

**Dose Of Happiness**

Dylan's body lay motionless on the sand, the evening stars were bright and to Dylan Simone represented every single one. She was beautiful, on the inside and out. She smiled at him every day as she entered the school gates where he sat, and every day his heart would skip a beat, desperately wanting to reach out and touch her soft face. The feeling never went away.

He remembered, as children they would play on the shoreline. The pitter-patter of their little feet left imprints in the sand. Only to be washed away, just like their past.

Whatever happened to the days when they would walk around on the rocky reefs, claiming each cave as their palace and making necklaces and crowns out of shells and seaweed. Hours would be lost making sandcastles with forts, eating ice creams that near enough melted as soon as they touched the sunlight and treasuring shade as their most valuable possession when the days were too hot to move.

A soft breeze that was still warm from the typical summer's day knocked Dylan back into reality. Memories were all he had left; his life otherwise filled with boredom.

Dylan's eyes wandered along the beach to the cliff where he had so many times wanted to leave his life of misery and pain for something better. What better was he wasn't sure. Maybe to hold a conversation with Simone, maybe to touch Simone's soft skin. Maybe to let Simone know how all he could think about was her, that without the glimmering hope that they would somehow break the barrier between them, he would die of heartache. Maybe to let Simone know he loved her.

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As Dylan walked home barefoot he played with the thought of himself and Simone as a couple. His heart raced and joy overcame him but he knew it would never happen that he was a dreamer, with one big dream.

The next morning Dylan woke to the sun glaring through his curtains. His thin blue sheet was scrunched at the end of his bed and his fan was still turning at a million miles an hour. The heat had affected his head and as he sat trying to overcome the dizziness he peered out of his window and saw his mum digging away at the garden. She just loved to garden and with the sweltering heat they were enduring, she was out there twice a day nurturing her 'children' with the hose.

Dylan scrambled to the kitchen where a photo frame with a picture of Simone and himself sat neatly on top of the fridge.

He often thought of forgetting all about Simone, closing that chapter of his life and starting fresh, but how could he when his own house represented a small piece of her. She was everywhere, and quite frankly, he loved it.

Dylan arrived at school with his tie loosely hung around his neck and his blonde hair falling in his eyes. He was obviously in a rush, but he arrived at school

Twenty minutes early so as to see Simone freshly revived from the weekend and in all her glory.

He sat, thinking about how much he would die for a cigarette but knew the consequence of not seeing Simone would do much more damage.

Ants formed neat lines and patterns, moving with such care and ambition, trying to go about their normal daily lives without being crushed. Dylan sighed and mumbled to himself, 'the strongest animal in the world, yet they're killed without thought.' The ants

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were something he looked at everyday as the minutes slowly progressed, until the time of 8:20am when Simone arrived with her golden curls falling gently around her face. Her cheeks were always rosy, like two of the finest peaches, and her lips were so tender and moist to look at. Dylan was waiting for the day she would arrive with a halo and silken wings. She was definitely his angel.

A car arrived out the front of the school gates and Simone hopped out with her usual beautiful smile, which just made her glow purity and goodness. Simone's mother waved at Dylan which made him feel so comfortable, she was such a familiar figure who used to bathe him, cut the crusts of his sandwich and nurture him when he cut his feet on the reefs. Karen was more than Simone's mum; she was his. Before his parents had split up they would constantly fight. Dylan's mum would pack him a little suitcase and he would stay with Simone for a couple of days. Karen always knew what to do.

Dylan waved and tried to give the warmest and most sincere smile he knew how. He wanted Karen to know how much she meant to him and how much he cared for her daughter.

Simone walked off the road and onto the footpath, Dylan cleared his throat and waited for Simone to say her usual 'hello' but her steps became slower and it looked like she was going to stop. Dylan's heart no longer belonged to him and it was beating at a rapid pace, his stomach had been overpopulated with butterflies and he felt utterly sick with fear. His hands were immediately placed in his pockets so they could fidget with his lighter and she wouldn't see, and he quickly leaned back against the wall behind him, In case his knees decided to buckle.

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Simone stopped. Her white blouse was neatly ironed with not a wrinkle in sight. Her skirt flowed to her knees and her beautifully tanned legs took their usual position of one leg on an angle in front of the other and slightly bent.

