

Transcript of 7NEWS Spotlight – 4 June 2023

FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Judge: Lee J Date:

Lehrmann v Network

File No. NSD103/2023

The speakers are:

- Michael Usher (host) (**Usher**)
- Liam Bartlett (journalist) (**Barlett**)
- Bruce Lehrmann (person being interviewed) (**Lehrmann**)

EXHIBIT/MFI: R4?

Description: AIDE ME  
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(party/non-party, if produced on s  
Associate:

There is audio from:

- Lisa Wilkinson (**Wilkinson**)
- Angus Llewellyn (**Llewellyn**)
- Brittany Higgins (**Higgins**)
- David Sharaz (**Sharaz**)

Voiceover	The audience is advised that the following program involves themes which could be disturbing for some viewers Tonight on Spotlight
Male	I've got two people going into Linda Reynolds's suite
Voiceover	What happened down this corridor? What happened behind this door?
Lehrmann	Life as I knew it was over. There was no coming back
Higgins	I was raped inside Parliament House
Voiceover	A scandal so huge
Wilkinson	The entire country knew the name Brittany Higgins
Voiceover	And a tale so baffling
Male	Let's look at the facts, let's look at the breadcrumbs. It was mind blowing
Voiceover	A jury couldn't decide
Lehrmann	We've had the trial, the charges have been dropped. We've had enough shit shoved down our throats
Voiceover	For the first time, the other side of the story
Lehrmann	Yeah it's the classic, beware the man with nothing to lose. I've got nothing to lose
Voiceover	Bruce Lehrmann has kept silent for 4 long years
Lehrmann	I shut my mouth, believing in the justice system and following the rules. Others in this saga haven't done that. There's only one truth
Bartlett	Did you rape Brittany Higgins?
Usher	Hello, I'm Michael Usher and welcome to Spotlight. It is the most controversial legal saga in recent history. One that has ferociously divided public opinion, rocked the foundations of Federal Government in Canberra, destroyed careers and sullied reputations. Through it all the man accused of a shocking sexual assault has remained silent. Until now. In the most explosive interview of the year, tonight, Bruce Lehrmann sits down with Liam Bartlett to tell his side of the story, about what happened when he

	entered a ministerial suite with Brittany Higgins in the early hours of Saturday 23 March 2019, and nothing is off limits.
ett	Bruce
mann	Liam, good morning
ett	Are you ready
mann	Let's light some fires
ett	Did you rape Brittany Higgins?
mann	No I didn't. It simply didn't happen
ett	Did you have consensual sex?
mann	No
ett	Did you kiss her, Bruce?
mann	No
ett	In that parliamentary office?
mann	No. I did not see her again
ett	Were you intimate with her at all?
mann	Not one bit
ett	You know that there is nothing out of bounds here, don't you?
mann	I do
ett	Everything's on the table
mann	Ask me anything
ett	There's no question off-limits?
mann	Go for it
ett	But you're also aware that you could come out the end of this, looking worse instead of better?
mann	Sure, I'm not after supporters, I just want the facts to be told
ett	But why take that risk?
mann	As I said, I'm not interested in supporters. I want the public to know the truth of the matter
ett	And you think that people will believe you?
mann	I don't care if they do but everything needs to be out there, in the open, so people can assess this for what it is
ett	All right
eover	In March 2019 both Bruce Lehrmann and Brittany Higgins worked in the office of then Defence Minister Linda Reynolds. Brittany had just joined. Bruce was just about the leave.

Lehrmann	I was a policy advisor, she was a media advisor, they're two separate things. We're not ... I'm not her boss, she's not my boss.
Voiceover	On the evening of Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> as this previously unseen CCTV footage shows they shared a night out with fellow Defence colleagues. At around 1:40 on Saturday morning, an Uber dropped them off at Parliament House
INTERCOM	Hello Ray speaking
Lehrmann	Hi mate, Bruce Lehrmann here with Minister Linda Reynolds, we've been requested to pick up some documents. I've forgotten my pass
INTERCOM	Ah yep, just one second
Lehrmann	Thanks mate [inaudible]
INTERCOM	Yes, I've just got to open it up for you and should be unlocking now
Lehrmann	Thanks mate
Voiceover	Before they could go upstairs, Bruce Lehrmann and Brittany Higgins first had to go through security. A process that would take several minutes. At 1.47am they were escorted to the lift that would take them to Minister Reynolds office. What happened in the following 40 minutes, is fiercely disputed. But what we do know is that video captures Lehrmann leaving Parliament house just after 2:30 AM. We also know that at 4:15am, Brittany Higgins was seen fast asleep, lying on her back, naked, on this couch in the Minister's office.
INTERCOM	[inaudible]
Voiceover	This is audio of one of the Parliamentary security guards.
Security 1	Yeah it's a delicate situation that's why I was enquiring.
Security 2	In what way?
Security 1	Um, yeah apparently there's a staff asleep in there
Security 2	There's a staff sleeping there?
Security 1	Yeah
Security 2	Is that what night shift's reported?
Security 1	Yeah
Security 2	We've been given strict instructions that staff aren't allowed to sleep in the suite
Security 1	Yeah, like you said it was a delicate situation that was reported to me so I just wanted to double check
Security 2	Go in mate, do a welfare check, go for it
Security 1	Yeah I need a female officer, ha, ha
Security 2	Oh is there a female in there?
Security 1	Yeah
Voiceover	It would be another two years before Bruce Lehrmann voluntarily presented himself to the Australian Federal Police after being accused on national television of a despicable crime

	This is a taped video and audio recorded interview between myself Detective Inspector Marcus Boorman and Mr Bruce Lehrmann... Is that correct pronunciation?
3	Yes
	Being conducted at AFP Sydney office, Goulburn Street in Sydney. The time is now 3:36 PM in the afternoon, the 19 <sup>th</sup> of April 2021
cover	Two months before Lehrmann's interview with the AFP, his accuser Brittany Higgins, her boyfriend David Sharaz, TV host Lisa Wilkinson and her producer Angus Llewellyn held a meeting to discuss the possibility of Brittany breaking her bombshell allegations on Network Ten's The Project
nson	Perfect time for the food. That was just the pre-show entertainment. Hello
	Hi there
az	Oh, whose wine was that?
nson	No, not mine, no
ns	No
az	Oh you ordered too, sorry. You did order two
nson	One for each hand.
ns	Laughing
nson	That's your gin and tonic Now, nachos?
	Those spring roles are actually pretty good
nson	Are they?
	Yes
cover	Over food and drinks the conversation ran for 5 hours. This is the actual audio
ellyn	I'd like to record this if you're okay with that?
ins	Absolutely, go for it
ellyn	It's only going to be on my phone, it's not going to be on a Ten server but it's basically to make sure that I'm scribbling, typing the whole time and I've also got back ups for the lawyers
ins	Yes, of course
nson	Yeah, because if we're going to proceed we have to know that we've got every legal loophole covered
cover	Lehrmann's interview with the police, two and a half months later was also recorded
	Now I must caution that you do not have to say or do anything but anything you say or do may be used in evidence. Do you understand that?
mann	Yes

