**Hi Elise!**

As you may have gathered, I’ve been atrocious at keeping any momentum going with this project! ☹ It hasn’t helped that I’ve gone back to the drawing board a couple of times with it (as well as putting it on the backburner for several months at a time…). I’ve now started again with an essentially new story. However, rather than circle back I’m submitting this as a rough outline/Step 4 – albeit a fairly short one (approx. 4.5 pages). Fingers crossed that I’ll do better at moving through the rest of the steps of the process and get it completed in a timely fashion!

You may or may not recall that this project is based on an agreement with an Australian singer/songwriter to use his songs for a jukebox musical – though not a story of his life – which this isn’t. Rather, it’s fiction, inspired by numerous stories of musicians, bands, etc – from Fleetwood Mac to various Aussie bands and artists of the era in which its set. (In *my* version of this document, I’ve incorporated potential songs to slot in at various points since that’s an element in the project which already exists.) I’ve briefly created a new 3 phrase outline and premise paragraph below.

**THREE PHRASE OUTLINE:**

**Beginning**: a young band, led by the charismatic Harry, on the cusp of success loses a key band member and then immediately finds a volatile singer/songwriter couple – June and Tom – to join the band.

**Middle**: the band looks set to disintegrate again after June discovers she’s pregnant to Harry after coming out of a messy relationship with Tom.

**End**: June spurns Harry and Tom and ends up with the unassuming band manager, Dan, with whom she starts a new life, raises her child, and pursues a quiet life of artistic expression coupled with domestic simplicity.

**PREMISE PARAGRAPH:**

A band on the cusp of great success loses a key member and recruits a volatile couple into their ranks. The band’s founder falls for the ‘new girl’ and she falls pregnant by him but doesn’t trust that he’d be the right choice to raise their child. She starts to fall for the unassuming band manager and they decide to quit the band, raise the child together and continue to play and write music for others to sing.

**4-8 pages for rough outline.**

**Want: in this room, at this moment (what does the lead character want)**

1. What does my Lead want in this scene?

2. Why does he want it?

3. What does he do to get it?

4. What opposes him and why?

**DEEPER WATER – ROUGH OUTLINE**

Melbourne, Australia; mid-1980’s. HARRY, early 20’s introduces himself to the (actual) audience, telling us who he is and where we are. He tells us he formed the band, The Debutantes, made up of himself on rhythm guitar, ZOE on bass guitar and CHARLIE on drums and a vocalist/lead guitarist. Their manager is the soft-spoken, DAN. Harry explains that in 1985, they are just starting to get noticed around the pubs and clubs of Melbourne; a couple of record label A&R men are sniffing around: they’re a great live band and are starting to attract a loyal following. But if the wheels hadn’t fallen off yet, one wheel was definitely starting to look wobbly. But as one door closes…The young band plays a rousing song to the delight of the (story) audience.

Backstage afterwards, while the ecstatic audience demands an encore, Zoe announces there’s a problem: their lead guitarist has passed out in the toilets and she can’t revive him. The remaining three band members frantically debate what to do for an encore. A reluctant Harry is pressured into singing a brand new song of his, not previously tested but all they can think of. Zoe encourages him: it’s good; back yourself. With some hesitation they return to the stage to rapturous applause and sing the song to great acclaim.

JUNE, early 20’s, addresses the audience. She introduces herself and explains that she hooked up with fellow music enthusiast, TOM when they were at high school. They messed around making music together through their teens: June seemed to take it more seriously than Tom, but he had a knack for coming up with an amazing lyric, seemingly effortlessly which really pissed her off! Throughout this, Tom interjects with his version of events. She continues that after school they set off backpacking around Europe. But their relationship suffered. They landed back in Melbourne: June getting a mind-numbing job and Tom on the dole; pottering around with his guitar and smoking pot. They drifted back into a relationship, against June’s better judgement. Then one day, Harry walked into the bar where they had a residency and everything changed…

Harry, Zoe, Charlie and Dan head into a pub and discuss what to do next: they feel they’re on the brink of hitting the big time but they’ve just fired their lead guitarist (off-stage) after losing patience with him and getting sick of giving him second chances. During this scene it becomes apparent that Zoe and Dan are a couple. Meanwhile, a low-key duo – June and Tom – set-up in the bar and sing a song they’ve written. Tom plays acoustic guitar while June plays the keyboard. Harry is immediately struck by June – not just her looks and singing ability, but the quality of her song.

Charlie, Dan and Zoe leave and Harry approaches June and Tom and mentions that they’re looking for a new singer and guitarist for their band. Tom is aware of Harry’s band as they’re starting to be noticed, and is immediately keen – he’s been looking to spread his wings and sees the current arrangement as a stop-gap. June is less certain; she has a lot of her own material and she isn’t sure if Harry’s band is the right vehicle for her songs. However, Harry reassures and she agrees they’ll get together for a jam and see what happens. They agree to exchange some chord charts and lyrics ahead of meeting up and agree to “see what happens” on the day. Harry appears slightly deflated when it becomes apparent that June and Tom are in a relationship but he covers quickly.

