is alright? Sharon, riding the Luge. If Laura hated this so much, then why didn't she try a bit harder to get Handy to switch tasks? On the other hand, Joe Jer voices over shots of one of her runs, pointing out that it was much slower than the swing. Laura tells us that she went into something called "RoadBlock mode". Which I'm sure will involve her blaming Andy for making her do this, and withholding sex until he apologises. But she only tells us that she doesn't think about the task as she does it. Pfft. Laura swings, and it appears she only narrowly misses a gondola. Perhaps they should move either the gondola ropes or the swing. It's a lawsuit waiting to happen. Laura loses her beanie, and I think Handy offers to give her his, but there's a small glitch in my audio here, so part of that quote is missing. I blame the people angry with that whole Tibet/China thing from a couple of paragraphs ago. Laura's echoing voice tells Handy she's fine.

At the luge, Joe Jer crashes into a stopped Sharon at the end of the course. Kind of a shame that there wasn't a musical flourish right on the moment of impact.

Antsy run past the Super Marsio Bros. in between the gondola and the swing, and Marsio tells them how scary it was. In what appears to be a different location, he adds that he was "glad [he] did it, though". And it's lucky this show doesn't do schmaltzy "Journey!! 1!" packages, because that scene would be right on top of their list.

There's a bunch of lugging, but it looks to me as though Zabrina is the only one participating. It's my party, and I'll luge if I want to, indeed. (Wait, are you telling me that's *not* how the song goes?)

Antsy reaches the swing, and Admiral Whinypants suddenly realises that when the clue says "swing", they don't necessarily mean "jive". Speaking of swinging, Handy does. A barely concealed "holy shit!" from Admiral Whinypants segues into San's excited cheering. San, I like you and all, but you really need to stop that.

In the gondola, Marsio explains how feeling like he was going to die felt. What? You expect me to make jokes about that? Maybe when I've had more coffee.

We briefly check in on the lugers (still lugging) and Antsy (still not jumping) before Laura reads the Arrowtown clue again for our enjoyment, or lack thereof. Both Andy and Mardy realises that they will have to search for the clue. No "the cluebox is located by the fifth haystack left of the sheep herd found immediately counterclockwise from the barn"? Refreshing, frankly. The Super Marsio Bros. get to their car.

Lugging all over the place, resulting in Joe Jer somehow tipping her toboggan over onto its side.

Fran swings, with yet more cheering by San. God, SHUT UP, dude. Tense music plays as Howard luges, and as Handy and Laura realise San is ready to swing. He does, and somehow his Woo Hoo Hoo Hoo! is miraculously cut down to a simple Woo!, followed by throaty laughter. I approve, though it's still one too many Woo!s to be completely enjoyable.

"Zzzzz." (21 seconds.)

SanFran get the clue and almost calm down enough to not act like four-year-olds after drinking red cordial. Meanwhile, Syeon is slowly lowered into position. We may be about to see someone get launched into space without any fuel. SanFran reads the clue. Syeon swings. The little camera that's supposed to be filming her face is focused on her jawline, because she tilts her head backwards during the entire thing. From this angle, she almost looks like Mr. Bean.

The lugers are still lugging, if you care. I know I don't.

Admiral Whinypants voices over that he didn't like the swing. The snarky editors cleverly put this confessional over a shot of him quite clearly having the time of his life on the swing. Except not.

Luging. Sharon promises Melody that she'll "try and be as fast as [she] can, girl". Well, yes, speed would help in a race, hon.

Antsy and Zabrina both get their clues. The cluegiver at the luge has some unfortunate sideburns that make him look like an extra in a *Grease* remake.

The Super Marsio Bros. have made their way to Arrowtown, and Mardy seems to have no idea where he has to search for the next clue.

The two remaining lugging teams get the clue. Howard's white beanie looks ridiculous. Whoever started that stereotype about all gay men being stylish? Completely wrong. ["You wear jeans and sarcastic t-shirts all the time, and you're mocking someone ELSE for their fashion sense?" -- EmoHunk]

The Super Marsio Bros. are still searching from their vehicle.

Howard and Cirran discuss once again about how Cirran was never going to do the swing. We learn that they went on the race "to have fun". Well, colour me shocked. Why would someone so afraid of heights come on THIS show to have fun?