AFP	Can you tell me in your own words the understanding of this caution
Lehrmann	Everything I say can be used in court proceedings as part as your investigation
AFP	That's correct
Wilkinson	So is your end game here, apart from getting ownership of your story back, is to press charges against Bruce?
Higgins	Ultimately one day if I can get enough stuff, absolutely that would be great
Sharaz	I guess, what's your, obviously we're not stupid, we know this sort of stuff's transactional, what are you getting out of it? What do you want out of it?
Wilkinson	No, I'm always about exactly the same thing. The inequality that exists out there, whether it's white privilege, whether it's male domination, whether it's yo know, criminal activity that is suppressed. I'm a girl from the western suburbs Sydney. I've always been motivated by exactly the same thing, people who deserve to be heard not being heard
AFP	How are you feeling at this time?
Lehrmann	Well, you know, obviously nervous and distressed as I have been for many weeks now, so, yeah
AFP	Do you feel all right to ...
Lehrmann	Yeah
AFP	Have this conversation?
Lehrmann	I've wanted to and that's why I've been more than happy to co-operate, yeah
Higgins	People in the know in the party well, it's two and two, they'll know, and that's what matters. He will never get a pre-selection now
Sharaz	And he'll be shitting himself when it comes out
Higgins	And that's the thing, he's like one of those sort like legacy ones, that's going to eventually, he'll run for a seat and so if enough people can put two and two together it will stop him from getting pre-selected for the seat of Wentworth or something like that
Wilkinson	So we need to work out ...
Llewellyn	Mmm
Wilkinson	.... when we do interviews
Llewellyn	Sorry, I'm working out how to get this pork onto the chip
Wilkinson	I'm glad you're going after the important stuff at the moment
Llewellyn	Okay, so
Sharaz	Stupid question cause we're having lunch together but you do want to run this?
Llewellyn	Yes
Wilkinson	We're not just here for gossip
AFP	And I just want to make it clear right now Bruce that this is an opportunity for yo to obviously participate in a formal record of interview in relation to this allegatio

nson	So, in terms of timing though, how does that work. If you resign, are you thinking next Monday?
ns	Next Friday
nson	So, you'd leave on the Friday and we'd run it on Sunday?
ns	Yeah
nson	I wonder if you should have a sick day on the last day
az	Can you just take it, like just be .... I'm just not well again
nson	Yeah, Thursday have a headache
ns	Mm, yeah
az	And who cares if at that point, they're suspicious.
ett	When was the first time that you realised that you'd been accused of being a rapist
mann	Ah, 15 February 2021
ett	That date rolls off your tongue
mann	Yep
ett	How did that roll out
mann	That was a pretty dark day
nson (interview)	Tonight, claims of rape, roadblocks to a police investigation and a young woman forced to choose between her career and the pursuit of justice and it all happened right in the heart of our democracy. Brittany Higgins says the government betrayed her. I sat down with you for this exclusive television interview and a warning this story contains confronting allegations
nson	The answer you really need to think about is why didn't you press charges
ins	Yeah
nson	I have every confidence that you will answer that very eloquently but it's one you just really need to think about
ins	Yep
nson	Yeah but speak about the culture that, you know, I don't want to put words in your mouth but if you can announce the fact that this place is all about suppression of people's natural sense of justice because you see around you the way that this place works that will help
nson (interview)	Did you feel pressured in any way whatsoever not to proceed with the case, with the police
ins (interview)	Absolutely, I mean there is a strange culture of silence in the parties. It's in everyone's interest to make the problem go away.
nson	It's about fear. It's about intimidation. It's sexist. Everything is implied. Everything is in secret
ins (interview)	I never let my friends know. I never really let my family know because it was this weird, there's this culture of silence

Wilkinson	Everything seems to operate in dark shadows because the minute you shine a torch on any of it, it's as ugly as sin
Llewellyn	I think the story will clearly have an explosive element of there is just no moral compass
Wilkinson	And exists within its own set of rules.
Llewellyn	Own set of rules, yeah
Wilkinson	The whole situation with the police. It's certainly not just a gender story. It's a Canberra bubble story.
Wilkinson (interview)	So this is the Canberra bubble
Higgins (interview)	Yeah, it protects itself. It's its own institution with its own rules
Wilkinson	But if you were a bloke, you wouldn't be getting this treatment
Higgins	No, not at all
Wilkinson (interview)	So for a woman to survive in Canberra, she's got to go into survival mode and play like the boys
Brittany (interview)	Yeah, exactly
Wilkinson (interview)	And side with the boys
Higgins (interview)	Exactly
Wilkinson (interview)	And protect the boys
Higgins (interview)	Yeah
Llewellyn	But you're calling out the culture
Higgins	Yeah
Llewellyn	Which is not just the Liberal Party. It's a Parliament House culture, which is taking steps forward making it a safer place
Wilkinson (interview)	Is Parliament House a safe place for women to work
Higgins (interview)	Honestly, that's the only reason why I'm even here today.
Llewellyn	Which, for God's sake, it's just not miners and builders who have to worry about workplace safety. Everyone has to.
Higgins	Yeah, that's true
Llewellyn	And it's not a safe place
Wilkinson (interview)	Shouldn't a young woman who just wants to go and do her job feel safe in Parliament House
Higgins (interview)	Yeah
Wilkinson	We must get that point across because that whole thing of what an incredibly safe place it is to rape someone. I mean that looks like intent
AFP	So, I think we'll start the interview by you sort of giving me a response in relation to the allegation I read out to you before. I'll repeat that if you want. In response to a report made to police by a Ms Brittany Higgins that claimed 1:48AM at

	2:33AM on Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2009 you engaged in sexual intercourse with Brittany Higgins at Australian Parliament House in the Australian Capital Territory without her consent in contrary to Section 54 of the <i>Crimes Act 1900</i> . What can you tell me about that allegation.
nann	So, I reject that allegation. It simply didn't happen
erson	If you've line up all your ducks, like if you know you want your future to not be in Canberra
ns	Yeah, that's fine
erson	... then they kind of can't touch you
ns	I know, I know
erson	... because you're taking back ownership of your story and what happened to you to make sure that it can't happen to others.
erson (interview)	What would you like to see happen as a result of this going to air
ns (interview)	I just couldn't live with myself if it happened to someone else.
allyn	Yeah, I mean, when it comes to defamation, his reputation is clearly gonna be lowered by being called a rapist and whether people could identify him
ns	I would love to have a Court case on like civil. If he wants to go after me on a civil basis, I think, on the balance of probabilities, I think I can win. I think if the onus of proof is beyond reasonable doubt, I think that would be different, I don't think I could win that
allyn	Yeah, my feeling is that if we didn't name him, it would still be, we may as well have named him right because so many people wouldn't be able to identify him
nson (interview)	So what's happened to the man that you say raped you on Minister Reynolds's couch
ns (interview)	He's fine. He's working in Sydney. He's got a good job. Everyone – people don't know why he left and I don't think he suffered any consequences for it at all
ett	She says this and I'll quote She says about you. <i>'He's fine. Got a good job. I don't think he's suffered any consequences. He just kind of got to keep going'</i>
mann	It just infuriates me. It infuriates me
ett	You don't think that's true at all
mann	I just, you know, yeah. It's not and it infuriates me. Yeah, it's pretty hard being kicked to the curb
nson (interview)	So once you passed through security, where did you go
ns (interview)	We went up the lift into Minister Reynolds suite. It was taking a really long time so I got to the point ...
ett	While you're watching it, what's going through your head?
mann	Um, utter outrage. Outrage at live before me, sitting in my lawyer's office. I'm seeing friends of mine block me on Facebook, remove me from group chats. I mean.
ett	Straight away