The planned jam session is about to get underway. June has arrived straight from her day job and makes awkward small talk with Zoe, Harry, Charlie and Dan while they wait for Tom. While they’re waiting, they agree to do a number together that June wrote. It’s sweet and tender and Harry is even more charmed by June.

Tom ambles in late and clearly high. He makes excuses but Harry is immediately unimpressed: they’ve had a string of unreliable guitarists/front men and if Tom can’t show up to their first rehearsal on time and sober it doesn’t bode well. Tom pushes back and reassures they have nothing to worry about. Tom encourages them to try one of his songs (he supplied the lyrics; June came up with the music). Tom wows the rest of the band with the song’s raw energy and drive. Harry grudgingly concedes Tom knows what he’s doing.

It’s agreed that they’ll give the new line-up a try; they have an important gig coming up and that can act as the final audition. June surprises Harry and the others by insisting that they’ll only do it on the condition that their set list includes at least three of her songs. Tom, anxious not to lose the gig, pushes back, but Harry surprises everyone by agreeing. A new line-up is born.

After Zoe, Dan and Charlie have left, Harry overhears Tom and June arguing: Tom has been fooling around and June is confronting him about it. She breaks it off with him but vows it won’t adversely affect their work in the band: she’s worked too hard to throw that away just when things are coming together for them professionally. Tom accepts this; Harry is left intrigued and hopeful.

The first gig with the new line-up is a success. Afterwards the band is buzzing. At a party after the gig, Tom proceeds to get wasted while Harry makes a move on June. June is tempted but rejects his advances, not wanting to do anything that could disrupt or complicate things within the band – though it’s clear there’s an undeniable mutual attraction between the two of them, rooted in their shared devotion to music.

The band embarks on a tour: long days and nights in a van, travelling long distances between small Australian towns to play one-off gigs and then doing it all again the next day.

Meanwhile, Dan and Zoe’s relationship is on its last legs. Zoe tells the audience that Dan never embraced the rock’n’roll lifestyle the way she did. She says it’s ironic that it’s him complaining about the booze and drugs and life on the road as that’s typically the complaint of women in relationships with musicians. But Dan is more of a home body at heart. He loves creating the alchemy of bringing the component parts of the band together into a glorious whole, but she feels like he could take or leave the rest of it.

Zoe breaks up with Dan who’s sad but philosophical. A friendship develops between the two women in the band, June and Zoe. June quizzes Zoe on her love life and Zoe admits that she and Dan have just parted ways. Zoe concedes that she still has a soft spot for the quiet and funny guy: he’s lacking in pretention and is one of the few truly genuine people she’s met in the music business. But they want different things. When June asks if it won’t be awkward (riffing on her own situation with Tom), Zoe laughs it off: she doesn’t think Dan is capable of being bitter and snide. She muses that maybe one day he’ll seem like The One That Got Away. But despite this, she just can’t see it working. June laments to Zoe: why isn’t it possible to have it all? Artistic expression *and* a soul mate? Zoe is dubious: it sounds nice in theory; she just isn’t sure it can work in practice: you can’t serve two masters.

The band sings one of their standards to a rapturous audience to end act one.

**Act 2**

The attraction between June and Harry grows and at another after-party they eventually hook-up. This is the start of a passionate love affair that seems to charge them both creatively as well as personally. However, June insists on keeping the relationship from the other band members – not wanting to rock the boat since her break-up with Tom is so recent and Zoe and Dan are going through their own separation. Harry agrees but finds it hard to contain his passion for her when they’re around each other.

When Tom’s continued bad behaviour threatens the success of a subsequent gig, Harry and June present a united front to Tom who’s put on notice that he need to lift his game or risk his spot in the band. A contrite Tom promises he’ll be on his best behaviour. However, Tom continues to enjoy the high life of a rising rock star with all that entails: the drugs, the booze, the women – keeping it *just* sufficiently in-check to be able to function. And – annoyingly – he continues to pull catchy lyrics apparently out of thin air, leaving it to others to spin them into pop song gold.

The band’s star continues to rise: Harry is approached about coming up with a Christmas song for a variety show in December. He’s stuck, Tom is AWOL on another drugs and booze bender, and June and Zoe agree to work with him to try to brainstorm some ideas.

The three of them work together, with Zoe demonstrating that she, too, has creative input to share in the process. However, after a while, she starts to feel like a ‘spare wheel’. She addresses the audience: she knew something was going on between Harry and June; the secretive looks, the sly knowing smiles. She concludes it won’t work though: Harry and June are too similar. It’s why the relationship with her and Dan worked as long as it did – because they were different. Dan pipes up, also addressing the audience, pointing out that he also knew what was going on, but he’s more optimistic about Harry and June’s chances. (After all – he and Zoe split in the end…) Zoe points out June’s desire to make it as an artist; Dan counters that he sees in her a kindred spirit. Like him, she wants something “real.” Amused, Zoe contends that maybe Dan’s a little jealous. He brushes this off but we see Zoe has hit a nerve.

