

*Falk Richter*

# Complexity of Belonging

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Der Text ist in Zusammenarbeit und der Auseinandersetzung mit den beteiligten Schauspielern entstanden:

Eloise  
Lauren  
Josh  
Karen  
Stephen  
Tara  
Alya  
Jimi  
Joel

## **Arrival/Malaysian Airlines - Eloise and Group**

### **Eloise:**

I was on this flight Malaysian Airlines

still pretty scary

you don't wanna just disappear with no trace suddenly 239 people are gone  
nobody has any idea where they are

I wonder how they died awful sucked out in an instant or is that even very  
painful or bloody or are you just switched off like a machine

do the bodies and seats just tumble through space?

stayed over at the Sama Sama hotel in the Kuala Lumpur transit area

### **PLACE OF NO BELONGING**

it is actually in the airport you sleep 5 minutes away from the check-in counter

couldn't sleep too wasted

have tried too many different sleeping pills felt like they kind of cancelled each  
other out

### **NEW TERRITORY**

### **A NEW BEGINNING**

Business class FINALLY. YES!!

I left France with nothing but an empty sketch book and a pay cheque for my  
new whatever human installation project for over 40 000 Australian dollars

### **FANTASTIC**

### **MEET PEOPLE**

Interview them

Find out who they are how they live

I NEED PHONE NUMBERS CONTACTS

plane is full of white male businessmen

they all look the same

EXHAUSTION

GREED

PSYCHOPATHS THAT ARE GOOD WITH FINANCE

guy next to me is kinda cute

late-thirties great body slightly over-worked slightly psychotic a bit boyish a bit like he would just LOVE TO QUIT EVERYTHING: work marriage yeah everything

frenetically working on his ipad photo of his wife or girlfriend on his iphone  
SHE DOES NOT LOOK TOO HAPPY JUST LOOKS STRESSED OUT

I smile at him he smiles back

I will kinda let my head fall on his shoulder later

ok

notes

I still prefer handwriting

no lap top

*(she reads out her notes about the project or we see this text projected and it is part of her notebook and someone else is reading through it)*

"since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has been losing its well-defined and stable models of life, relations, work, lineages. Traditional, normative ways of "Belonging", nation, religion, ideology, language, culture, gender and sexual identity dissolve, get more fluid and flexible. Utopian freedom of choosing where to belong is one of this new world's promises, the struggle to find a place, a sense of belonging one of it's challenges. At the same time, reductionist senses of belonging continue to be misused for political purposes, to gather groups of people against others, to discriminate and kill. Where do I fit in there?

**Lauren / Eloise:**

Where do I belong? Who do I refer to when I talk of "I"? Who am "I"? To whom, or to what does this "I" belong?"

*(short conversation between Josh and Eloise)*

**Josh:**

Do you want me to put that on the homepage?

**Eloise:**

Yeah, yeah, that would be good I guess

**Josh:**

Do you have a logo? Anything that identifies your brand?

**Eloise:**

You mean like a corporate identity?

**Josh:**

Yeah, your label like you know, like what defines you, your signature thing, what makes you recognisable, like what you want people to identify you as, as an artist as a brand a trademark kind of thing I mean you need a logo an image something to illustrate who you are so that people UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE

**Eloise:**

I'll think about it.

*(back to the plane story)*

**Eloise:**

It's 2 am but I don't know where I am on this planet and I think we are just somewhere in the middle of nowhere over an ocean

in 1770 they thought this part of the world would be full of sea monsters

there is a woman

kind of stressed kind of nice though

restless sleepless tired but wide awake

SHE WANTS TO REBOOT RESTART

**Karen:**

Europe can get so claustrophobic

**Eloise:**

she says

she was evaluating people's emotional performance and social skills for this big finance corporate whatever forgot the name should have written it down

I MUST BEGIN TO WRITE THINGS DOWN

**Karen:**

assessment

**Eloise:**

Oh yeah, she was doing assessment centers in big finance blah blah blah in southern Europe

**Karen:**

mainly Portugal Italy Greece and Spain - the countries that they call P.I.G.S because they are so poor they really fuck up the rest of the European economy so things will get pretty rough over there soon, its time to get out

**Eloise:**

she wants to start all over again

**Karen:**

I think now I wanna HELP people with their problems rather than assessing them, handing over an evaluation list to their employer and having them fired and fucking their lives forever

**Eloise:**

She has never been to Australia

IT IS A NEW TERRITORY FOR HER

**Karen:**

Okay. So. Um. First impressions?