Lehrmann	Straight away. Like it is a metaphorical version of a nuclear bomb or the world exploding before your eyes. You know, you're being blocked, you're being removed from group chats. I mean I'm an extrovert, used to be. I mean, now sort of live under a rock but you know that was one of the worst things to see that people were dropping me because I was politically inconvenient to be associated with.
Bartlett	As the story is going to air, as Brittany is speaking on National television, you're being disowned
Lehrmann	Yep and if that's not a clear indication of being identified, without having been named formally, I don't know what is.
Llewellyn	You know, at the right time, so as to prevent there being injunctions and things like that, we would go to him and we would go to the Minister's office. If we're making accusations, we have to give everyone a reasonable chance to reply and a reasonable can be pretty iffy as long as it's not 5 minutes before broadcast and it's 10 minutes, we should be okay.
Wilkinson (interview)	It sounds to me like the easiest place in this country to rape a woman and get away with it is Parliament House in Canberra
Higgins (interview)	Yeah, yeah
Wilkinson (interview)	We, of course, approached all the people named in our story and all our requests for interviews were declined. Those requests remain open.
AFO	Is there anything further at this point that you wish to tell me about this matter?
Lehrmann	No, um, no. It's ... I think you can tell, yeah, my world has been rocked so.
Llewellyn	Okay, why don't we have some lunch
Wilkinson	Yeah, that's what I'm thinking as well
Sharaz	So, not much of a story right?
Llewellyn	No. Yeah, we'll pass on it. No, that's a joke.
Usher	Next...
Higgins	This is kind of where it gets fuzzy
AFP	At any time at the DOCK, did you engage with Ms Brittany Higgins
Lehrmann	I would have. Yes, yeah
Bartlett	You need a nice quiet place and so you head off to Parliament House
Lehrmann	No, that's
Bartlett	You're kidding me
<b>BREAK</b>	
Wilkinson	I'm a great believer in people's time will come. I'm incredibly ....
Sharaz	Is it Linda's time? Please god, let it be Linda's time
Wilkinson	Well, it might be

ett	Let's come back to your working relationships. Brittany Higgins has said repeatedly that you were a favourite of your boss, Linda Reynolds, the Senator, the Minister, the new Minister
erson (interview)	So, he was a bit of a favourite of Minister Reynolds
ns (interview)	Yeah, very much so
ett	And you were also like her boss
nann	Umm
ns (interview)	I guess he was broadly sort of, what I regarded, as like my boss essentially.
ett	Were any of those things true?
nann	Not in the slightest. I mean I was a policy adviser. She was a media adviser. They're two separate things. I'm not her boss. She's not my boss. This idea that I was somehow her superior was an odd message to put out there for the last couple of years, yeah
ett	How long had you been working with Brittany Higgins
nann	Two or three weeks. I barely knew her.
ett	She said you were a bit of a bully. That you bullied her
nann	Mm
ett	On at least one occasion
nann	Mm
ett	Is that right?
nann	No, not at all. In fact, I think it was adduced in evidence in the trial that that was not the case
ett	Let's look at your job in that office. What was your career path working with the Minister
nann	Well, I was, towards the end of my career in politics. I had formed the view that I was done with politics. It's a grubby game. In many respects, I agree with Ms Higgins. That building is not the best place to work. The culture, irrespective of gender, is pretty pathetic. I'd just had enough. I mean 16 hour days, living out of a suitcase. The shine of it wore off.
ett	So, you had already, at the time of this incident, as I understand it, you have already resigned
nann	I had
ett	Brittany Higgins has said a lot about how you were a young Liberal. In fact, I think it was even mentioned that you were looking at a seat, possibly pre-selection for the seat of Wentworth.
ns	Eventually, he'll run for a seat and so if enough people can put two and two together, it will stop him from getting pre-selected for the seat of Wentworth or something one day
ett	So you were painted as this young man of privilege. Is that fair to say?

Lehrmann	It's the complete opposite. It's been rather funny to sort of see the Twitterati f up. Its, you know, I'm a country boy, who likes to drink XXXX beer. Haven't been a member for a party for 3 to 4 years now.
Bartlett	Were you a young Liberal?
Lehrmann	Oh, very early on at University but I left because they're a bunch of losers on both sides of politics. It was not for me.
Bartlett	And what about this image generally of a privileged young man
Lehrmann	Well, I think it's impacted my Mum because she's a widow and has been a widow for all of my life
Bartlett	Born in Texas, Lehrmann's American father died in a serious farming accident When did your father pass away?
Lehrmann	I was 17-18 months old
Bartlett	Bob Lehrmann's body was found by his wife Linda. After the funeral, she decided to return to Australia to raise Bruce and his younger sister, Bobby, in Toowoomba in Queensland.
Bartlett	So, your Mum has brought you up single-handedly?
Lehrmann	Yeah. On social security
Bartlett	Oh, this must have devastated her.
Lehrmann	Yeah
Bartlett	Because you've gone one step further haven't you. I mean you've dipped into her Super.
Lehrmann	Yep. She's got no money and I don't have any money. My uncle, who's been father figure for me, he every Saturday he tries to win on the horses and if he has a big win, he'll throw me some cash here and there and keep me afloat so it's been very tough.
Bartlett	Does your Mum believe in your innocence?
Lehrmann	100%
Bartlett	Did she ask you the question?
Lehrmann	She did
Bartlett	She had to say to you, to her own son, 'did you do it Bruce, did you rape her?'
Lehrmann	Mm-hmm and she believed me and that's really, in all of this, that's the only person I need to believe me. I don't need anybody else because that's my Mum and I'm a mummy's boy and I'm proud of it.
Bartlett	That must've been difficult
Lehrmann	Yeah, yep
<b>SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC</b>	
Bartlett	On March 22 2019, Brittany Higgins invited Bruce to some work drinks she was having with various Defence staff. It was two months out from the Federal Election

allyn	And where were the drinks?
ns	At The Dock. So it's this place on the Kingston foreshore.
<b>ROWING MUSIC</b>	
ns	It was the last hurrah before the election and that's why we invited everyone down. Had a big group about 20 people and they'd all been either working as Liberal Party staffers or were departmental or worked for the Defence. That was the group of people that was there
nann	And they were all Defence people. That's what she said to us.
ns	I actually had a Tinder date that night. I was recently single and I thought come down for drinks, come be around all my friends and see if you survive. He did not survive.
ason (interview)	So, this senior male colleague was at those drinks.
ns (interview)	Yes, yep, he was.
ason (interview)	I'm just working out whether I want to do anything more on that.
	So you walked down to The Dock with Austin, is it? And what was Austin's surname?
ns	Austin Wenke
nson	He's name is not Austin 'Wanky'
ns	I'm not joking
allyn	How do you spell his last name
ns	I told you, W E N K E.
nson	Oh – 'E' – right
ins	I'm not joking. It wasn't me just being rude. That is his name
	What does Austin do?
nann	Mr Dutton's Media Officer, adviser
nann	My friend Austin and I were going because we got an invite from her to come and meet some fellow Defence colleagues.
nann	When I arrived, I assumed that was such a small defence team. I said, this is one of their shindigs. We knew the Minister in Portfolio and Austin was a mate of mine. I was going to hang out with him anyway
	Now, when you arrived there, was Ms Brittany Higgins there on your arrival?
nann	On my recollection, she was yeah
	At any time at the dock, did you engage with Ms Brittany Higgins
nann	I would have, yeah. She was a colleague of mine yeah
nson	Were many people drinking?
ins	Everyone. Yeah, definitely