Dylan looked down at her hands and there it was, the ring he gave her on her 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was silver with a light blue stone, just like the ocean and her eyes. Simone wore it everyday and it gave Dylan the nicest feeling, that deep down she yearned to be his best friend again, when things were innocent and simple.

“Hi Dylan” Simone spoke with such freedom and she had an easiness about her. Dylan saw this as an opportunity to make his life a little better and hold a conversation.

“Hi Simone how have you been?”

“Good, good, you?”

“ Yeah I’ve been great,”

“So are you excited about the formal?” Simone’s voice turned from happy to ecstatic, Dylan could see this was an easy topic to keep her interested.

“Oh yeah, I suppose, you?” Dylan suddenly realised what had come out of his mouth, he previously had no intention of going to the school formal but he didn’t want to spoil Simone’s fun.

“Definitely! I started planning at the beginning of the year! Are you going with anybody?”

“No, I don’t want to spoil anybody’s fun. By having me as a date!”

“Oh don’t be silly you’re great fun, hey remember when we were little and I was sick so you made me a shell necklace and a jar of sand until I could visit the beach again?”

Simone giggled and looked happy as she headed towards class.

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*Of course I remember*, thought Dylan. He remembered that day like it was yesterday, his stomach no longer did flips and he felt so calm. Life was perfect!

The long day ended, and as the school bell rang, Waters Bay College burst at the seams. Teenagers scuttled in every direction, some for the bus, some for p-plated cars that would cruise the streets until late at night, and some for their desperately needed nicotine hits. Dylan joined the mass of youths and hurried towards the front gates, desperately wanting to bump into Simone.

As he walked towards his 'spot' with the sun glistening brightly and the warmth flooding his body, boys and girls of all age ran passed him in the opposite direction towards the beach with body boards, surfboards and beach towels in hand.

Dylan walked along the creek bed, willows overhanging like arms of protection and the sun creeping through the crevices of the trees. His 'spot' was amongst three willows, with lush soft grass that was like a bed of pillows. Dylan would lie amongst the grass, his schoolbag for a pillow and dream of Simone and how much she would love his spot. He took his most prized possession from his pocket, a shiny cigarette tin engraved 'eternal love', and lit up a cigarette. When Dylan's father moved away he gave him the shiny tin to put his hankies in. The tin was a present from his mother when they were young and in 'love', quite ironic Dylan thought.

Day turned to night and Dylan walked home, bag slung over his shoulder and cigarette in hand. People thought smoking was the perfect image for Dylan, an intellectual who kept to himself. Everybody knew Dylan was smart, even though he hated the attention he was

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forever getting called up on stage for awards, until he decided to be 'sick' on days that special assemblies occurred.

The smell of fish and garlic poured out of the windows as Dylan walked up the front steps of his house. He opened the door to two unfamiliar faces sitting at the dining table with his mother talking of art and upcoming exhibitions in the city.

The paintings, which adorned the house, showed Dylan's mothers love for art, she even claimed the small sunroom with light yellow walls and polished floorboards as her painting room. A fresh canvas was always leaning against the wall, waiting, while a half completed painting stood, propped on a stand.

"Is that you Dylan?"

"Yes mum"

*Who else would it be?* Thought Dylan, she only ever said that when friends were over, as if her house was just constantly full of people 'dropping in', being the socialite she was.

"Your dinner is in the oven dear, it should still be hot.

"Yeah maybe later,"

Dylan ran up the stairs before his mother could introduce him as the boy who had topped his year many years in a row, and they were *just waiting for the scholarships to be offered*. With his music at a tolerated level and his fish fed Dylan lay on his bed, soaking up that first refreshing hit of coldness from the mattress before it became warm from his body heat. The music stopped and the lapping of the waves took over. Repetition after repetition of water gently touching the sand and sucking back into the great ocean, another world. His eyes became heavy and his mind started to float amongst the clouds. The waves became faint and he fell asleep to the soft lull of Mother Nature.