It seems like I'm not only on the southern side of the world as opposed to the northern side but people have actually swapped things around. Like it seems to be a dangerous act to ride your bike here. People wear helmets and coloured vests. And I was just getting a cup of tea and there was a sign on the kettle warning me that the water was going to be hot. And when I was at the beach there was a big sign with a picture of a crocodile saying "Hazardous! Caution! Attack may cause injury or death!" Yet everyone was in the water. Even families with little toddlers. I made sure I stayed close to the toddlers so the croc would take them first.

I don't think many 60's sentiments have infiltrated here. They didn't quite go through it I think. People don't talk about their feelings or emotions. Like it's a big virtue to be tough. I heard this saying the other day, "Give him a spoonful of cement and tell him to toughen the fuck up!"

But they're actually really friendly, for criminals. Everyone, absolutely everyone asks me how I'm going. Even the lady at the supermarket said, "Hey, how are you going?"

I told her I wasn't actually going that well, that I'd left my own country on the other side of the world to come over here because my boyfriend is Australian and we never actually see each other because he has this job where he has to travel all the time - Europe, Asia, the US, Australia - and we never have sex anymore because he is always too tired and burnt out and if we try, it is really disappointing because his performance is so weak. I am a therapist specializing in trust issues and childhood trauma so I can basically work anywhere in the world because everybody is traumatized one way or the other, or has trust issues, so I can provide for him ...



by that stage she was serving someone else but it was still nice that she asked me how I was going.

**Eloise:**

What else have you observed about Australia?

**Karen:**

What else? What else? I haven't seen any Aboriginals yet but I've seen lots and lots and lots of Asians. As in lots and lots. There are lots of Asian restaurants, there is a whole China Town, but I haven't seen a single aboriginal restaurant for some reason. Everyone is happy here. No-one has any worries. They make a real point of constantly telling you that they have no worries. "No worries mate". "No worries, no worries." I'm not sure how I'm going to start a therapy business in a country where no one has any worries.

**Eloise:**

Thank you Karen

**Karen:**

No worries

**Eloise:**

I met this web designer, who offered me a really good deal on a website he wants to design for my project. I met him at the airport but it turns out he's never ever left Australia although his actual job is writing these very detailed personal travel articles that I was reading in the inflight magazine of Malaysian Airlines. How do you do that?

**Josh:**

I just google the shit out of places. And make up what an experience might be for someone going to the place. It's amazing what you can glean off the internet.

**Eloise:**

What are you doing here at the airport?

**Josh:**

I'm picking up this guy that I met on grindr the other day you know it started out as a sex thing but now it has turned into something more of a romantic kinda thing.

**Eloise:**

Are you in love?

**Josh:**

Ah, I don't know

**Eloise:**

You don't know?

**Josh:**

I don't know.

**Eloise:**

You don't know what it feels like to be in love? Or you don't know if you are in love with that person?

**Josh:**

Well, I've never been in love before.

**Eloise:**

You've never been in love before.

**Josh:**

No. I've never had a boyfriend.

**Eloise:**

What do you feel when you are with him?

**Josh:**

Yeah, it is all new territory, quite scary, I never know what is gonna happen next, feels like if I make a wrong move, it might all be over in an instant, like you push the wrong button and you crash. Like a plane. So lets talk about your project.

**Eloise:**

Ok, hey, I'll take you out to lunch.

## **Not a love Interest – Karen/Stephen**

**Karen:**

So what time is it over there?

**Stephen:**

I'm not really sure.

**Karen:**

What's the weather like?