Wilkinson	So there were a lot of people who were inebriated?
Higgins	Yes, definitely
Bartlett	How much was everyone drinking that night?
Lehrmann	Well, it was a Friday night so we were pretty cheerful
Higgins	There was no food. We were just drinking.
Wilkinson	Was Bruce inebriated?
Higgins	Not that I knew of. I knew he was there, I knew he was socialising. I knew he was buying us drinks. I noticed that he was buying me a lot of drinks
Bartlett	The clear impression that Brittany Higgins has given is that she was being plied with drinks
Lehrmann	Mm
Bartlett	We can only assume it was by you
Lehrmann	Yeah, yeah, which is ridiculous and actually proven in evidence that I'd only spent \$40 that night so there must've been cheap drinks Liam if I was shouting everyone so
Lehrmann	I certainly don't recall buying lots of drinks at all but I'm happy to provide my bank statements from that night
AFP	Appreciate that
Wilkinson (interview)	So, this senior male colleague was buying a lot of the drinks
Higgins (interview)	Yeah, yeah he was
Lehrmann	The narrative that has been advanced in the last two years has been latched on by the nation's media has been an absolute bloody furphy. There's so many inconsistencies. It's been pretty wild to watch actually
Bartlett	As midnight loomed, the work drinks wound down and the Group started to disperse before Bruce Lehrmann suggested going to a nearby nightclub
Lehrmann	It was just some work drinks on a Friday and then you all decide oh well let's kick on a bit. They were having a fun time of it and so there was a broad invite to come to 88 and those who said yes did and there was four of us that went
Higgins	We went to a second venue and that's sort of when the number of people changed and his interactions with me changed
Llewellyn	And what's that place called
Brittany	88
Sharaz	88MPH
Lehrmann	I mean it's a pretty fun bar
Lehrmann	I really enjoyed 88MPH, a favourite of mine. It's like 80's music and I said let's go there
AFP	What about your interactions with Brittany?
Lehrmann	Close, yeah close

ett	You told Police, in your own words, that you two were close
nann	Yeah
ett	What does that mean?
nann	Well, just looking out for each other. I mean you're out now in public so
ett	What does close on a Friday night mean Bruce?
nann	Oh, opening doors for her and the others that were there. Making sure that you know, idiots who were completely sloshed weren't getting in our way
ns	He was like, obviously helping me quite a lot. He was very helpful. I remember feeling quite grateful
ison	Right
ns	But nothing that would make me feel ...
ison	... that he had anything other than your welfare
ns	Yeah, I think. I remember just feeling embarrassed. Oh okay, whatever and I remember feeling sort of embarrassed but that was sort of it
	You said that you and Brittany were close when you were there
nann	Mm
	Well, we've spoken to Lauren Gains
an Gain	I think I remember Bruce and Brittany being quite close and I remember them kissing on the couch and it was at that point I don't really remember much after that, I'll be honest. My memory is quite hazy because we did have a lot of alcohol to drink that night.
ett	She told police, and I quote: 'you and Brittany Higgins were sitting very close, kissing and passionate'
nann	Rubbish
ett	But it's one thing for you to tell the police you were close, it's another thing for an eye witness at the venue to say that you were being very close
nann	Sure, but that eyewitness gave her statement two years after the fact.
ett	But it makes a lot of sense doesn't it because if you two were canoodling, snogging, call it what you like, you had a belly full of grog, either way, things were getting a bit hot so, half past 1 in the morning, on a Saturday, you think well you need a nice, quiet, private place and so you head off to Parliament House
nann	No, that's not how the night eventuated whatsoever
ett	But that makes sense with the eyewitness report
nann	With one eyewitness report, sure
ett	And you completely reject that
nann	Absolutely
ett	So she says 'Black', you say 'White'

Lehrmann	Mm-hm
Bartlett	Why did you decide to go back to the office?
Lehrmann	Well, a couple of reasons. I had to get my keys to go home because the night became later than I was expecting.
Bartlett	At around 1.30am, Bruce, Brittany, Lauren and Austin decided to pull up
Brittany	Lauren and Austin went in one direction and I didn't live in that direction and Bruce lived broadly in the same direction as I did so I remember there was sort of that thing, alright well we're going this way, you guys going that way, catch you later
Lehrmann	I had to go back to Parliament House to get my keys to get back into my apartment where I was living with my girlfriend and Brittany also indicated that she had to attend Parliament for something. I didn't enquire as to what. I thought I was being a gentleman and I said well I'm ordering an Uber
Higgins	And then sort of the next thing I knew I was in a taxi.
Wilkinson	So you remember being in the taxi with him thinking I'm going to be dropped at home
Higgins	That was what I wanted and I remember him saying, at one point, 'we've got to stop by Parliament House, I've got to get something' and I remember like okay remember being annoyed
Lehrmann	From my recollection, she had told me that she also needed to go back to Parliament House
Bartlett	You're kidding me
Lehrmann	But she indicated she had to go back there but who am I to question that
Bartlett	Let me get this right, all of a sudden you jump up from the table and you say 'guys, I've got to go, it's 20 past 1 or thereabouts, I've got to go back to Parliament House to pick up some stuff on the way back' and she says 'Oh good, I've got to go too' and you don't think that's a touch unusual.
Lehrmann	No, not one bit. She's an adult. She's an advisor with the same security clearance as me and she's indicated that she had to go back there and I thought I was being a gentleman in assisting her to do that in sharing an Uber
Wilkinson	So, if Bruce was gonna commit a rape, he chose wisely didn't he
Sharaz	It's the perfect place to do it. That's what makes me think he ...
Wilkinson	He premediated
Usher	Coming up
Wilkinson	You went to Linda Reynolds' office
Higgins	Yep
Bartlett	Let me tell you something else. It doesn't add up. You still choose not to check up on her
Lehrmann	No

ett	This had gone way beyond working together
<b>AK</b>	
ett	At 1.40am, on 23 March 2019, then 24 year old Brittany Higgins and then 23 year old Bruce Lehrmann, arrived at Parliament House after a night out drinking. Lehrmann says he'd left his security pass and house keys in his office. He would later tell Fiona Brown, their chief of staff, that he'd gone back to drink some whisky
i Brown	And I asked him why he attended the office, which he told me was to drink his whisky
	Okay, and when he talks about drinking his whisky
i Brown	I asked him how much he had. He said two glasses
	Okay
ett	Now, you know what the problem is here because you're living and breathing this
nann	Umm
ett	You've given three different reasons to various parties why you went back. You've just given me the reason that you gave the police
nann	Yep
ett	To retrieve your keys and to work on the Question Time folders. You told her that you'd gone back to drink some whisky
nann	Yep
ett	And had two glasses
nann	Mm
ett	So you doubled down on the fib
nann	Mm hmm
ett	And then you told security when you got there a completely different story. You told them you'd been requested to pick up some documents
o (security)	(Phone ringing) Security, Mario speaking
nann	Oh, hi mate, Bruce Lehrmann here with Minister Linda Reynolds. I've been requested to pick up some documents. I've forgotten my pass
o (security)	Yep, just one second
nann	Thanks mate. We're just at the Ministerial entrance
o (security)	Yep
nann	Yeah, well coming into Parliament is a bit of a process so I needed to ensure that we could get in first to get my keys at that time because it was a late time so in order to do that to gain access, I had to say that to get in