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Dylan poured his mother's freshly squeezed orange juice into an enormous glass to go with his vegemite on toast, and sat in front of the television for some mind numbing cartoons. *I wonder what Simone's doing?* He suddenly lost all interest in the cartoons and planned Simone's weekend. Firstly, she would go into the city and see a cultured movie, something with sub-titles because they were her favourites, even as children Simone always wanted something that had sub-titles when Dylan wanted the latest teenage mutant ninja turtles video. Then she would go to a quaint bookshop that sold, old, authentic novels with leather covers or ribbons to tie together and read while sitting in the corner of a café. Then she would sleep over a friend's house and talk about what they want to do next year, before going over last minute preparations for the formal on Monday night. Then on Sunday they would laze about and get really excited about the formal and their dresses and their hair and their make-up and their jewellery.

Dylan dreamt of how beautiful Simone would look at the formal, like a princess out of a fairytale. He was lucky his mother was so excited about the formal that he actually had a suit for his last minute decision to go.

He was going to talk to her he decided, the formal was a good a place as anywhere everyone would talk to everyone and he and Simone could talk about the great night. Dylan knew he wouldn't enjoy himself unless he was talking to Simone. They could forget about everything and reminisce of the past.

Dylan awoke from a deep sleep automatically. His eyes looked around the room as if searching for something, and then he realised, it was the day of the formal. His stomach

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churned with excitement and worry at the same time and as he peered out of his bedroom window deep dark clouds engulfed the ocean.

“This can’t be good,” he muttered to himself

Dylan started to think, was this a sign of the bad night ahead? Would the night end in disaster? Or would Simone glow with beauty against the dark, beautiful sky?

The day progressed slowly and all Dylan could think about was the night ahead, Simone in her formal gown laughing and smiling, having the time of her life. Dylan hoped with him.

“Dylan”

“Yes mum?” Dylan yelled from his room,

“Can you come downstairs for a moment?”

Dylan ran downstairs and almost pushed over Simone who was standing at the bottom of the staircase,

“Simone?” Dylan couldn’t believe his eyes, the girl who controlled his dreams, who determined whether or not he did his maths homework, was standing in his house!

“Hi Dylan”

“Hi, what are you up to?”

“I was on my way to the hairdressers and I thought I’d just drop in to see if you were coming tonight.”

“Yeah, mum’s bought my suit, too late to back out now”

Simone gave a laugh, but all Dylan could think about was how lucky he was to have Simone standing so close that he could smell her perfume.

“Well I can’t stay I have an appointment, but I’ll see you tonight?”



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“For sure”

“Ok, bye Dylan”

“Bye Simone”

Dylan ran to his room, he was so excited! All he could think about was Simone and how great the night ahead would be.

Dylan arrived at the surfclub where his formal was being held. Fairy lights covered the gazebo and people were everywhere, wearing beautiful gowns and tuxedos. Dylan remembered his plan to speak to Simone and he thought that would be easy considering Simone’s little visit that afternoon. His eyes wandered around the outside of the surfclub and the beach when he spotted her.

Simone stood with a group of friends in a gown that made her look like Cinderella. She wore a strapless baby blue dress that bounced out at her hips. Amongst her soft curls was a silver tiara that made her look like a fairytale. Dylan dreamt of Simone like that everynight, as a beautiful princess but she looked so much more beautiful and delicate in real life.

He noticed Simone looking over at him and as she started to walk over towards him she looked as if she was floating like an angel.

“Hi Dylan,” Simone looked the happiest she had ever been, as if the night was planned just for her.

“Hi Simone” Dylan wanted to tell her how beautiful she looked but he knew those words would never come out of his mouth.

“Isn’t this exciting? I can’t believe this is it, the end of school.”

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Dylan pulled out a cigarette from his silver tin, which he had polished for the special occasion and lit up.

“Wow, you’ve still got your dad’s tin. Could I have one?”

“What? When did you start smoking?” Dylan was astonished, Simone had an innocence about her, she didn’t smoke.

“I don’t usually, but I wouldn’t mind one if that’s ok?”

“Sure”

“So,” Simone paused as she lit her cigarette, “Are you going to the afterparty?”

“Probably not. I’ve got heaps to do tomorrow,” Dylan knew as soon as the words came out of his mouth how stupid it sounded, but he knew Simone wouldn’t say anything

“Well if you do decide to come it’s at the beach near Waters Point. Everyone will be there.”

Simone finished her cigarette and held out her hand, “Shall we go in?”

Dylan was having the best night of his life! Not only had he succeeded with his plan of talking to Simone, but he was making an entrance with her!

“I moved you to my table seeing as you didn’t come with anyone.”