**Stephen:**

You know, I'm not really sure. I mean ...

**Karen:**

Are you depressed again?

**Stephen:**

Why do you ask that?

**Karen:**

Is it the lack of sex? (very short pause) Look I don't mind if you wank. (very short pause) Hello?

**Stephen:**

Yeah, I'm here. Yeah, I don't mind, you know, if you-

**Karen:**

Good.

**Stephen:**

Do you?

**Karen:**

Yeah. Don't you?

**Stephen:**

I haven't ... really ... had the time.

**Karen:**

You are frozen.

**Stephen:**

Haven't really had any wank in me.

**Karen:**

And there's this horrible noise again. Can you hear that? Like a plane crash in slow motion... just very, very soft and

**Stephen:**

Listen. I don't think I'm going to be able to get that flight next week.

**Karen:**

Oh, you're not?

**Stephen:**

No...well... it's complicated, you know, my boss moved this conference I was telling you about and now we all need to re-

**Karen:**

(interrupts him) That's okay.

**Stephen:**

That's okay?

**Karen:**

Yeah. I'm sure someone else will come or I'll meet someone or...

**Stephen:**

What? You'll what?

**Karen:**

I didn't mean a love interest.

**Stephen:**

You mean do the holiday with someone else?

**Karen:**

Yeah, I'm just in like ... I'm in a good space with myself! I talk to people easily, I feel connected to people easily ...

**Stephen:**

Well, look, I can still try

**Karen:**

No worries. I'm fine. Maybe take some days off on your own, think about what you wanna do.

**Stephen:**

I wanna be with you

**Karen:**

Well, you have been saying that for quite a while now.

**Stephen:**

I really wanna be, I mean like right now, I want to *(heavy breathing)*

**Karen:**

Are you wanking now?

**Stephen:**

No I'm not. Are you? Are you?

**Karen:**

No, I'm not.

**Stephen:**

D'you, d'you want to?

**Karen:**

Um ... not particularly right now.

**Stephen:**

Okay.

**Karen:**

Do you want me to?

**Stephen:**

Yeah.

**Karen:**

Oh.

**Stephen:**

No, no, don't...but I....we'll see.

**Karen:**

Okay.

**Stephen:**

So, so, how about skype breakfast tomorrow, 8 a.m. your time, and shit I I I ...  
hello? can you hear me? fuck I I shit

**Eloise:**

I think he hung up.

**Karen:**

Well you never know if the connection broke down or if he ... actually left. But  
yeah. Possibly he hung up on me.

## **I WANNA KNOW HOW HEAVY A CHILD FEELS IN YOUR ARM - Eloise**

*Alya's dance solo.*

*After the solo, Alya is looking into the camera. His face is projected onto the screen at the back of the stage. Eloise walks to the side of the screen and describes what she sees.*

### **Eloise:**

He's a white guy with blonde hair. He's not obviously urban- or suburban-looking. It's hard to tell where he is from exactly. Perhaps he spends time on the beach. He has very clear skin, clear eyes. He could be of English heritage or Polish maybe? Or another European country? It's difficult to determine exactly.

He's sweating a little bit and breathing heavily but there's something very focused and open about him.

I want to know how heavy a child feels in your arms.

I want to know what it feels like when I'm crying on your shoulder.

I want to know what your mother says to you when she gives you advice.

I want to know what the first time you flew in an airplane felt like.

I want to know what makes you nervous or insecure and what makes you feel weird about yourself.

## **I Feel Weird – Tara/Lauren/Karen/Jimmy/Joel/Stephen**

**Tara:**

Sometimes I feel weird about the fact that I look more sacred than I am.

**Lauren:**

Sometimes I feel weird about how lonely I can feel even when around people who love me very much.

**Karen:**

I feel weird about sometimes being shy about being a woman.

**Jimmy:**

Sometimes I feel weird that I'm not a woman.

**Joel:**

Sometimes I feel weird that I'm not a woman.

**Tara:**

Sometimes I feel weird that I am a woman.

**Jimi:**

Sometimes I feel weird that I'm Asian.