A bunch of teams get off the gondola and return to their cars.

The Super Marsio Bros. have found the clue at Arrowtown. Mardy calls the cluebox "a son of a gun". Heh. In their car, San tells us that he gets worried every time he hears "find a clue". Do these people even understand which damn show they auditioned for? Marsio reads the clue, telling them to "self-drive" (ugh) to Off-Road Adventures. Mardy seems excited. WuWho adds in a bunch of useless information -- blah blah rugged farmland blah blah Lord of the Rings blah bling blee, pretty much -- and tells us that both team members have to ride quad bikes along a marked course. The Super Marsio Bros. return to their car, and it appears Marsio has lost his map, leading Mardy to sound like a Hispanic stereotype. "I don't know where chu PUT it! Chu always lost things, man!"

"Zzzzz." (45 seconds.)

Syeon gets on board a double-decker bus, and asks the driver if he has the next clue. Unsurprisingly, the driver is confused.

Melody says they should check out the Chinese settlement, after she sees Zabrina turning in that general direction. Zabrina and Joe Jer are indeed the next team to find the cluebox. Zabrina's big pink gloves do not appear to be particularly practical.

Antsy asks Handy and Laura if they've found the clue yet, and Handy logically points out that if they had the clue, they'd be going to wherever the clue said, instead of searching around like a bunch of fools. Quite right.

Howard and Cirran also decide to check out that bus. The bus driver's probably thinking, "Am I really that conspicuous parked here in my empty double-decker bus?"

Antsy and SanFran both find the clue. How did Sharon and Melody get so lost along here? Howard and Cirran also find it, and Cirran wants Howard to take it somewhere else to read, because then people might see them. Sharon and Melody see the cluebox anyway, guys or no guys. As they leave, Handy and Laura turn up, miraculously in last place. So much for the speeding helping you.

The Super Marsio Bros. arrive at the off-road place, and find that it closed at 3:30pm. In the afternoon. They must really not be doing much business there, then. Also, it means the entire leg up until this point has been both boring and pointless. Everybody else soon joins them.

"Zzzzz." (A chunk I'm too lazy to time.)

It turns out that Handy is trying to blame the stunt whore's watch for him being in last place. Or something like that. The Super Marsio Bros. explain that Handy can't be trusted. On a slomo shot of Handy pacing, we cut to...

Commercials. Mmmmm, labneh.

The next morning, Handy and Laura voice over that they wondered whether they should violate the gentlemen's agreement they made and show up at the karting place early enough to not be in last, but then they decided it wasn't worth pissing people off to do it. Makes sense, but how do they not realise they're pissing people off anyway?

"Zzzzz." (35 seconds-ish.)

Mardy tells us that they wound up in last place starting the quad bikes, because there wasn't an outfit big enough for him to wear. As much as I'd like to blame the stunt whores, I think this might be a producer problem. Is it really that hard to find out people's clothing sizes beforehand, and make sure the right sizes are available when you get down there?

"Zzzzz." (A chunk of time conveniently lasting the duration of the task. All you really need to know is that Sharon's bike died, and everyone passes them.)

SanFran get the clue, which is a RoadBlock. Here, WuWho wants to threaten people who don't know what one is with making them write "A ROADBLOCK IS A TASK THAT ONLY ONE PERSON CAN PERFORM" on a blackboard repeatedly, but doesn't. And what is the RoadBlock? A bungee jump. Yes, that's right, ANOTHER one. Sigh. In fact, it's the same one as we saw way back in The Amazing Race 2. Obviously, being a bungee jump, it's also a first come, first served task, but the catch here is that you only have two minutes to jump once

you step out onto the ledge, or you have to go to the back of any line. And because it's a huge drop, it might actually happen.

Fran reads the teaser hint for us, muffled slightly by her helmet. It says: "Who can fly 134m in 8.5 seconds?" San takes it, and so does Laura.

Marsio tells us that he's "a superhero" for managing to ride a quad bike. Yeah, you might want to lay off with the Jonathan Baker references there, dude. It's very unpleasant.

Howard, Mardy, Admiral Whinypants, and Melody all have the RoadBlock thrust upon them. You may notice that we don't yet find out which of Zabrina and Joe Jer is jumping. As they leave, Syeon's helmet gets stuck to her head (insert "Gasp! The skinny Korean girl has a fat head! Egads!" joke here), and Admiral Whinypants tries unsuccessfully to remove it. I would like to see her try and finish the leg wearing the helmet.