Mario (security)	I've just got to open it up for you and should be – unlocking now
Lehrmann	Thank you, I didn't have my pass. I think I'd probably just forgotten it that night didn't have my keys and belongings because I wasn't expecting a big night
Bartlett	The police version is the truth so the chief-of-staff and the security versions are both lies. (Lehrmann nods.) This is one thing I'm intrigued with, which I've never really seen or heard a decent explanation. Why did Brittany Higgins need to go back to Parliament House?
Higgins	It's weird. It was midnight or 1am-ish, and I was like 'oh okay, I guess I'm now going to Parliament House with you'
Lehrmann	From my recollection, she had told me that she also needed to go back to Parliament House and I thought I was being a gentleman in assisting her to do that in sharing an Uber
Bartlett	What if you were being a real gentleman, when she got in the Uber, you would have suggested ' <i>look why don't you just keep going and use the Uber and go home</i> '.
Lehrmann	She didn't tell me that she needed to go home. She told me she also had to go to Parliament
Mario (security)	Unlocking now
Higgins	I remember him just saying 'shhhh', just shooshing me through security
Wilkinson	Why did he tell you to be quiet?
Higgins	I think, on the basis that I was very visually drunk and it was an issue. Why would they let a very, very drunk girl in a cocktail dress into Parliament House 1 o'clock in the morning
Bartlett	This is the actual security vision from the night
Wilkinson	So, it was clear to the security guards that you were drunk
Higgins	Yeah, very much so
Lehrmann	She did not appear to be heavily intoxicated whatsoever
Bartlett	You told police that you thought that she was 'moderately drunk', is the word you used to them
Lehrmann	Mm
Bartlett	7 out of 10
Lehrmann	Mm
Bartlett	What does that mean?
Lehrmann	Tipsy, but functioning, aware of surroundings, able to make decisions, you know Not black out drunk and I know that the CCTV footage shows that
Higgins	The video of me going through that footage, I had to take off my high heels or something and I was stumbling all over the place. Like, I wasn't capable of real walking through the security system even myself

o (security)	Security, Mario speaking
<b>NE DIAL TONE</b>	
(security)	Yeah, Mario. It's Mark here mate. Buddy, I've got two people going into Linda Reynolds' suite. Foxtrot 4 has taken them up.
son (interview)	So, there would've been somebody monitoring all of those cameras and they would've seen you walk along that corridor, get into that lift, a drunk woman, with apparently a sober man
ns (interview)	Yep
<b>NE DIAL TONE</b>	
urity	(inaudible) 23
	Roger
	Can you put in access
	Roger, in full access, over
ns	And then so we had to go into a lift and that goes up to the Ministerial levels
ett	So, you get to the office. Then what happens?
nann	The security let us in. I turned left. She turn right and I never see her again.
ett	There's no conversation between either of you?
nann	No
ett	But you're telling me that you had been trying to be a gentleman on this evening, so wouldn't a gentleman say 'Listen, I've just got a quick thing to do, it's gonna take me half an hour, you right for a lift back or ...'
nann	Well, because she didn't indicate that she needed to go home. She indicated she also had to go to Parliament so I had assumed that she was there also to do some work in her capacity as a media adviser
ett	But wouldn't you, just out of curiosity, say, 'Brittany, how long are you gonna be?'
nann	I suppose, in hindsight, sure but my mind was focused on getting my keys, noting down what I needed to note down and getting back to my girlfriend, who had called a number of times and I'd then seen those calls and I needed to get home
ett	In the 41, 42 minutes that you were physically in the office, she called numerous times and you never answered those calls
nann	No. The phone was on silent, probably much earlier in the evening. We miss calls. You have your phone on silent, you miss calls, you're deep in work. That's what happens
ett	So, are you telling me that she was at one end and you were at the other?
nann	Yep, and that's the layout and I drew a very detailed mud map for the AFP about the layout of the office

AFP	Can you draw me, sort of, a bit of a mud map in relation to who's desk is when and the layout of the office from the entry?
Bartlett	Would you mind drawing me a quick one, just to give me a bit more insight?
Lehrmann	Sure
Bartlett	Right. I'll just grab a pad, just to give me a bit more insight, thank you very much, into what you're talking about
Lehrmann	Let's do it
Bartlett	Give us a quick floor plan
Lehrmann	So you've got the blue carpet here, double doors. The main entrance to the suite. You're coming into the reception area here. There's a reception desk. go to the left, she goes to the right, massive bullpen of desks here
Liam	Where was your desk
Lehrmann	My desk is smack in back corner, over here, right near the back exit there
Bartlett	Where is she?
Lehrmann	She said, well she went right, because she's told Australia that
Wilkinson	You went to Linda Reynolds' office. Do you remember walking down the corridor towards the room? Do you remember him saying anything about what he was getting?
Higgins	No. I remember sitting on the window sill, our window sill overlooked the Prime Minister's Courtyard and I remember kind of sitting there waiting for him for a really long time and I remember him sort of being away for a while and I remember just feeling tired and really sleepy
Bartlett	So there's a fair amount of space there
Lehrmann	Yep
Bartlett	And it's obvious from that that you physically can't see her
Lehrmann	Oh, not at all, yeah. I'd be hard pressed to even hear her actually
Bartlett	But you still choose not to check on her?
Lehrmann	No
Bartlett	I've got to say to you, that surprises me given your position about being a gentleman
Lehrmann	Yeah, okay, sure but it's Parliament House. She's a staffer in her own right
Bartlett	And if we follow your line of reasoning about being a gentleman, I would have thought the least you could do is just pop your head in, take you two seconds, and say 'Brittany are you right, are you finished because I'm going, I've got an Uber. Do you want to just be dropped off at home?'
Lehrmann	I assumed that she was there to do work

ett	You'd been drinking together Bruce
nann	Sure
ett	This had gone way beyond working together
nann	Sure
ett	At 2.31am, Bruce Lehrmann leaves the Ministerial office via a back entrance near his desk and exits through security. Lehrmann says he spent the fiercely disputed 40 minutes inside Linda Reynolds' office making contemporaneous notes of conversations he'd had with Department of Defence staff earlier that night
nann	And I'm furiously making notes and trying to remember what Department of Defence officials had told me
ett	Let me tell you something else that doesn't add up. You're sitting in that office for something like 40 minutes, working on material for a Minister for a Question Time that's not even happening in a couple of days afterwards because Parliament wasn't sitting
nann	But it was her first Question Time that she was about to step into
ett	Over a week later
nann	Sure
ett	And this is 2 o'clock in the morning on a Saturday
nann	Yep. And I had received information from Department of Defence officials that was highly relevant to a sensitive issue that the Opposition did eventually go Senator Reynolds on in Question Time
ett	And you couldn't have done exactly the same thing first thing Monday morning?
nann	Well, I was already going back to get my keys so I was in at my desk so it stood to reason that I would make those notes then
ett	Stood to who's reason?
nann	My reason, so I didn't forget them
ett	How does she end up on a couch fully naked?
nson	What does that photograph show?
nann	Well, it was fabricated and that's the only explanation
<b>AK</b>	
ett	I know you've said this a thousand times. You go left, she goes right and that's it
nann	Yep
ett	That's the end of any contact?
nann	That is