**Tara:**

I feel weird that I'm not Asian enough.

**Joel:**

I'm not Australian anymore.

**Karen:**

I'll never be Australian.

**Josh:**

I never really feel Australian.

**Lauren:**

I don't really know what that actually means: "To feel Australian."

**Tara:**

Sometimes I feel weird about the fact that I cannot impregnate my future wife.

**Karen:**

Sometimes I feel weird about the fact that I earn more money than my boyfriend but when we go out to dinner he still insists on paying for us and then at the end of the month I have to put money onto his account because he is broke.



**Stephen:**

Sometimes I feel weird about the fact that I haven't slept properly for over three years now and that I have travelled to so many places in the world without ever getting to know them.

**Josh:**

I feel weird about the fact of how many hours I spend on facebook.

**Lauren:**

Same

**Jimmy:**

Same

**Josh:**

and "grindr".

**Karen:**

What's "grindr"?

**Josh:**

Oh.

**Joel:**

You don't want to know.

**Karen:**

Right.

**Josh:**

A location based dating app.

**Joel:**

And by dating he means looking for sex.

**Karen:**

I sometimes wish that would exist for straight people as well.

**Lauren:**

Same.

**Josh:**

It does, actually, it is called "Bang your friends"

**Lauren:**

I sometimes feel weird about the fact that I have not talked to my parents in over 5 years. (short pause)

**Jimmy:**

I don't feel close to my father at the moment.

**Stephen:**

I don't know my mum. I mean, I know my mum. But I don't KNOW her. I never ever mean what I say when I speak to her.

**Josh:**

I don't like my dad.

**Tara:**

I feel weird that I can't explain to my 9 year-old sister why I can't marry in Australia.

**Joel:**

Sometimes I feel weird about the fact that I want to get married.

**Lauren:**

I never know if I want to get married, it scares me.

**Jimmy:**

I feel weird that most of my family don't know that I'm in love.

## Philosophical Improvisation – Eloise

I was reading this thing about belonging  
And it was really really interesting  
And what it said was that belonging is the only relation

So to belong is to exist  
To exist is to belong

To exist is to belong to a collection of multiples, to be multiple multiples  
counted as one, counted as one one-multiple belonging to one collection of  
multiples counted as one

And only belonging—a structural relation—and nothing existential  
distinguishes multiples that belong from multiples to which other multiples  
belong

The only distinguishing factor is belonging.

And these multiple multiples belonging to a collection of multiples belong  
*equally*—belonging is the equality of free association, no order, no names, no  
arrangement or hierarchy or accreditation or judgement, *just belonging*; a  
collection is composed only of what belongs to it, defined only by its  
composition of these belongings

If we think in the terms of this belonging, names and types and kinds are  
suspended, *just belonging*, to think in the terms of the equality of belonging we  
have to suspend the assumption that what exists has already been named  
Because belonging speaks for the equality that exists before names exist

hierarchies, orders and arrangements only happen when belonging multiples  
have been counted as one a second time by a second count for one and are  
then held in an arrangement arranged according to a principle, a principle not  
of equality but a principle that speaks for positions and place, and then it can  
be said that *only nothing has no place*.

And that's the difference...that's the difference between belonging and  
inclusion. And we have to think about this, we have to think about this  
difference every time we think.

I find that kind of interesting (short pause) at the moment.

Hope this message finds you well.

I wanna kiss you.

Doesn't really work when you are 15,000 kilometers away.

Je t'embrasse fort. Lets change perspectives.

## **Pentecostal Parents – Joel/Josh**

**Josh:**

Joel, are you there?

**Joel:**

How are you doing?

**Josh:**

Yeah, I'm okay. How are you?

**Joel:**

Yeah. Can't complain. Well, I can. But I'm fine.

**Josh:**

Good. So....I've got some time off over Christmas and I've got some frequent flyer points.

**Joel:**

Yeah, great. Cool.

