

**ATC BAREBOARDS 2021**  
**IS THERE A WAY OUTA HERE?**  
***Written and directed by Maz Goldrick***

Characters:

Hannah – late 20s, early 30s - a competent, no nonsense, to-the- point journalist.

HANNAH: Why don't you go for a nice long walk Jeff? Get some fresh air.

Jeff stops pacing. A thunder clap.

JEFF: Are you serious? (Beat) In case you haven't noticed Hannah, the weather is in the throes of another boisterous thunder storm. The rain hasn't stopped for two whole days.

HANNAH: Look sweetheart, I know you're bored but I'm ...

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I can't concentrate either Jeff. (Beat) Look you persuaded me to come here. You got this shack for a good price from "a mate at work" who told you that this was the perfect venue for me to finish writing my article. Quiet and isolated and ...

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HANNAH: I was also hoping that later we could idle away some hours in bed making passionate love like we used to and ...

JEFF: I'm not in that space at the moment Hannah.

HANNAH: You haven't been in that space for some time now Jeff.

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JEFF: This should be hooking the catch of the year. (Jeff demonstrates netting a fish)

HANNAH: You will net something eventually Jeff ... hopefully.

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JEFF: You do realise that you are killing my sinuses when you smoke.

Hannah puts cigarette back in packet.

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Hannah (Contd)

HANNAH: All right! (Beat) I was smoking when we first started going out together, eighteen months ago. In those smoke filled days we talked about getting married, madly in love, lots of sex, lots of lingering in bed and whispering sweet nothings to each other. Look at us now! Why have you brought me up here, Jeff? (Beat) I tell you what - I won't write. I won't smoke. We can dedicate the next couple of hours talking about the life of us. Okay?

JEFF: Okay.

HANNAH: Good.

JEFF: I've been meaning to tell you some ... (stops talking suddenly)

HANNAH: Go on.

JEFF: I'll make coffee.

HANNAH: I see. It's going to be one of those serious sober talks.

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NEV: I've got things to get and things to do here.

JEFF: Okay. Go ahead and get those things, we don't mind.

Nev nods at Jeff and blatantly looks Hannah up and down as he walks past her through the door into the other part of the house. Nev laughs  
Jeff watches Nev move up hallway. Hannah turns around to face Jeff.

HANNAH: He's creepy.

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HANNAH: Oh shit, just spill it. What do you want?

NEV: To the point, aren't ya girlie?

HANNAH: Believe me, it's the best way.

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JEFF – late 20s, early 30s – a shallow, a tad dopey guy, keen on fishing and his car

JEFF: A week of fishing could virtually be flushed into the drains of the Lower Clarence. I want to go fishing Hannah.

Jeff continues pacing

HANNAH: Believe me Jeff, I want you to go fishing too.

JEFF: And you! - tap, tapping away on that computer. It's driving me crazy. Tap, tap, tap.

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JEFF: (Stops pacing and points to ceiling) There are cracks in the ceiling. Long snake-like stripes of age wriggling towards the wall edge. We could count those cracks too.

HANNAH: Cracks can appear anywhere. Walls, ceilings, relationships - have you noticed?

Jeff ignores her and walks over to window and looks out.

JEFF: At least my brand new RAV4 is getting a wash.

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JEFF: You do realise that you are killing my sinuses when you smoke.

\*\*\*\*\*

JEFF: No Tim Tams left, no choccie biscuits. No snacks of any kind. You were in charge of the shopping for this trip Hannah.

\*\*\*\*\*

JEFF: Well we weren't expecting anyone up here. It's not exactly populated.

NEV: Yeah, that's the way I like it up here mate. Know what I mean?

JEFF: Who gave you a key to this ...

NEV: I'm ya landlord. Nev's the name. (Takes his coat off and hands it to Jeff, who is a little dumfounded but takes the coat and stands holding it as water drips from it onto the floor)

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JEFF (Cont'd)

JEFF: Landlord? ... um, er ... You're the landlord! But my mate at work owns this place. I rented it.

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JEFF: Sandra told me about her holiday house and said I could rent it. She didn't mention that her brother would drop in.