“Thanks” replied Dylan.

As the night progressed Dylan was thoroughly enjoying himself, the hours passed by and he didn’t even realise it was time to go.

“Hey Dylan what do you say, join me at the afterparty?” Simone tried to persuade him

Dylan couldn’t give up a chance like this. He had expected the night to drag on but instead he had been seated next to Simone and the night had flown by.

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“Sure, you know, tonight was a lot better than I thought it would be” Dylan couldn’t believe he had said that but he felt young again. He felt like he could tell Simone anything and she would understand.

Walking to the beach they walked alone talking of school and what they wanted to do next year.

“Do you think you’ll stay in Waters Bay next year?” Asked Simone

“Probably not, I think I’ll move to the city how about you?”

“I’m definitely moving to the city next year. We should move in together!”

Dylan thought how perfect it would be, “Hi Simone” Dylan turned around to see Hayden Kulser, Simone’s ex-boyfriend, interrupting their conversation.

“Hi Hayden” replied Simone.

Dylan noticed a look of pain on Simone’s face. She didn’t want Hayden to be there and either did Dylan.

“You headed to the after party?” Asked Hayden

“Yep”

“Well I’ll see you there, see ya.”

Dylan knew Hayden was a touchy subject but he wanted Simone to know he was there for her.

“How long did you guys go out for?”

“A year and a half, but it didn’t work out”

“Simone if you ever want to tell someone,”

“I know” interrupted Simone softly

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Their eyes met and there was a silent agreement that they could now share their secrets with one another.

At the after party Dylan sat on the logs around the bon-fire while others huddled around in small groups, more and more bottles of alcohol accumulated around the over-flowing bins and everyone was becoming loud and enjoying their new found freedom. Dylan smoked cigarettes and watched everyone, like he was on the outside looking in. Boys and girls flirting trying to get attention, laughing at stupid things and Simone, his main attraction, having fun.

“Hey Dylan man, you’re sober, what’s going on?” Chris, the schools known drug dealer, had offered Dylan ecstasy a few times before and Dylan had always made it clear he wasn’t interested but recently Dylan had wanted to try it and why not? School was officially over.

“Hey John, how you going?”

“Not too bad, listen, I was just wondering if you knew anybody after some E’s, I’ve got two I wanna get rid of.”

“How much?” Asked Dylan curiously

“Usually \$80 for both but I’ll make it \$50 for both cause I need to sell ‘em”

“Ok I’ll buy them.”

Dylan couldn’t believe what he had just done, he only occasionally smoked pot, and he had just bought two ecstasy tablets. He took one out of the plastic satchel and popped it in his mouth. At first he felt nothing and wanted to find John for a refund, but after about half an hour the effects began. Suddenly Dylan felt anxious and sitting around the bonfire

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felt wrong, he leapt up and as he rose to his feet so did his mood, happiness, excitement and love ran through his body and he really wanted to find Simone.

People were everywhere and he could feel the heat from their bodies transfer into his. He was all warm and tingling inside.

“Thankyou!” Dylan suddenly yelled, people turned to see what he was doing and he quickly knocked himself back into reality for a split-second. Why had he said thankyou? Was it because for the first time he was going to be open with Simone, or more importantly he had the courage to be open with Simone, or was it because for the first time since his friendship with Simone had drifted apart he was full of happiness, as if all his Christmases’ had come at once. His body was overwhelmed with a sense of excitement and then he remembered Simone. Pushing through the crowds of people Dylan felt unstoppable and finding Simone was the most important thing in the world. Then he spotted her.

Simone was sitting amongst a group of friends and laughing freely as she talked to Hayden. She looked so happy and then Dylan watched as Hayden leant over and kissed her on the mouth before moving closer and putting his arms around her.

Dylan felt his throat close up and his heart being ripped out of his chest as he saw the one girl he had ever known and loved being man-handled as if she was a piece of meat.

Within seconds Dylan’s mood went from an ultimate high to the lowest he had ever been, Dylan wanted nothing but to die. His life felt meaningless and he began to walk home.

For days afterwards Dylan lay in his room and felt the effects of the pill he had taken at the party. He was in a deep state of depression and all he could think about was Simone

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and Hayden kissing. He hated himself and wanted the pain to wash away. All Dylan wanted was to end the misery and the pain that pounded in his head and crushed his heart that repeatedly told him to end it, end it all.

