

STORY ONE:

“WHO AM I”

STORY—“WHO AM I”

“Good evening Dara.” said Dr John Kawasky.

He was dressed in an elegant suit which covered his old but refined features. His office, although located on the twenty third storey of one of the most auspicious buildings in Sydney, was lacking tasteful decor. John had become quite obsessed with Dara’s case. He had worked on many successful cases throughout his time with war veterans, burnt children and rape survivors. Every case had been serious and intriguing. This case, however, was a challenge.

“Dara...multiple personality disorder is a very serious case. We need to find out when and why it started in order to cure it...”.

Dr John Kawasky wiped his spectacles onto his suit. He had a slow manner and when he spoke, it was as if he were out of breath.

“Now...tell me about your time in prison” He thought of the terrible effects prison may have had on the disorder.

“Everything that you can remember...”

Dara looked around the dark and spacious room and shuddered. The shabby office was decorated with venerable magazines and net curtains that needed laundering. There was an odor of dust coming from the remarkably ancient novels on the bookshelf. Dara thought it was unusual that such an unpleasant atmosphere was present in such a prominent building. She tried to remember her days in prison.

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I carved a neat white line on the wall of my cell with a rock I found while working in the garden of Mulawa Correctional Centre. The five weeks I had spent as an inmate had aroused a deep appreciation of the outside world. I turned away from the wall to view the surroundings. Parramatta River was unusually clean and peaceful and reflected the dark, smoky sky. The breeze gently stirred the slender trees. Its sound, like a soft whistle, was overshadowed by the noise of the busy, morning streets. Tiny dark figures with briefcases were rushing about disturbing the serene image. Inside was different. Each cell at Mulawa was about 2.5 by 3.5 meters. In my cell there was a toilet stand, a shower cubicle and a bunker bed with a fitted wall table and a mirror. No one was in a rush.

My cellmate, Vergy, was writing 'shout outs' for the monthly prison magazine 'Shadow's Edge'. Just like me, she was in for murder. Vergy was one of the many people in Mulawa that had become addicted to drugs.

I had confronted Vergy about her addiction during my first few weeks at Mulawa. She told me that she had started using drugs in prison because she wanted to fit in. Her addiction was *uncontrollable* as she complained:

"I guess when I decide to use drugs again, or relapse, the first thought that repeatedly runs through my head is the euphoric effects I get from heroin. I tell myself that I'll be able to control my addiction and that one shot will be okay. I know that from past experiences one shot leads to a habit but at the time of relapse my head blocks out that thought."

Despite our differences, Vergy was my only comfort in prison, we normally spoke to each other about our crimes and our past. She is the only one that can understand me.

“Oh Dara...before I forget...I put your mail under your pillow...didn't want anyone walking through to read it...” Vergy said and stopped writing to watch me open the letter.

I reached for the envelope under my pillow. It was marked with several stamps which meant that it was from overseas.

“Who's it from...?” Vergy asked curiously.

“It's from Bulgaria...must be mum...” I said and opened it carefully. Inside was a small piece of paper with only a single sentence.

“Read it !!” Vergy yelled

“*Mila Dara*

*Nadiavam ce che scoro shte izlizash ot zatvora. Molatice razberi zashto niskam da ce vidime dokato ne izleznesh. Poghalavem ti mnogo shtastie e ospeh.*

*Ot Maika”*

“What does that mean.... ?” Vergy asked.

“She says... she hopes I understand why she refuses to visit me...” I said.

“Oh Dara...would you understand your daughter if she killed her father”

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Dr John Kawasky adjusted his spectacles. He had conducted extensive research before he agreed to take the case. He read that the second personality can hear the conversations of the first personality. *I must be careful* he thought.

“Dara...is that all you can remember” He said.

“...Ohh I’m sorry” Dara said.

“You don’t have to apologize”

“Ohh...sorry”

“It’s alright Dara” He said.

“...I can’t remember anything else...”. Tears emerged in Dara’s eyes.