\*\*\*\*\*

JEFF: Not now Hannah. I wanted to talk to you properly.

HANNAH: Properly! You mean you want to divulge details of how friendly you were with baby sister Sandy?

JEFF: We should go. Now. I needed to stay here but he's given me the creeps. I've got a feeling that we should leave.

HANNAH: What about those slippery roads Jeff?

JEFF: The RAV4 can handle slippery roads. (Beat) That man is creepy.

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JEFF: Um, we were just saying that we should leave before this weather gets any worse.

NEV: Gets any worse! It's at its worst mate. They're rowin' boats through the main streets in town. Do ya happen to have a spare boat with ya?  
(Laughs)

Hannah and Jeff look at each other.

NEV: Yeah, the highway's blocked. No one's gettin' in. No one's getting' out. Know what I mean?

JEFF: Shit.

NEV: Driest part of town up here mate. Haven't you people got a radio, TV, mobile or any other whiz bang thing to keep up with the situation in town?

JEFF: The reception's bad – crackles and spits – only ok on occasions and the internet comes and goes.

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JEFF (Cont'd)

JEFF:           Just shut up Nev and get the hell out of here. I rented this place for a week. You're trespassing.

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JEFF:           For God's sake Hannah , write the bloody apology.

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NEV - aged about 40 - Big, menacing bloke with a criminal background

NEV: I was standin' in the pouring rain, knockin'. Ya didn't answer. (Beat)  
Thinkin' of cookin' some eggs are ya? (Indicating fry pan in Jeff's hand)

JEFF: (Walks over to cupboard to put frying pan away). We haven't got any  
eggs. (Walks back to stand in front of Nev)

NEV: These are yer car keys. (Hands Jeff the car keys and Jeff puts them in  
his pocket).

JEFF: Thanks. How come you've got a key to this place? Who are you?

NEV: A bit stupid leavin' keys in an unlocked car. Know what I mean?

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NEV: Sandy tells me you were very friendly when she started work at your  
company. She tells me you two hit it off. Know what I mean?

HANNAH: Do tell Nev. What do you mean?

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NEV: I have a little holiday shack next door. You can't see it cause it's  
surrounded by bush. I like it that way mate. Hidden away from pryin'  
eyes. Know what I mean?

JEFF: No I don't know.

NEV: Bit awkward for you is it? Me droppin' in like this?

\*\*\*\*\*

NEV: Driest part of town up here mate. Haven't you people got a radio, TV,  
mobile or any other whiz bang thing to keep up with the situation in  
town?

\*\*\*\*\*

NEV: Ya know that me baby sister and your boyfriend here are together?  
Know what I mean?

HANNAH: Yes, a clear inkling arose to that fact a little while back. I just don't  
know why I had to come all this way to hear about it.

JEFF: Hannah, I ...

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NEV (Cont'd)

NEV: (Looking at Jeff) Yeah I heard he's a big boy around town, buyin' me baby sister all sorts of expensive goodies.

NEV: Get over it girlie, yer boyfriend found another fish in the sea.

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NEV: You got off easy mate didn't ya?

JEFF: It's none of your business.

NEV: (Laughs) You've made it my business and I must say I've enjoyed hearin' you two go at each other's throats. It's like watchin' one of them two act play things. (Beat) You're priceless.

JEFF: I told you to get out. Just go Nev.

NEV: I'm not going yet. I'm here to do somethin'.

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NEV: That's me favourite photo, a look-alike Ned Kelly. Those feds are not the smartest, you know. They can't catch me or me family. We're the smart ones.

\*\*\*\*\*

NEV: Shut up stupid! (Beat) You know it's a shame I might have to do some damage here because as I said before, youse two are good for a laugh. I'm having the best time.

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NEV: My trigger finger's getting very itchy. Sometimes I can't control it.

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NEV: You have no need for the ex boyfriend now, have ya? (Beat) My aim will hit the target next time.

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NEV: I want a doctor you idiots, I'm bleeding.

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NEV: (Laughs) A woman scorned mate. Untie me and we can deal with her.