The small blue tablet which he kept tucked away in his wallet stared him in the face and he wanted that feeling of happiness back. He wanted to forget about suicide and Simone and be happy. He shoved the tablet in his mouth and walked to his spot so that when he began to feel anxious he could walk it off.

Walking past the surfclub memories came flooding back of how beautiful Simone had looked and the close bond they had shared that night. He had pushed aside his fear of rejection and told Simone things he thought he never would.

When Dylan reached his spot his mind was focused on Simone “Stop, stop it” Dylan slapped his head, he didn’t want to be thinking of Simone. He wanted to be happy. He wanted to forget all his problems, including Simone. Where was this sense of fulfillment and joy that previously filled his body and made him the happiest he had ever been?

Dylan began acting robotically; he took a cigarette out of his tin, put it in his mouth, lit it, took some paper and a pen out of his mouth and began to write.

*Simone don't do this to me you're the one I want. I need you, you are special. My world revolves around your existence. Why don't you love me the way I love you? You broke my heart when you kissed him. I thought we were getting close. My heart is shattered, I will never be the same. Without you I want to die, Simone help me. If you stay with him I will have to go. I will have to leave this world, I will have to leave my shiny cigarette tin. I will have to leave my spot, I will have to leave my mum and I will have to leave you.*

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Then as quickly as he began writing he stopped, Dylan didn't feel well, his stomach started churning, his head thumped and his eyes started to blur. He lay down and tried to sleep. He wanted the awful experience to be over and as he started to imagine the lapping waves calming his soul he could feel the water cooling his insides, a rock absorbing the sea.

Hours passed and Dylan woke up to darkness. He had no idea where he was and felt completely disorientated. As he walked home everything felt strange. The streetlights shone brightly in his eyes and everyone doing their late-night shopping seemed to be staring at him. Dylan felt alienated, what was once him looking in at the rest of the world now seemed to be the world looking in on him.

"Are you ok?" Asked Dylan's mum as he entered the house

"I'm fine, just a bit sick" Dylan snapped back and ran to his room

"Oh by the way Simone dropped by earlier this afternoon" Dylan's mum yelled back after him

Dylan stopped, what had Simone bothered to come around for?

"Did she say why?"

"No not really, she said you could call her if you wanted"

"Maybe later," and with that Dylan went to his room and slept for what felt like an eternity.

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As weeks passed, Dylan found it harder to become happy. Ecstasy was a brief experience that made him forget all his problems but he would soon remember Simone and start writing letters to her about how much he wanted her friendship.

Dylan desperately wanted happiness. He was stuck in a deep dark hole surrounded by things that made him want to be gone. Letter after letter he would write to Simone and let her know how much he wanted her. He wanted the bond that they shared as children and he was finally realising that Simone would never feel the way he felt about her.

After visiting John and buying three ecstasy tablets Dylan walked to his spot. When he saw Simone sitting at a bus stop he wanted to talk to her. He wanted to let her know, without her, he felt hopeless and that she was stupid for kissing Hayden, when she knew it would end in disaster and she would be left hurt. But he kept walking. He didn't want Simone to see him like that. When he arrived at his 'spot', he swallowed two of the ecstasy tablets and stared at the stars. The warm summer night breeze calmed Dylan and he felt at total ease. He realised that Simone and himself would never be how he wanted and so he wrote one last letter to her.

*Dear Simone,*

*You will proberly never get this letter, but I want you to know I love you in every way possible. From the day we drifted apart, I have missed the bond that we use to share. You were someone I could always rely on and you always understood, even when my Dad left home. Simone, I want you to know that you will forever hold a place in my heart, and although I realise you do not feel how I feel about you, I truly love you and always will.*

*Goodbye Simone,*

*I love you,*



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### *Dylan*

Dylan swallowed his last ecstasy tablet, he felt at peace and everything finally felt perfect. Dylan stood up and made his way to Water's Point, once there he sat and watched the moon glowing over the sea, peace and tranquility surrounded him. Dylan was finally happy.

He took his last cigarette out of his tin and put his letter to Simone in it. Then he placed the tin in his jacket pocket and zipped it up. After he finished his cigarette Dylan stood up. Below him were the rocky reefs that shone brightly from the moon and sparkling stars, where he had played with Simone on hot summer days when they were innocent children.