Bartlett	Did she try to kiss you?
Lehrmann	No
Bartlett	Did she make any approach?
Lehrmann	Not to my knowledge
Bartlett	No contact whatsoever between you, physical contact?
Lehrmann	No, no physical contact whatsoever
Bartlett	No attempted intimacy from either of you?
Lehrmann	No attempt
Higgins (interview)	I remember that he was taking a really long time with something and so I got to the point where I don't know if he guided me there or if I went there myself but ended up laying down and passing out on the Minister's couch
Wilkinson (interview)	So, what's the next thing that you remember happening
Higgins (interview)	The first thing that sort of awoke me was I was in a pain. My leg was kind of being crushed. The senior staffer was on top of me. He was clearly almost finished
Wilkinson (interview)	Sorry, was there sexual intercourse going on?
Higgins (interview)	Yeah, I woke up mid-rape essentially. I don't know why he was almost finished but it felt like it had been going on for a while or that he was almost done. He was sweaty, I couldn't get him off of me. At this point I started crying
Wilkinson (interview)	What did you say to him?
Higgins (interview)	I told him to stop
Wilkinson (interview)	Did he?
Higgins (interview)	No
Bartlett	Did you rape Brittany Higgins?
Lehrmann	No, I didn't. It simply didn't happen and the evidence supports that the Federal Police support that. I don't know what more you could possibly want other than what we're seeing coming out of the Inquiry and some of the other things that have been publicly reported post the dropping of the charge
Bartlett	How does she end up on a couch fully naked?
Lehrmann	That is a great question. I mean I don't know. I can't talk to that because I never saw her again. That was news to me with the rest of the country
Bartlett	What I'm trying to get into my head Bruce, here you are a few walls away working on these documents that you say are important and here's this young lady in an adjoining office virtually, what disrobing on her own? Is that how she ends up naked?
Lehrmann	Well, I don't know what happened Liam. This is the point because I didn't see her so I can't comment about what was going on in that office

ett	You can see the contradiction in this can't you?
nann	Sure, but...
ett	You two were drinking with each other as part of a group of four, for an hour and a half beforehand at least at the last bar and then all of a sudden there's this transition and she, albeit, with a couple of walls between you, is naked on a couch but here you are acting like a Buddhist Monk, making post-it notes stickers for a Minister
nann	Yes, to ensure that the information that I'd collected that night was as accurate as possible as I had discovered it
ett	You can't marry the two up, can you? It's very difficult
nann	Well, people will draw conclusions Liam. The fact of the matter is I never saw her again
ett	When Brittany Higgins first went public with allegations she'd been raped in Parliament House, she claimed she had critical photographic evidence
erson (interview)	You have a photo that you took of a bruise that developed from that night. What does that photograph show?
ns (interview)	It's just essentially where his leg pinned me down. It's quite a large bruise. It's just the weight obviously of his leg pinning me down.
ns	I had this weird, big bruise on the basis of where it was positioned
erson	I hate to ask, but I have to
ns	Yeah, of course
erson	Have you got the photo there?
ns	Yeah, of course
erson	So, you took that when you were in the office, just when it happened or a couple of days later?
ns	A couple of days after
allyn	When the bruise appeared?
ny	Yeah, it took a little bit
ett	Brittany Higgins made a lot of this bruise, which suggested in no uncertain terms, that you had pinned her down
nann	Mm
ett	On that ministerial couch
nann	Mm. Well, it was fabricated. That's the only explanation is that it was fabricated or it's a bruise from much later
orter	Photos of a large bruise on Ms Higgins' right leg from after her alleged rape was shown to the Court. 'I was fully exposed. I was like a prop pinned into a corner'

Reporter	<p>The photograph was furiously contested during Bruce Lehrmann's criminal trial last October and under scrutiny, the reliability of the bruise as evidence began to fade. In two separate meetings she had with the AFP in April 2019, Brittany Higgins failed to mention the bruise or the photo.</p> <p>Subsequent metadata analysis has been unable to pinpoint when the image was taken but its existence can't be traced further back than January 2021 nor was it mentioned in any of Brittany's text messages until February 2021, around the same time she began meeting with journalists</p>
Brittany	Fundamentally, at the end of the day, it will come down to my word against his and if I don't have any corroborative sort of like evidence, whether it's the tape or whether it's the logs
Sharaz	I think he can just say, 'we had consensual sex'. I mean I'm sure you'll tell Lisa: you've got a photo of a bruise
Bartlett	So, you're saying she just took that picture and used it because it was convenient
Lehrmann	It would appear that she's given that to The Project to enhance the weaponization of her sexual assault allegation. It's pretty sick.
Usher	Next
Bartlett	If we are to believe you, you have been totally framed
Lehrmann	It would appear that way
Bartlett	It's the ultimate reaction. It's pretty heavy duty Bruce
Lehrmann	There was no coming back. I'd actually even worked out the St Leonard's train station. I was just going to go.
<b>BREAK</b>	
Bartlett	On Saturday 23 March 2019, Brittany Higgins woke around 8.30. As this visitor shows, she left Parliament House at 10.01 to catch an Uber home. On Monday it was business as usual for both Brittany and Bruce. They even shared a coffee together but, the following morning, Fiona Brown, their chief of staff, learned of their late night security breach, called Lehrmann in and told him to clean out his desk. That afternoon, she then asked Brittany Higgins to give her version of events. The alleged assault was not mentioned at this meeting. Higgins did not raise it until a follow-up discussion with Brown a week later.
Bartlett	See, here's the thing Bruce. If we are to believe you, you have been totally framed.
Lehrmann	It would appear that way
Bartlett	But, if that's true, what is her motivation? What is this woman's motivation, who's known you at that stage for two, maybe three, weeks to tell criminal lies about you in order to do what?
Lehrmann	I think that a white lie to save a job occurred, a tick that happened, because she saw me getting the turf and then she's come into contact with media elites that have sort of latched on to this given the environment at the time in 2021 to weaponise it and advance a movement really.
Bartlett	So you believe it all started with her watching you come out of the office of the chief of staff, Fiona Brown, and she knew you had been sacked

nann	Yep
ett	And she thought she was also going to get fired
nann	Yep. It's pretty clear.
ett	Well, it's not clear that's why I'm asking you.
nann	Well, the first meeting with Fiona Brown, I'm given the turf. There's a period of two or three hours of seeing me pack up my boxes on my desk. She's called in for a please explain. There's no mention of a sexual assault in that first meeting with Fiona Brown and a second meeting with Fiona Brown occurs. She's given an opportunity to sign the Code of Conduct. We are at crunch time of signing the contract for your job and not until the very end of that second meeting was any inkling of an allegation of sexual assault. So, it was clear that there was a pressure there that in order to save her dream job, as she told The Project, she needed to ensure that it was a satisfactory sort of explanation in terms of why they're keeping her around.
ett	After leaving politics in 2019, Bruce Lehrmann went onto a well-paid position in government relations with British American Tobacco in Sydney. It was also in Sydney, two years later, where plans were being made about the timing of Brittany Higgins' story
ns	Full disclosure, I've spoken with Sam, Sam Maiden, who's a friend of ours and she sort of knows everything, yeah she's pretty keen to get out in the ...
nson	Right, so we're talking about four weeks from last Sunday
allyn	Got it.
az	Do you know MPs who could find questions at Question Time?
nson	Oh, certainly Albo
az	Yeah
nson	Tanya Plibersek
az	Yeah. All we need is like a I don't know, we get Grace Tame doing the media the next day. You need someone who – because you want friendly so they don't saturate the airtime with, you know Craig Kelly, oh you know, women just need to suck it up.
ett	The Project would air and Samantha Maiden's article would be published on 15 February 2021 by any measure the worst day of Lehrmann's life.
nann	It started with Samantha Maiden's article at 8am. I, like everybody else, had read it and was horrified. I think there are text messages between me and friends saying, I used to work with her. Horrified. It then became apparent at 2 o'clock or thereabouts when Rosie Lewis at The Australian emailed my boss at British American Tobacco and said that she'd heard from government sources that I was the alleged rapist. Now, I'm called in for a meeting by my bosses, they suspend me pending an internal review that they're going to undertake and they say 'is there anything we can do', you know, 'what can we do?' And I said well, it's pretty clear I need a lawyer, no shit. So, I messaged some friends and thankfully get a solicitor, Rick Korn, who was just incredible. I went to his office and pending The Project airing.
ett	Did you sit down and watch it?