The teams are driven up to the gondola that will take them over to the bungy platform. First, we learn that Marsio thinks jumping from high altitudes "gives [him] headaches". They also give me headaches, because I have to try and figure out how to make it interesting to read about, and I think we can agree that out of the three times I've had to do it in these past two episodes, I have failed to do so. Then, we learn that Howard wants Cirran to do the RoadBlock. Does he not know that they can't change once they know what the task is? What show does he think this is, Survivor? Also, Laura wants the other teams to know that "yes, it [bungy jumping] can rupture your retinas". Helpful! And, necessary! Fran weighs in on the debate, as though someone cares what she thinks, and she says there's no need to psych people out. She seems to think that three-year-olds will be unable to figure out that Handy is being a big meanie. Besides, she's sleeping with the Kiwi. If anybody in the race would know whether your eyes pop out bungy jumping, it's San, and he clearly seems to think it's a load of hogwash.

It's time for this week's segment of Wonder World (Now with 100% less Simon Townsend!). San wonders whether this is that largest bungy jump in the world. Laura wonders why people would pay to bungy jump. Sharon wonders why she's letting herself do this after swearing to herself that she wouldn't. Zabrina wonders "what the hell [Joe Jer's] been eating" to get to the ridiculous weight of 61 kilograms. Lardass. ["This, coming from the guy who's beer gut has its own beer gut?" -- EmoHunk]

San jumps, and the epic music kicks in, moderately appropriately for once. After a brief interruption caused by Melody's realisation that quitters never win, we learn that teams are heading to the Pit Stop, after what may be the least physically challenging leg in Amazing Race history. Seriously, even those almost-universally-reviled Family Edition legs in the south of the United States were tougher than this one. And to make matters worse, the Pit Stop is at a winery. The Chard Farm Winery, to be exact. WuWho reads from the Chard Farm winery promotional material as he calls it "widely-acclaimed". Pfft. Fran finishes reading the clue, telling us that the "last team to arrive will be eliminated". (In the event of a tie, ...fuck it, I don't care.) So in addition to being a ridiculously dull episode to watch, with poorly-designed tasks to boot, they're not even letting this be a non-elimination? And they're being allowed to get drunk? This really is the worst episode ever.

"Zzzzz." (About three and a half minutes, until the commercials. The interpersonal dynamics are a little bit entertaining in this stretch -- such as Joe Jer "pretending" to kick Handy -- but frankly, my mind is going to turn into an even bigger pile of mush if I have to recap more bungy jumping any time soon. And a mushy-minded recapper is not a good recapper.)

Commercials. Right about now, I wish Quantum Leap was real, because then Sam could leap into me and I could get out of writing the end of this one. But because it's not, you're stuck with me. And I'm tired and in a bad mood. Oh, boy.

Mardy jumps. Whee!

SanFran arrive at the vineyard and run to the mat, where... oh my god, is tha... no it's not. For a minute there I almost thought they had Phil Keoghan as the greeter. Which would totally rock, but which would make me compelled to point out that it's not the right part of New Zealand for that to make sense. Checking the winery's website, it looks as though Not!Phil is simply the owner. This week's "kia ora" is a simple "hi". I feel ripped off. Welcome, SanFran, you are Team Number... One! And on a leg with driving! San tells us he was excited to win a leg in his home country, but he sounds as though he's reading a ransom note. Don't blame me, I just report the facts. ["Maybe his personality has been taken hostage by Hobbits." -- EmoHunk]

Antsy are driving. They cannot see the Pit Stop but, to be fair, they also don't seem to be trying very hard.

Handy and Laura find the turnoff for the winery. Handy warns her not to go too fast, almost choking on the hypocrisy of what he just said.

Mardy and Marsio get the clue.

Welcome, Handy and Laura, you are Team Number... Two. But you get a penalty for the speeding, of two minutes for every kilometre over the speed limit you were, for a total of 92 minutes. Or something to that effect. I miss when it was a simple "thirty minutes plus time gained" for every penalty. But apparently the penalty doesn't count until they leave the Pit Stop, which means they're safe even if everyone else arrives in the next 92 minutes. What a stupid idea. But still, the last three episodes have pretty much all been decided by penalties, so I can see why they did this. Doesn't make me any happier about it though. Andy looks stonefaced when WuWho condescendingly asks if they understand that they fucked up.