Harry and June are excited about the song they’ve composed. The plan is to play it – along with a selection of other tracks – for an A&R guy from a prestigious record label. However, June laments she’s feeling unwell: she wonders if it was the take-out they had last night. With the session with the A&R guy looming, June declares she’s not feeling well enough to take part.

Harry, Zoe, Tom, Charlie and Dan discuss what to do. Dan suggests postponing – they’re playing some of June’s songs after all, but Harry counters that they have to be pragmatic and think of what’s best for the band. Tom and Zoe are quick to agree (though it’s clear Zoe feels bad for June) – the music has to come first. They can get a session musician to fill-in for her; they know someone who could quickly get up to speed and they agree that that’s the best solution. Meanwhile, a pregnancy test reveals to a stunned June the real reason for her feeling sick: she’s pregnant with Harry’s baby. Harry has a lot to organise ahead of the performance for the A&R man, so Dan offers to let June know what’s happening. Glad to be “off the hook” Harry takes him up on his offer.

Unsure what to do, June wants to talk to Harry about her pregnancy, but can’t seem to bring herself to raise it with him. The ever-pragmatic Zoe encourages her to focus on the music: she knows June has an amazing talent – Zoe wishes she had an ounce of the song-writing ability that June has. How is it fair that the guys get to lead a life of hedonistic irresponsibility while the women have to deal with any unforeseen consequences of that wild life? June ponders this but is no closer to deciding what she should do. She’s surprised when the quiet but observant Dan guesses what’s going on with her pregnancy and provides a sympathetic ear. He doesn’t have any answers but is happy to just be an empathetic confidante. He also encourages her to follow her desire to “have it all” – doesn’t she think it’s possible to have a family *and* write great music? By way of illustration he talks up the great songwriters of the Brill Building era. June is left with food for thought.

The band sings the song Harry and June wrote (without June there). After an especially tender moment with Harry where he talks of a shared future together, June finds the courage to tell him about her pregnancy. He’s initially shocked but then appears to warm to the idea. June warns him that it will change things. Harry downplays this; June insists that she won’t be able to be the party girl any more – is he sure he won’t find that boring? Harry disabuses her and insists that he’ll be there for her every step of the way; they’ll do it together. June allows herself to be optimistic.

However, it’s not long before June – who’s having a burst of creativity despite the morning sickness – sees that Harry is finding it harder than he imagined to abandon the rock’n’roll lifestyle with all that that entails, and June feels like a boring weight around his neck. This is brought home to her when she realises that while she is abstaining from drink and drugs, Harry is surreptitiously continuing to partake. She sadly moves out of their shared apartment.

As June’s pregnancy progresses, she and Harry drift apart: she doesn’t feel remotely rock’n’roll with her pregnant belly sticking out. But her creative output continues to impress. Zoe asks her to consider whether she’d give up the baby: she insists that June has so much to offer; why should she have to give it all up because Harry got her knocked-up? Tom also thinks she’s mad: they’re on the cusp of something great – don’t walk away now!

Only Dan refrains from putting pressure on her. He surprises her by admitting that he’s sometimes thought about packing it all in. Whenever they’re away on tour for any length of time he finds himself yearning to just have a quiet night home. He loves the music. But the rest of it, he has little appetite for. June finds herself attracted to his low-key integrity and impressed by his clear-sighted financial foresight.

Things come to a head when June unexpectedly goes into labour. At the same time, the band is meeting a record label to play them some of their music. June is unable to get hold of Harry – Zoe and Charlie are likewise committed to capitalising on the opportunity. Tom is AWOL. Only Dan answers the call and agrees to be with her when the baby comes. This causes Harry and the other band members to lose their shit: they have no lead guitarist or keyboardist. Instead they play a tender ballad, penned by June, which impresses the man from the record label. (Along with a cassette tape of their other songs.)

It turns out Tom missed the record label gig as he’d passed out due to excess drugs and alcohol and needed his stomach pumped. This helps confirm June’s view that this isn’t the life for her (or her child).

Harry visits June and the new baby. It’s revealed that Dan has moved in and is revelling in domestic bliss. The band is about to go on tour to promote their latest album which is charging up the charts – propelled, in part, by songs written by June. Harry challenges her: is this really all you want? The band is only where it is because of her songs. June counters that both Harry and Tom are strong song-writers in their own right and that they have the stomach for life on the road – as does Zoe – but it’s not for her. Besides, it doesn’t mean she’s going to stop writing. Harry counters that Tom is unreliable: he’s promised he won’t let his partying affect his commitment to the band, but Harry isn’t so sure. June responds that that’s his problem; not hers.

After Harry has gone, Dan double-checks with June: are you sure you’re not going to miss all that? June sings a tender song of thanks, reassuring Dan she has all she wants right here. They watch a videotape recording of Harry and the band singing June’s latest song. It sounds great and June swells with pride about her part in its creation.

The band plays one of their greatest hits as an encore.