"I love you Simone."

Then he jumped, jumped to freedom, leaving behind his cigarette tin, his spot and Simone. Dylan hit the ground. His neck snapped. It was all over. He had left the world feeling happy and calm.

Simone sat completely still. Every single muscle in her body wanted to let go but she had to be strong. Her Dad put his hand on his shoulder, she supposed he was trying to say sorry for what she was feeling, but he had lost the right to touch her or be a part of her life when he touched her in those places many years ago.

She stood up. Her eyes became an ocean of tears, and as she saw Dylan's Mum in the front row weeping. She wanted to let it all go, to buckle to the ground and have Dylan put his familiar arms around her but that couldn't happen. He was gone and he was never coming back. Simone cleared her throat.

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‘Dylan and I met in kindergarten, when everyone was teasing me because I had to wear glasses temporarily and he stood up for me. I felt our bond even then.’ Simone gave a sweet smile as she remembered how much fun they had together and a tear rolled down her cheek.

‘Dylan was the most loving and considerate person I have met. He would always know what to say, and when I was upset I knew he would always understand. He truly was someone special and I am eternally grateful that I was able to share that with him, he was my soul mate.’

Simone walked back to her seat, her body was numb. After the funeral, people gathered at the Surf Club.

‘Simone.’ Simone faded out of her own world and saw Dylan’s mother standing in front of her.

‘O, Hi Rose.’

“Simone I just wanted to let you know that what you said this morning was beautiful, Dylan really loved you, oh, and this is for you.” Rose searched through her handbag,

“Here, he would have wanted you to have this and there’s something inside for you.”

“Thankyou, you don’t know how much this means to me,” Simone ran her fingers over the shiny cigarette tin that was marked *eternal love*.

“You’re who he would have wanted to have it, anyway dear, I must talk to my sister, I’ll see you again.”

“Bye,” Simone kept running her fingers over the beautiful tin, which mirrored her reflection.

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Simone walked along the beach, the waves were smooth and majestic carved by the direction of the wind. She opened Dylan's cigarette tin and unfolded the paper which lay inside, she began to read.

*Dear Simone,*

*You will probably never get this letter, but I want you to know that I love you in every way possible....*

Simone weeped and wished Dylan knew that she too loved him, and that she desperately wanted his warm comforting touch to let her know that everything would be ok.

*...Simone I want you to know that you will forever hold a place in my heart...I truly love you and always will.*

Simone sat staring at the calming waves and watched the sun sink into the water as the stars began to appear. She was motionless, Dylan was gone, what now? All of those times she had wanted to tell Dylan exactly how she felt and how she cherished every 'hello' and passing smile, it was all gone. She took her leather diary out of her bag and began to write.

*Dylan I wish you hadn't left me here you were the only one who understood me. Dad has been trying really hard lately, I think he actually realises what he did was wrong, but there's too much pain. It hurts Dylan, it really hurts, you're gone and I'm left with nobody. Mum has no idea what dad used to do to me and Hayden, well; it seems all he wants to do is keep breaking my heart. I wish it was you I kissed at the afterparty but you disappeared. I thought it was your subtle way of not wanting to talk to me. What happened to us? We used to be by each other's side constantly when we were younger. Then dad started touching me, we started highschool and it seemed you no longer wanted*

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*to know me, just when I needed you the most. But I don't blame you, you were put on this earth for me to love.*

*Wherever I go and whatever I do I want you to know that, you to, will hold a place in my heart and I will forever love you. You were special, really special and I will never forget you. I love you Dylan, your soulmate, Simone.*

Simone sat for hours staring at the stars her eyes had never hurt so badly and her heart ached as she realised Dylan was really gone. She couldn't walk over to his house and say hello, she couldn't bump into him in the street and she had nobody who would understand her, really understand her, like Dylan did.

Sitting there Simone reminisced about her past with Dylan. Collecting shells on summer afternoons, painting pictures on rainy days at Dylan's house, eating fish and chips on warm balmy nights and sleeping at Dylan's house. Sharing the same bed made her feel so safe. Even though they were children Simone knew no harm could come to her when Dylan was around. Hours passed and Simone watched as the sun started to glisten over the water, she had sat for hours staring at the sky and thinking about Dylan but she felt no differently. She was still numb and the pain felt like it would never go away.