**Josh:**

So I'm just going to put this out there...float this idea with you. It would be fine...if...I were to meet your parents. If I were to spend Christmas with your family. I'm saying it would be fine with me. I'm not saying I want to do that necessarily but if that were to happen it wouldn't be awful. Is that something that wouldn't be awful for you?

**Joel:**

Um...well...well...well....um....yeah....I reckon we can talk about it...yeah

**Josh:**

Okay, great. Yeah...um...I'm not suggesting that we're, ya know, going to be life partners or anything like that. I just thought it might be nice to take the next step.

**Joel:**

We aren't going to be lifelong partners?

**Josh:**

It's not that we are not going to be life partners. I can see a future in which we are life partners. But there is also a future in which we are not life partners and I'm also open to that. I'm just trying not to put pressure-

**Joel:**

Are you breaking up with me?

**Josh;**

No. I'm just not very good with words.

**Joel;**

Okay, we have been on the phone for 2 minutes and we've gotten to a point where we know you aren't going to break up with me.

**Josh:**

I'm just going to break this down into dot points. More for myself-

**Joel:**

Brilliant.

**Josh:**

For me to clarify:

I definitely am not breaking up with you

I definitely like you

I definitely don't think it would be a bad thing if I were to meet your parents. or if your parents were to meet me. Maybe.

**Joel:**

Okay, listen. It's not...um...er...it's not....you. It's not you. You aren't the problem. It's...um...it's...okay, my parents. My parents are the problem.

**Josh:**

What's wrong with your parents?

**Joel:**

They're just a bit white bread is all. You know, white picket fence, Mom tends the roses.

**Josh:**

I can look nice! I can wear a nice shirt!

**Joel:**

I don't know if a shirt is gonna do it. I just think...well, you know...you're kinda...you've seen yourself in the mirror.

**Josh:**

What...what are you saying about my appearance? You're going to have to unpack that for me...

**Joel:**

Well, you are attractive. I mean at least that I find you attractive.

**Josh:**

Well, that's good considering we are in a relationship.

**Joel:**

But I didn't at the beginning. But now you are.

**Josh:**

So, I've grown on you.

**Joel:**

Listen, the thing is my parents would expect...I mean hope, that you were someone... a little less like yourself and a bit more like someone else. Someone you could take to prayer group at church. You're more like someone you'd take to a tattoo-parlour.

**Josh:**

I don't have any tattoos.

**Joel:**

Well...I didn't mean that literally. I don't know why I said that.

**Josh:**

I'm like dating a tattoo parlour? Is that what you just said to me?

**Joel:**

Book the flight. And I'll get on to telling my parents that you exist.

**Josh:**

So they don't know.

**Joel:**

They know I'm dating someone. They just think...your name is Sandra.

**Josh:**

Are you not out?

**Joel:**

No

**Josh:**

Have you not told your parents you are gay?

**Joel:**

Well, there was that time they found my porn but I think I managed to convince them it was just a gift.

**Josh:**

A porn gift?

**Joel:**

A porn gift, yeah.

**Josh:**

This is really huge. I think you need to...maybe see a therapist.

**Joel:**

About the porn?

**Josh:**

About not being out to your parents. I don't think I can help you through this. I've been there. I've done that. I've got the wounds. Scars. I don't think I can...FUCK! You haven't told your Christian parents that you are gay?

**Joel:**

No. But I can! I can do it! It's just...they kind of have this thing where they believe homosexuality is a demon that possesses you. The whole exorcism thing is messy.



**Josh:**

Exorcism? What are you talking about?

**Joel:**

It happened to me once when I was younger.

**Josh:**

You were exorcised?

**Joel:**

Yes. I told them it worked because I didn't want to do it again.

**Josh:**

That's tragic.

**Joel:**

It's not like the film, it's more like brain washing. It's like they just spend so many hours and hours and hours with you and you just get so exhausted until finally you're like, "fine, I like pussy!" And I think I was cured. For about 36 hours I think I was straight.

**Josh:**

Right. This is really full on Joel. I have this image of your parents in bonnets. And garb. Prairie garb.

**Joel:**

You think my parents are Amish?