As she turned away to stare out the window, John observed her elegant features. Her long black hair had been plaited away from her rosy cheekbones that stood high on her face. Her worn blue uniform hung loose on her thin body like a fitted sheet. *It matches her eyes*, John thought.

“That will do for today Dara...” He said.

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Phyllis’ blue eyes danced around the shabby office as she waited for Dr John Kawasky to make his entrance.

She recited her favorite piece of poetry as he walked in.

You can not keep me shut

I run on diesel.

You can not trick me

For I am Weasel.

Dr John Kawasky sat across from Phyllis, greeting her with a smile.

“Good afternoon Phyllis”, he said.

Phyllis nodded. *I must be careful*, he thought.

“Phyllis...please try to understand that I’m here to help you” he said.

“Bullshit !!” she yelled jumping to her feet. “You’re trying to get rid of me !!”

“That’s not true” he said.

Phyllis grabbed the magazines on the table and threw them at his face. John took a step back and adjusted his glasses.

“You’re trying to get rid of me !!” she screamed.

“I just want to talk to you...but you need to calm down first” he spoke faster than usual.

Phyllis sat down rapidly and crossed her legs.

“You’re trying to get rid of me” she said, shaking her head.

“I’m sorry you feel that way” he replied.

“You think I’m the second personality...you’re here to help Dara”

“I’m here to help you and Dara” he corrected. “I need to know when you emerged”

“I didn’t emerge” she said coldly. “I have always been here”.

John wondered whether Phyllis was stubborn or confused. He had previously read that in such a disorder the second personality will remember the events that only the first personality has experienced.

*This will take some time*, he thought *I need to warm her up first*.

He wiped his spectacles onto his suit.

“Tell me...how was prison for you ?” he asked.

“...It was hard...”. Phyllis replied. “...very hard...”.

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Mulawa's west wing consisted of three different groups, there were the 'Lesos', the 'Wogs' and the 'Skips'. I sat with the 'Wogs' as I was, after all, European.

I was well accepted into the group, not only because of my race but I discovered that I had a lot in common with the rest of the girls. We all enjoyed the same jokes and understood each other's crimes.

My group had been in numerous conflicts with the 'Skips'. Vergy told me about the constant physical fights that would occur in Mulawa. The most common places were the laundry room and the Gencor unit. The 'Skips' would always attack someone in a gang of four or five, yelling out "Damn wog !!" or "Damn Lesbian !!". They left their victims bleeding and breathless. Vergy explained that most of her scars had been their work. She told me that they used sweeping brooms or broken glass as weapons.

Although these fights were obvious to the wardens, they couldn't do anything to stop them. No one would report. It was an oral conduct between the three groups, despite our disputes. Reporting a fight would encourage an even bigger conflict which I was told could lead to murder. As a result, all the inmates kept their problems away from the authorities. From the moment we enter prison we are taught the basic rules. Silence was one of them. Anyone who breaches this rule becomes an alien in prison.

I was doing my laundry when four girls belonging to the "Skips" walked in. One of them closed the door while the other three surrounded me.

*“Don’t you know better than to be alone wog” One of them said.*

She had blonde hair and yellow teeth.

*“She’s new”* Another one replied. They were coming closer towards me.

*“Keep guard at the door Annie...we’ll take care of this bitch”* The blonde haired one said.

She grabbed my wrist and squeezed so tightly that I felt like a million sharp needles had stung my hand.

*“Aaagghhh !!”* I screamed. My hand grew numb.

*“Damn Wog !!”* She pulled my hair back and took out a piece of glass.

*“Now every time you look at your face you’ll be reminded of who runs this fucking place”*

She dug the glass into my cheek and dragged it down to my neck. I saw my blood dripping on my clothes. I felt faint. They thrust me onto the ground.

The blonde haired girl neared my face.

*“You report this and you’re dead”* She whispered.

Her breath was almost as bad as the pain I felt in my cheek. The other two girls bent down and ripped my clothes. They punched me in the stomach so hard that I felt like large cannons were fired at me.