Melody is scared, and one of the stunt whores tells her to stick her fists into her pockets for some reason. Cirran and Howard blather on about Cirran wanting to take the penalty, even though he wasn't the one doing the task. If you're not even going to watch someone attempt something you don't have to do, Cirran, then GO HOME ALREADY. God. Howard finally takes a tone I can agree with, which is basically "we raced, we can't unrace". The stunt whore reminds Melody about why she should jump head-first rather than foot first. Howard jumps. For some reason, that music this show has that really doesn't fit in anywhere when it's used (you know the one I mean) turns up right here.

Zabrina and Joe Jer find the winery turnoff, and squeal and giggle their way to the mat. Welcome, girls, you are Team Number... Three. Happy slomo hugs for all! WuWho congratulates them on a "great job". Which is pretty stupid, considering they've had two third-place finishes already, in Kuala Lumpur and Auckland, and would have won the Bali leg if it weren't for their RoadBlock penalty. These girls, frankly, are smoking the race.

Howard bitches for Cirran to not have a breakdown on the way to the Pit Stop, because they have a chance of not being last. Heh.

Melody freaks out a little on the bungy platform, but jumps anyway. She screams.

"Zzzzz." (Not long, but long enough to tune out for a while.)

The Super Marsio Bros. are lost, and Mardy and Marsio switch positions. Antsy, meanwhile, have found the road. Howard says they can't take risks, because there's a chance they could be in last place. Isn't that exactly the time when you should be taking risks?

Welcome, Antsy, you are Team Number... Four.

Howard is doing exactly what he told Cirran not to, and is freaking out. Well, I suppose you can't get where you're going if you're both like Flo.

The Super Marsio Bros. find the turnoff. Welcome, you are Team Number... Five.

Cirran threatens to decapitate the producers if they aren't able to drink any wine at the winery. As you do.

Both Howard and Cirran and Sharon and Melody appear to be driving along the bumpy road to the winery. I would have thought somewhere so widely-acclaimed would have a better driveway. All four people get out and start running to the mat, and it's edited to be close, even though we never see the opposing teams in the same shot. Howard and Cirran arrive first, sadly. Welcome, you are Team Number... Six. Howard is much more excited than Cirran to still be in the race. I think Cirran seriously had no idea what he was signing up for.

Sharon and Melody make it to the mat, and are told the bad news about their elimination. In a post-boot interview, Sharon tells us that her "biggest fear for this race was, you know, behaving badly, and losing [Melody] as a friend". Awwww! Sharon is seriously awesome. And she clearly knows what the race involves, which is more than I can say for some of the people still left, CirranAndyAdmiral WhinypantsCirranMardyCirranMarsioCirran. Melody reminds her that they made a deal that "[their] friendship was more important than anything else".

Fucking quad bikes.

Executive Producer? Michael McKay. Pit Stop Captain? Priscilla Yeo (what does that job entail, anyway? Is it uniting the teams to make a stand against exorbitant room service prices?). Pit Stop Hotel? Still not mentioned. ["Priscilla Yeo must be doing her job very poorly." -- EmoHunk][*"Well, she was responsible for casting the next two seasons. Between Marc, Rovilson, Ann, Terri, Sophie, Edwin, Vince, Geoff, Henry, Mai, Niroo, Kapil, and Natalie, she's got a lot to answer for."* -- Raceguy]

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Thank God that's over. I wish EmoHunk could have left after a better episode, but them's the breaks sometimes. I don't know how much of my hatred of recapping this episode was due to burnout, or knowing the results, or the whole WhoreBoy situation, or just simply not caring about this particular episode, so from now on, I'm going to be jumping all over the place and taking some episodes from different seasons instead of doing them chronologically. Hopefully it'll make for some better recaps. I'll be doing this with a couple of other shows, too, so there are going to be some Skins, Quantum Leap, and Doctor Who episodes coming up in the near future. I know fewer TARA recaps isn't ideal, but I'm trying to do whatever I can to stop myself from getting sick of this whole project thing. Because it actually was a bunch of fun until recently. And on that sad note, good night, and big balls.