**Josh:**

Are they Amish?

**Joel:**

No. Worse than that. Pentecostal.

**Josh:**

Fuck.

**Joel:**

So I reckon you should come for Christmas.

**Josh:**

Right.

**Joel:**

Though...maybe buy a blonde wig...

**Josh:**

I'll cross dress for you. I'll be your...6 ft 6...

**Joel:**

Blonde, Swedish-

**Josh:**

Swedish model -

**Joel:**

Girlfriend.

**Josh:**

Girlfriend. Called Sandra.

**Joel:**

Sandra.

(laughter)

**Josh:**

Full on.

**Joel:**

Yeah. So book the flights.

**Josh:**

I'll book the flights.

**Joel:**

And I'll figure it out.

## **I am not/A real Australian man – Josh/Stephen**

### **Josh:**

I'm not short  
I'm not even average height  
But I'm not a medical giant  
I'm not a jock  
I'm not clean cut  
I'm not rugged  
I'm not a twink  
I'm not big enough to be a bear or young enough to be an otter.

### **Stephen:**

A real Australian man is tall, he is strong and he's burned brown by the sun.

### **Josh:**

I'm not handsome.  
I'm not good looking. I'm not ugly. But I'm not not ugly.  
I'm not the boy next door.  
I'm not someone you'd want to introduce to your mother .  
I mean I wouldn't introduce myself to my mother.  
I guess I'm not easily categorisable if that's a word.  
I don't run with a crowd, I don't have a gang  
I am not one of the boys, I'm not one of the girls  
I'm not the sassy gay best friend with the quick wit and the on-trend fashion tips.

### **Stephen:**

If a real Australian man hits an animal on the road and doesn't quite kill it he'll stop, get out of the car and finish the job himself

### **Josh:**

I'm not sharp  
I'm not driven, career focused  
I'm not that buff tanned gay guy that takes posed selfies with other buff tanned gay guys who work in PR, on the beach or by the pool in Mykonos.  
I guess I'm not sure where I fit in.

**Stephen:**

The greatest compliment a real Australian man can give a mate is that he would go to war with him

**Josh:**

I guess I'm the kind of guy that would like to fit in.  
I wish I had a group of gay friends that I could go to brunch with on a Saturday after going out the night before and taking someone home.  
I'm not lonely. I'm not, not lonely.

**Stephen:**

A real Australian man never comes back from the bar with a just a beer for himself, he comes back with a jug and enough glasses for....

**Josh:**

I'm not tattooed.  
I'm not the kind of guy who blogs about his breakfast.  
I'm not fashionable.  
I'm not a real Melbournian.  
I'm not from Perth either. Or maybe I am. But I will never admit it. To anybody.

**Stephen:**

A real Australian man doesn't need to see a psychologist, talking about a thing doesn't change anything...

**Josh:**

I'm not the kind of guy that can talk to his father for hours on the phone about fishing or football  
I don't have a team  
I'm not very good at plumbing or making things with wood.  
I'm really good at assembling Ikea furniture though, I'm particularly good at the queen size Brimnes with under-bed storage, if anyone needs a hand.

**Stephen:**

A real Australian man has one pair of boots that will last him his whole working life

**Josh:**

I'm not masculine, I'm not feminine  
I'm not a top or a bottom, I'm versatile.

I'm not sexy. I'm not very good at sex. I'm not terrible either but maybe don't proposition me at the foyer bar because it'll only end in disappointment.

**Stephen:**

A real Australian man will seal the steak, flip it once, and not touch it again until it's ready to eat.

**Josh:**

I'm not muscled

I'm not slim

I'm not average

I don't like smiling in photo's because I have a gap between my teeth and I'm really self-conscious about that.

I guess I'm not sure what I am.

## Two Brothers – Stephen/Alya

**Stephen:**

Hey

**Alya:**

Hey

**Stephen:**

How are you?

**Alya:**

Okay I guess

**Stephen:**

Good (pause) What's up?