Walking home in the early hours of the morning Simone noticed a small florist opening and walked inside to the aroma of fresh flowers. A beautiful bunch of yellow daffodils wrapped in purple paper stood out and she immediately bought them.

"These are for Dylan" she mumbled, for the first time since Dylan's death Simone was smiling, she felt like she was doing the right thing. The flowers were a sign that she shouldn't dwell on Dylan's death. Something told her that Dylan was happy, that everything would be alright and whilst she kept walking, tears pricking her eyes, she

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believed it. She believed that life would go on, that Dylan would be forever looking over her and one day the pain would go away. One day she would wake up and think of Dylan and feel good inside, without an inch of pain in her heart.

Simone walked along the creek bed by her house until she reached three willow trees where she would often see Dylan from her bedroom window. She knew this place was special to him and as she sat down amongst the soft grass with the sun filling her body with warmth and the water trickling by, she knew why, it was his own little paradise. She lay there for a few hours drifting in and out of a peaceful sleep whilst dreaming about Dylan and as she got up to go home she left the yellow daffodils.

“For you,” she whispered as she propped them up against one of the willow trees.

Everything was complete Simone was going to be alright and she knew it. She would never stop loving Dylan but something in her heart told her that was ok. As she looked back at the yellow daffodils with Dylan’s cigarette tin in her hand she blew a kiss and walked away.

Away from the hatred and torment caused by her father, away from the heartache caused by Hayden and away from the sadness and pain she felt for Dylan. Simone felt love; something she had only ever experienced for him and it was Dylan she had to thank.

## **Reflection Statement**

On choosing my major work I thought it was appropriate to do a short story, due to my passion for writing. Throughout my story description is more apparent than dialogue which was useful in my particular scenario of youths and drugs because it allowed me to give an insight of the characters' mentality to the reader.

The purpose of me doing a short story was to show the effects of drugs and the deep impact they can have, not only on the user, but also on surrounding family and friends. I aimed was to demolish any stereotypical ideas that drugs have social classes, to make people alert and recognise the harsh reality that poverty does exist amongst us and society needs to stop ignoring it. I wanted people to come away and think about the truth behind today's youth concerning drugs, that is not only a problem but rapidly becoming a culture that I wanted to expose.

As my work progressed and I became more aware of the direct path it would follow, I incorporated depression and suicide, which after extensive research I realised played a major role in the portrayal of my main character, Dylan, and his addiction with drugs.

The audience I intended to aim my major work at was the youth of today. This was made possible, because they can relate to the characters and the use of drugs apparent throughout the narrative and today's society.

Dealing with the three main themes, drugs, depression and suicide, I compiled research through various resources such as the Internet, magazine articles, music, visual texts, movies, documents and books, both fiction and non-fiction. Apart from gathering information for the content of my story I also reviewed books and videos on how to write a short story and creative writing as a whole.

Through the Internet I collected real accounts of ecstasy users and information about the positive and negative effects of the drug, the main web site my research was associated with was [www.ecstasy.org](http://www.ecstasy.org). This Web site was a benefit in helping me understand what I needed to know about drugs. Again, through the Internet, I found web sites dedicated to depression and suicide that gave me an

insight into the possible warning signs and causes associated with depression and suicide. This research was necessary for the portrayal of my main character. Movies and documentaries such as Trainspotting and Kids with drug related issues, gave me different perspectives to look at and helped my understanding of what themes and messages I wanted to put forward through my characters and their emotions.

Trainspotting familiarised me with different surroundings and societies but was not what I wanted to incorporate.

Two resourceful books were Ruby and the Stone Age Diet (fiction) and Anna's Story (non-fiction). Ruby and the Stone Age Diet, is a book based around two squatters who take whatever drug comes their way.

The effects of the drugs they took, and the close bond the two friends shared was helpful in my research. From that, I could relate what Dylan the main character felt for Simone, in terms of their friendship.

Anna's Story gave a lot of factual information about ecstasy and contained journal entries, which was a crucial turning point for the plans of my story. I then decided to add letters from Dylan, on ecstasy, to Simone that would give the reader a more elaborate understanding of Dylan and his love for Simone. I also decided to include Simone writing in her journal, because there were key moments and incidents that needed to be explained but not through dialogue or description.