Lehrmann	We watched it at live
Higgins (interview)	And that was sort of the first time I vocalised I had been raped
Lehrmann	There were a lot of tears, a lot of swearing.
Bartlett	When that show finished, what feeling were you left with?
Lehrmann	It's all a bit of a blur for me. Like much of the last two years. But Rick Korn was certainly concerned for my welfare. Yeah. I went off the deep end, so to speak in the sort of 24 to 48 hours after
Bartlett	Afterward? In what way?
Lehrmann	Oh, I had just made arrangements just to go. An allegation as serious as this made so public and with the networks that I had and they were just disappearing. It all just became too much. I felt that I couldn't recover
Bartlett	Just to go?
Lehrmann	Yeah, I'd made arrangements to go. Mum was going to be okay. She'd get my superannuation and you know I'm clearly a political problem so I'll make it easy for everyone.
Bartlett	You're telling me you were suicidal?
Lehrmann	Yeah for a little while there, in the start of 2021, mmm
Bartlett	It was that bad?
Lehrmann	Yep
Bartlett	Wasn't there a part of you that thought 'well if I'm not guilty I can beat this?'
Lehrmann	Well, I hadn't thought that far ahead, but I thought given that the allegation was being aired so publicly a not guilty verdict meant jack shit. When the media had already convicted you, so
Bartlett	When you say you'd made plans? What everything? Financial?
Lehrmann	Yep
Bartlett	Lifestyle?
Lehrmann	Yep. There was no coming back. I was, I'd actually even worked out the St Leonards train station, I was just going to, just going to go. I ended up taking myself to Royal North Shore Hospital and that sort of began a period of just, sort of strengthening my mind, that there is a light at the end of this
Bartlett	So you sought some clinical help?
Lehrmann	Yeah. I just thought, I just thought that's a pretty weak way to go, to go, I should have a stab at trying to fight this
Bartlett	So that interview, really was one of your lowest points, but it was also a turning point, in a sense?

nann	Mmm. Yeah, it was a low point but a turning point and it, um, yeah. It set off a sort of a two or three week period of certainly touch and go. I was then in a clinic for a couple of weeks and my lawyers were Rick Korn and John Korn, his father, he's been an absolute godsend. He just wanted me to get mentally strong, that was the focus. Don't, let them handle all the crap and you just get mentally strong.
ett	On the 19 <sup>th</sup> of April 2021, Lehrmann voluntarily consented to a formal interview with the Australian Federal Police in Sydney
ett	When you chose to do that, you decided not to have your lawyer present
nann	No
ett	And that's a basic right
nann	Mmm
ett	And the police reminded you of that
nann	Mmm
	You may communicate with or attempt to communicate with a legal practitioner of your choice and arrange or attempt to arrange for your legal practitioner of your choice to be present during the questioning. Do you understand that?
nann	Yes
	And do you wish to communicate with your legal practitioner at this time?
nann	No
ett	You chose to be interviewed by them for a couple of hours
nann	Mmm
ett	Without having a legal representative by your side
nann	Mmm
ett	That's highly risky, why did you choose to do that?
nann	Because I hadn't had sex with her. Not only that, I hadn't had any sexual activity of any kind with her. So John Korn said, go in and say that, that's the truth. Umm and I had nothing to hide.
	Yeah, anything you can do to, that you believe may be able to assist us in our investigation, that would be appreciated
nann	Okay
nann	They took my phone under warrant, but I very willingly gave it over, I got to the doors and I said, 'I suspect you want my phone?' And gave them access to everything, so I had nothing to hide. And I was, I'm thankful I did that. I don't regret talking to the Federal Police. I think there's only one truth and I sat down and told it
er	Next

Shane Drumgold (DPP)	I've made the difficult decision that it is no longer in the public interest to pursue a prosecution
Lehrmann	He took my opportunity for a not guilty verdict away from me. He then told Australia, oh I still could have won it. What the [bleep]
<b>BREAK</b>	
Wilkinson	So in being asked to address you all here today, I called Brittany and asked her if there was anything she would like me to say on her behalf.
Female in crowd	It's not about you mate
Wilkinson	And her immediate answer was, yes. But yesterday Brittany decided not to have me read the words, instead, Brittany wanted to say those words herself
Crowd	[Cheering]
Wilkinson	In person, right here on this stage
Crowd	[Cheering]
Wilkinson	So ladies and gentlemen, it is my enormous honour to introduce to you all, one of the most courageous women I know, Ms Brittany Higgins
Crowd	[Cheering]
Lehrmann	It's pretty sick that I can just be cast aside for a greater movement
Bartlett	What do you mean by movement?
Lehrmann	Well I think it's pretty obvious that there's a link or a connection here with the #Me Too movement and trying to, for whatever reason, enhance the movement here in Australia by using this case
Julia Zemiro	A little bit of quiet please and cameras, would you back off
Crowd	[Cheering]
Bartlett	Bruce Lehrmann was charged on August 7, 2021 with one count of sexual assault without consent. By that time Brittany Higgins, with the help of author Peter FitzSimons had already negotiated a six figure advance for a book to be called 'Not Just a Daughter'. It was to be a raw and personal account. This is an extract from her draft
Female voice	Honestly, I feel like a B-grade Grace Tame. She exists outside and beyond the political bubble. Court case closed, awarded, and revered. Here I am in the mud with the pigs - fighting for control of the daily news cycle, throwing mud. A WhatsApp here, a voicemail there, a drop to Sam.
Bartlett	The book has been shelved. In part, because on October 26 last year the trial was sensationally abandoned while the jury was deliberating on its verdict
Reporter	Brittany is there anything that you'd like to say to Mr Lehrmann?
Higgins	[Breathes out]
Bartlett	A rogue juror had accessed material not presented as evidence in court. Then five weeks later, this:

e Drumgold )	I've made the difficult decision that it is no longer in the public interest to pursue a prosecution
ter	The Director of Public Prosecutions has dropped the rape charge, saying the ongoing trauma posed a significant and unacceptable risk to Brittany Higgins' life
e Drumgold )	There was a reasonable prospect of conviction and this is a view that I still hold today
ett	Here's a chief prosecutor telling everybody
nann	Yep
ett	Never mind that trial, he's never going to have another one but pretty much he's a rapist
nann	Mmm. He took, my opportunity for a not guilty verdict away from me. But he then told Australia, 'oh I still could have won it'
ett	Hmm
nann	What the [bleep]
ett	Shortly after the charge against Bruce Lehrmann was dropped, Shane Drumgold called for a public enquiry and he got it
Minister	The ACT Government will be establishing an inquiry
ett	Brittany Higgins reacted to the news by sharing a quote on Instagram
ett	Mr Drumgold was the first witness to be called and Bruce Lehrmann was determined to be there
nann	This is the guy who ruined my life. He commenced the prosecution based on no evidence and the cards are going to fall that way and he's going to have a very tough week
ett	Bruce was back in Canberra but this time it was the chief prosecutor under pressure
ie Drumgold )	In retrospect it was a failing
ett	Bombshell revelations follow
Chrysanthou SC	You didn't see that?
ie Drumgold )	No
Chrysanthou SC	Are you serious?
ett	Drumgold admitted errors were made in the handling of the case
Chrysanthou SC	And it actually was an act of misleading Mr Lehrmann's lawyers, wasn't it?
ie Drumgold )	I didn't view it as such at the time
er Sofronoff KC	No you're being asked whether it was