**Alya:**

Same ...just the same

**Stephen:**

What's that ...the same

**Alya:**

Just the same

**Stephen:**

Ah

**Alya:**

I met this girl

**Stephen:**

Is it serious?

**Alya:**

I work for her.

**Stephen:**

aha

**Alya:**

It's an art installation

**Stephen:**

What d'you do?

**Alya:**

I just talk to her about Mom and Dad and how we grew up

**Stephen:**

That's it, that's the job?

**Alya:**

Yep

**Stephen:**

And how IS Mum?

**Alya:**

It's intense

**Stephen:**

Why?

**Alya:**

It's all a bit don't know

**Stephen:**

What?

**Alya:**

Emotional

**Stephen:**

How's Dad?

**Alya:**

Don't know. Things are just tense.

**Stephen:**

What's that mean?

**Alya:**

Dad's not talking to Mum. I think he's forgetting things.

**Stephen:**

What's the situation?

**Alya:**

He walks into a room and has no idea what he wants there, why he walked in and then he stands there and stares at you. Like a wounded animal. Paranoid. Sad. Really, really lonely and sad. Like a child that they forgot to pick up. Can't you come home?

**Stephen:**

Well it's I

**Alya:**

Please.

**Stephen:**

I am actually going on this I don't know lock down thing won't be around for a while and

**Alya:**

Come home.

**Stephen:**

I can't

**Alya:**

Yes you can.

**Stephen:**

No I can't.

**Alya:**



You are never here you just don't fucking care about your family are you still with that crazy woman, Mum hates her

**Stephen:**

Did she say that?

**Alya:**

We all hate her.

**Stephen:**

What are you talking about?

**Alya:**

YOU ARE NEVER HERE

**Stephen:**

How is mum?

**Alya:**

They don't talk to each other they don't talk at all, can't you come over

**Stephen:**

Listen you are old enough now you can

**Alya:**

Come home

**Stephen:**

No

**Alya:**

Please

**Stephen:**

I can't

**Alya:**

You don't want to

**Stephen:**

Listen mate

**Alya:**

You always say I can't but you can you can if you want but you don't want to you should be here with me we are family you should be here where are you

**Stephen:**

Look mate I am I am I am gone for a while you manage you are old enough now you can handle the situation

**Alya:**

Where are you going?

**Stephen:**

I am in creative lock down mode

**Alya:**

Creative lock down mode?

**Stephen:**

Yeah

**Alya:**

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

**Stephen:**

Need to kinda like re-define myself. Look through all the tapes and cut out the scenes that went wrong

**Alya:**

Which tapes?

**Stephen:**

It's a metaphor

**Alya:**

Man what the hell are you talking about?

**Stephen:**

Look man I am not in a good place right now

**Alya:**

NOBODY IS

**Stephen:**

Listen

**Alya:**

NO YOU LISTEN OUR FATHER IS ACTING LIKE HE COULD BE OUR 5 YEAR OLD BROTHER OUR MOTHER IS CRYING ALL DAY THEY DON'T TALK TO EACH OTHER THEY DON'T TALK AT ALL THEY DO NOT SAY A WORD I AM STUCK HERE WITH THEM THIS IS YOUR FAMILY COME HOME NOW AND HELP ME

**Stephen:**

I can't sorry you hang in there you are old enough you take care

**Alya:**

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

**Stephen:**

Don't ask questions. Get CONTROL OVER THE SITUATION TALK TO THEM DO WHAT YOU FEEL IS RIGHT TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS STOP WHINING IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE THE MAN OF THE FAMILY

## **The Aboriginal Heritage – Eloise/Joel**

**Eloise:**

Hello is that Joel?

**Joel:**

Yeah. Hi.

**Eloise:**

Hi Joel Hi. I got your number from Josh Price. Does that ring a bell?

**Joel:**

Yeah, actually I am waiting for Mr. Price as we speak. How can I help?

**Eloise:**

I'm working on a project, it's a sort of an art project and I want to interview someone who is Australian and of aboriginal descent. Is that right, is that what...I mean...who you are?

**Joel:**

That's me.