Creative Writing a Practical Guide, by Julia Caserton, brought to life my ambitions of what I wanted to do with description. The book helped me with the more technical angle of my story, such as bringing description to life through people, places and objects, making a short story, developing a narrative and reaching an audience. This book was influential in the shaping of my story, and I found it very resourceful.

Creative Writing, by Box Hill College of Technical and Further Education, is a video that interviews three authors, Hazel Edwards, Josie Stainsby Arnold and Frank Wilmot. This video was not as resourceful as I expected but it had a few good points such as brainstorming your ideas, getting an idea and arranging it

through trial and error, and as Frank Wilmot suggests, 'take the journalistic approach with that element of research and listen, think and observe'. From the very beginning of my major work, there was always the concept of drugs, and I was aware of what I intended to do with my major work and what outcomes I wanted to achieve. Working with various themes such as love, depression and possibly suicide, I was able to relate some of them to my drug theme.

The structure of my story was planned from the beginning with two characters' perspectives in the third person that went through and explained particular moments or problems either through the other character from their perspective, or flashbacks from the past. Problems that were not resolved, opened up into issues or moments.

Texts such as books, music and visual texts were what I initially focused on in the beginning process of structuring my story. Fictional books helped to create different angles that I could look at whilst non-fiction books gave me relevant information on drugs, depression, suicide and how to go about writing a short story.

It was obvious that if my intended audience were to be the youths of today, the technicality of my language would have to be left in simple terms so that teens could relate to it. I found that through description I was able to relate scenarios, thoughts and ideas. Familiarising the reader and giving a better understanding than if I were to have a more technical approach in my use of language and dialogue. Otherwise, it would not let the reader know what the characters were feeling and thinking in relation to themselves.

'...conjure up the spirit that would give life and breath to description of places.'

This quote from Julia Caserton inspired me to use nature in a metaphorical sense that would allow me to compare it with emotions. My preference for description rather than dialogue meant I could also portray different characteristics with different surroundings. As with Dylan, the main character, and his 'spot', I was able to share a close bond between himself and a secluded spot nestled amongst three willow trees.



As with many short stories that tend to unravel with a strong focus all the way through, my major work was no exception with a drug theme carried all the way through. The conventions of my story were very much based around time, so I linked phases around this, including flashbacks. On writing the story around the main character, I wanted a connection with the reader that dealt with the intensity of feelings and thoughts and the fragility of young people and how appearances can be deceptive. This can be seen through both characters, Dylan with his visage of being smart and although a 'loner', nobody suspects that he is on the verge of suicide. Simone appears to be bubbly and outgoing, but the reader can see that she was molested by her father as a child, which is the reason for her holding a lot of pain and resentment bottled up.

In the early stages of my major work, many of my intentions were different to what resulted as the final product. Various concepts were changed or discarded in order to make room for new and improved ideas. Originally I had planned for Simone, the other main character, to commit suicide devastated by Dylan's death and the anger and frustration felt from being molested by her father. But I did not want to overly dramatise the story or overwhelm the reader with an unbelievable story line.

Other concepts which I initially intended to use was having the story based only on Dylan's perspective. But after much consideration, I came to the conclusion that Simone's perspective was also needed to give the reader an insight of her mentality and to verify key issues which would otherwise be left unresolved.

One of the most challenging issues I found was constantly wondering if I was including enough dialogue in my story and if I should possibly use more dialogue and less description. This was one concept I could not decide upon until I realised that to depict Dylan and Simone as I wanted them to be viewed, would mean using more description in a means of portraying their mentality in a light which would otherwise not be seen through dialogue.

In changing my original concepts, I believe there is a better understanding of the themes I wanted to pursue and put forward. In relation to my intended audience, I would say that it appeals more to the younger generation than it possibly would

have because it relates to the raw emotions that all teens experience, with one key feature being description rather than dialogue.

Music was a large inspiration in stimulating my creativity, and one Australian band in particular, Powderfinger not only motivated and inspired my writing, but the lyrics related to the mood I was trying to create and Dylan's mentality.

In researching many different elements throughout the year to create a short story as my major work, I not only found it enjoyable but an interesting experience. I was able to delve into issues that are common in today's society and give on perspective of the harsh reality accompanied with drugs.