Shane Drumgold (DPP)	Ah, I think 'misleading' is probably too strong a word
Walter Sofronoff KC	What word would you use?
Shane Drumgold (DPP)	Well, because, again
Walter Sofronoff KC	What word would you use?
Bartlett	We know from the Sofronoff Inquiry that the police didn't want to even charge you
Lehrmann	Mmm
Bartlett	They said, it's quite clear, it's in black and white. There was insufficient evidence
Lehrmann	Mmm
Detective Superintendent Scott Moller (AFP)	And I was worried that Mr Lehrmann could potentially be placed before the court when we didn't believe there was enough evidence
Lehrmann	They didn't want to charge me. In fact the investigating officers refused to sign my charge sheet. They had to go to a higher officer to sign the charge sheet because he didn't want to morally put his officers through charging who they thought was an innocent person
Bartlett	By the time the first day was over, Bruce Lehrmann had decided it was time to start speaking out
Lehrmann	I could say a lot of things that are probably not appropriate for TV but
Bartlett	Like what?
Lehrmann	It was [bleep] outrageous. It was [bleep]. This entire case was [bleep] um and Drumgold was central to that. He kicked things off and we're finding out things that we should have had, we tried to ask for things, were denied them and it's just [bleep]
Lehrmann	I'm just an everyday bloke, getting on with his life and shit hits the fan. There's gonna be people that'll believe her, there's going to be people that believe me. You know you make lemonade with lemons
<b>BREAK</b>	
Lehrmann	I'm just an everyday bloke, getting on with his life and shit hits the fan. And you bunker down and you get on with the hand you're dealt. There's gonna be people that'll believe her, there's going to be people that believe me. That's just a fact of it and, you know, you make lemonade with lemons
Bartlett	Isolated and shunned by many of his former friends and colleagues, Bruce Lehrmann has cut a lone figure for much of the past two years. Golf helped clear his head
Lehrmann	That's kept me sane. I get out on the golf course and I just go around by myself it clears the mind. The lawyers know not to contact me when I'm on the golf course, you know, it's four hours of, you know, to myself

ett	While the criminal trial is now behind him, Bruce Lehrmann's days in court are far from over
ett	Well you've sued a number of media outlets
nann	Mmm. There's three underway
ett	Three underway. Have any of them settled?
nann	One has settled on satisfactory terms to both of us
ett	Right
nann	And um, that's all I can say about that. I'm not trying to be a millionaire out of this, in any way. In fact, the opposite. I'm trying to pay my lawyers, I'm trying to pay back my mum and my uncle and others who have supported me. But I'm not seeking mansions or a celebrity lifestyle on the other side of this.
ett	So let me give you a scenario. If it turns out that you end up with 5 or 6 or 7 mil in the bank, will it have all been worth it?
mann	Ah, no, cos um, I don't want to be known as the guy who could have, would have, allegedly raped Brittany Higgins. And that's, and that's, that's a tag that's out there now and I don't have the court system to remove that tag anymore
ins	I told the truth. No matter how uncomfortable or how unflattering, to the Court. Today's outcome does not change that truth
ett	Your accuser has said a lot
mann	Yeah
ett	And a lot publicly as you know
mann	Yeah
ett	But why don't you sue her personally, for defamation?
mann	Well, I mean that's, that's a possibility. I mean, it's ...
ett	I mean, are you reticent to do that? Because you know that ...
mann	I'm not ruling it out, but I mean it's ...
ett	But if you do that, of course, then you'd have to be up for cross-examination by her legal representatives, wouldn't you?
mann	Oh sure, I mean, I face that at the moment with the proceedings underway in the Federal Court. I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid of it. I haven't ruled it out, but I'm cognisant of the fact that, you know
ett	That what? It's not a good look?
mann	Well it's not a good look, you kick someone when they're down and you know, I have some sympathy for her because she's obviously got people around her who are not considering, they're not there for her, they're there for other, they're there for their own agendas

Bartlett	Somewhat ironically, Bruce Lehrmann is not studying to be a lawyer
Lehrmann	There is a part of me that thinks that there's some serious issues without justice system. I think for me it just the inspiration of seeing, in particular my two senior barristers John Korn at the start and then Steven Wybrow, I mean, Arthur Moser as well. It's inspirational stuff to see these lawyers take pity on someone, that they saw the system failing someone and they just, you know, they're not interested in money, they. I saw another side to lawyers, I think that people wouldn't realise that there are some lawyers out there that have a heart
Bartlett	You know that there are going to still be some people, people who are watching this program tonight, no matter what you say, who think 'there's the bloke that raped Brittany Higgins'. You're never going to change their mind. How does that affect the rest of your life?
Lehrmann	I think it's unfortunate that some people in the media consider themselves judge jury and executioner. I think there needs to be somewhat of a reckoning at the end of this, and I hope the inquiry does that in some way and I think, I just hope that we can get back to a neutral position, I suppose. Is that? I accept that there's going to be 50% of the country, probably more, that think I'm a rapist, okay. But how about having a bit of an open mind and a bit of pragmatism about how you approach an issue, you know. There's two sides to every story. Let's look at the facts, let's look at the breadcrumbs, where do they lead. Let's look at motivations, let's look at credibility
Bartlett	I know your lawyers didn't want you to do this interview
Lehrmann	[chuckle]
Bartlett	Didn't want you to talk
Lehrmann	No
Bartlett	But it has been a long time in the making
Lehrmann	Mmm
Bartlett	You finally get your chance to say something
Lehrmann	Mmm. I'm not going to shy away from having my say. I think it's, I know the lawyers don't want me to say anything but, we've had the trial, the charges been dropped and I think we've had enough shit shoved down our throats. It's time for a bit of setting the story straight, I suppose
Bartlett	There you go
Lehrmann	That's it
Bartlett	You've finally had your say
Lehrmann	I could go another hour if we could, there's going to be heaps to say, but (chuckles)
Bartlett	Well there's a lot of detail, isn't there?
Lehrmann	Yeah. It's the rabbit holes, there's so many
Bartlett	Mmm

nann	I mean, yeah. There's a lot of people to fire up about. I don't, I mean, I've got a taste of it. I don't think it will be last time you see me because I think I need to ...
ətt	Keep talking
nann	Well there's a lot of people that have a lot of questions to answer in this and how they've behaved. Drumgold being the first, so
ətt	Mmm
nann	He should never have progressed this, so
ətt	Hmmm
nann	He, he, I wouldn't be sitting here talking to you if it wasn't for Drumgold. He knew he had a weak case, so
ətt	Mmm. But you had to put your case sooner or later Bruce
nann	Mmm. I don't regret it one bit. I think the fire's just been burning so much that I think it's, you know. Beware the man who's got nothing to lose. There's a bit more to come yet