**Eloise:**

That's what identifies you?

**Joel:**

One of the things, yes.

**Eloise:**

Great. So ... where are you from? I mean where are your people from?

**Joel:**

My people are called the Warrajirri. From Warrajirri country. That's in Central New South Wales. They were moved from their ancestral lands to a church mission near Tamworth. That's where my grandmother was born. When the mission got closed down she was kinda kicked out and got married to a white man ... and later gave birth to my Dad. He's the one who is Aboriginal and my mother's family is from England.

**Eloise:**

And have you ever spent time with extended members of your father's family?  
His aboriginal family.

**Joel:**

Sure.

**Eloise:**

Have you lived with them on Aboriginal communities?

**Joel:**

Uh...What does that mean? Aboriginal communities?

**Eloise:**

Aren't there...if I'm correct in understanding ...aren't there... places marked as  
Aboriginal communities ...around Australia? With a selection of ...er...housing  
and schools, often, on these communities. They are usually marked with a  
boundary, aren't they? They aren't exactly cities but aren't they called  
communities?

**Joel:**

Oh I see. I see. You want a REAL aboriginal.

**Eloise:**

Maybe I want a real aboriginal.

**Joel:**

Is that what you're after? You're looking for a fair-dinkum black Aborigine, like  
those little statues people put in their front gardens. Long black beard,  
standing on one leg, holding a spear, woolly hair. Is that what you're after?

**Eloise:**

Well I heard that, I mean, I may be mistaken, but I understood that members of  
the Aboriginal community who live in cities and towns, that they still have ...  
are in contact ... with Aboriginals who live ... in these communities I was talking  
about ... they still have contact ... because they are family and ... that they are  
involved with in some way. Is that incorrect? In your case?

**Joel:**

I'm pretty fucking white.

**Eloise:**

White?

**Joel:**

Yeah. I look white, I talk white, I drink white wine. My house looks like something straight out of "English Homes and Gardens". So if you are looking for some kind of, I don't know, postcard black then maybe, Eloise, you are barking up the wrong tree.

**Eloise:**

I don't think I am looking for some kind of postcard black. Maybe the postcard picture is shifting in my head as we speak. It's informative -

**Joel:**

O good. That's exactly what I want to be! Informative. I really want to inform whitefellas! You know what? I will just miss my flight and sit on the phone all day and educate you about what it means to be black, even though I am white. Sorry that came out a little aggressive, go on.

**Eloise:**

Do you speak any languages?

**Joel:**

I speak Hebrew. (says in Hebrew: "Also a pretty fucking damaged group of people. But quite sexy.") But I'm pretty sure that's not what you're after.

**Eloise:**

You speak Hebrew, that's impressive. Why's that?

**Joel:**

I went there because I fell in love with an Israeli guy and we wanted to get married which you are not allowed to do in Australia, but then we separated, because he was fucking around too much and I was not ready for that at the time and and I stayed for a while on my own and needed a job and look, it's complex, I'd miss my flight.

**Eloise:**

Right. I'll be quick. Josh mentioned you once had some training in aboriginal dance practice? Is that correct?

**Joel:**

Yeah. I was terrible.

**Eloise:**

Why were you terrible?

**Joel:**

I was really white.

**Eloise:**

Too white to do the dances?

**Joel:**

I don't mean my skin colour. I move white. I kinda move white. I can't describe it. There is something...something white about the way I move. Does that make any sense?

**Eloise:**

What was the dancing like?

**Joel:**

It's amazing. There is this thing called the Ghost Dance. They dance these kind of spirits. You have to see it. I think the whole idea is to not be on your own centre of balance. So they look like they are floating and they do all these extraordinary angles with their bodies and these little jumps. It's absolutely phenomenal. I totally didn't do it justice.

**Eloise:**

Could you connect to the ideas ... of spirituality?

**Joel:**

Sometimes I thought I could.

**Eloise:**

What made sense to you?

**Joel:**

Well, that's the thing. Sometimes I think I was able to convince myself that I was connecting to that culture but I ....think I was just faking it.