*“I can’t breathe”* I choked. Blood drooled down the side of my chin.

*“...Help...”* I whispered. No one came. I wept.

The blonde haired girl yelled something out to the other two but I could not hear.

As I looked up at them she grabbed my head and banged it violently on the concrete floor. I felt my final blow.



I opened my eyes to see a white blurry figure peering at me.

“...What happened...?” I asked.

“That’s what we want to know” The lady said.

I blinked several times and tried to match a face to the sweet voice I was hearing.

“You fainted darling...” The nurse said. “One of the wardens found you sprawled on the ground in the laundry room...how are you feeling”

“...Dizzy...” I complained.

“That’s the pain killers Dara” She said.

“...My name...is Phyllis”

“Ohhh...you must have hit your head harder than I thought” She said. “You rest now...later the police want to ask you some questions”.

Prison was hard after my first fight. I was expected to protect the inmate’s code. I was also expected to report my incident. I was in too much pain to think of a story.

I knew, from what Vergy told me, that if I were to ‘rat’ on the ‘Skips’ I would become *an outcast to my own group*.

I told the authorities that I had accidentally scratched my face and that the blood had made me faint. That was the end of the investigation.

Justice was not served.

Discrimination wasn’t the only problem in Mulawa. Drugs were another major issue. I was often confronted with Vergy’s breakdowns, which would occur after she had passed a week without heroin.

Once she experienced the intake, she told me she felt strong and satisfied. I soon realized that it was not difficult to acquire drugs in prison. They were usually sneaked in by visitors and sometimes even by the wardens themselves.

Vergy told me:

“If you want something, you get it. Not even this place can stop you”

It certainly had not stopped Vergy.

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Dr John Kawasky nodded his head slowly.

“Not bad for a prison story...ey ?” Phyllis asked.

“I think it’s more serious than that Phyllis” he replied earnestly.

“...What would you know...?” She replied coldly. “You’ve been through nothing”.

“I’m only trying to help you” he said

“...Then let me go !” she yelled.

*I must go easy on her, John thought. This must have started before prison.*

“Very well...we’ll speak again next week” he said.

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Dara was biting her fingernails as she waited for Dr Kawasky to make his entrance.

“Good morning Dara...how are you feeling today...” he said as he entered.

“...alright I guess...I remember some more stuff about prison...” she said.

“That’s alright...prison wasn’t the trigger...” he replied.

“...well...what was...I mean...when did this start ?” she asked.

“That’s what we’re going to find out...”

“Didn’t...didn’t Phyllis tell you...?” she asked.

*I must be careful, Phyllis can heard every word,* he thought.

“She’ll tell me when she’s ready...in the meantime... I want you to try and remember....”

“...Alright...”

“Dara...you said your mother never visited you in prison ?”

“No...when I...” she hesitated. “When my father died...she went back to Bulgaria”.

“Would you say you were close to your mother ?” he asked

“...I guess...” she replied avoiding his eyes.

“You guess...?”

“Well...after dad left... we grew close...I don’t know why she never came to see me...why she went back to Bulgaria” she said.

“Could it be the issue with your father ?” he asked.

“Well...yeah...but I don’t remember...and I didn’t mean...” She shook her head.

“No one is blaming you...or Phyllis...” he said. “I’m here to help”

“...Okay...” she said

“Now...tell me about your childhood” he said.

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“Dara... *berzo*... we’re gonna be late” Mum yelled.

“Coming *mama*...” I replied.

I rushed down the stairs and met my mother at the doorway. She looked so elegant that her face betrayed the darkness of nightmares. She wore a red suit which stood nicely against her dark skin.

“Your dad’s plane has landed early”. She said. “We must hurry !”

At five years old I still didn’t know my father. My *nana* told me that he works in Iraq as an engineer to escape the discrimination from the communism in Bulgaria.

He would say:

“Only the supporters of communism could earn a decent wage”.

My dad was waiting outside the airport by the time we arrived. I could not recognize him.

“*Kade beshe*...!!” He yelled angrily.

“*Izviniavay*... sorry” Mum said.

He walked past my mum and approached me steadily. He looked much bigger than I remembered.

“*Zdravo Dara*” He said and bent down to hug me.

During the ride home my parents were extremely quiet. It was as if my dad had never left. His arrival was not celebrated and the next day they immediately went back to work.

I spent most of my time in the care of my grandparents. *Nana* is the most traditional person that I have ever met. She celebrates every Bulgarian tradition. My favorite is the first day of Spring which is celebrated during March.

*Nana* would dress me in red and white clothing and take me to the public festivals. She told me that the colors were to honor the arrival of spring.

Growing up with my grandparents, I knew that something was terribly wrong with the way my parents acted. I could not figure out where I went wrong.

When I was eight years old, communism in Bulgaria had become less strict and my family acquired a permanent visa for Australia. I was sent to school straight away without speaking a word of English. It was horrible. I could not talk to anyone. Not even my parents. They too, had to work and attend English classes at the same time.

I found it extremely difficult to cope with school and understand my teachers. My parents would come home late at night, too tired to see me. I lost track of all traditions.

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John nodded his head as he wrote on his pad. He looked up at *Dara*.

“Is that all you can remember about your father?” he asked.

“... Well I... like I said... I didn't see him much”

“What about your mother... you said you grew close to her”

“I did... later... when dad left...” *Dara* looked down at her feet

“*Dara*... do you remember why your father left?”

*Dara* gave a sigh. Her blue eyes circled the room in sadness.

“He... he just left...” She said. “I don't know why...”

*Dara* fidgeted with her necklace.

*This isn't helping, I need to talk to Phyllis* John thought.

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“Good afternoon Phyllis ” John said.

“How was your chat with Dara” She asked.

“It went well...we spoke about her childhood”.

*But you already know that* he thought.

“...Dara didn't help you much did she ?” she asked

“What do you mean...”

“Didn't tell you why Ivan left...I didn't think she would”

“She can't remember” he said.

“Bullshit !!” Phyllis shook her head. “She chose to block it out...just like prison”

*That's why you emerged* John thought. *To help her deal with it.*

“Phyllis...can you remember what happened...?” He asked.

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I never slept until my parents came home. Gina was the first one to return. Sometimes she would cook dinner for me. That's the only time we spoke.

Ivan came home past midnight. I don't remember him ever being sober. He always drank. I remember lying awake in bed one night listening to them yelling.

They always fought about something. That night they were both screaming, but I could not understand some of the words he was yelling at her.

I felt so helpless. I wished that they would stop hollering at each other.

The next night I fell asleep before he came home.

I confronted Gina at dinner.

“Is *tate* coming home tonight ?” I asked.

She stopped eating and turned towards me. Her brown eyes grew tired.

“...*Ne*... he’s not coming home at all...it’s better for all of us that way” she said.

“...But *Mama*...”

“*Mlek !!*” She yelled. “No more questions !!”

She pushed her chair back violently and retreated to her bedroom. I went to bed and cried myself to sleep. Although I never knew him, I felt that I had missed out.

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“Was that the last time you saw your father ?” John asked.

“Prior to his death...yeah it was” she replied.

“Did this upset you ?” he asked.

“It did...I really missed him...”

“And your relationship with your mother ?”

“It got better when I grew up...but we never spoke about him”

“It must have been hard not to be able to talk to anyone” he said

“It was...that’s why *Dara* emerged” She replied. “For a second personality...she doesn’t help much”

“You believe she is the second personality ?” John asked.

*She’s trying to trick me* John thought.

“She’s my extension... she carries my emotions...”

*Or you carry her strength* he thought.

“...but she can’t deal with them... she blocks it all out” Phyllis said.

“The second personality doesn’t emerge to help the first one” He said.

*I must play along* John thought.

“She’s only in my way” Phyllis said “Just get rid of her”

*She trusts me* he thought *I must play along.*

“I’ll need your help with that” he said. “When did you decide to meet your father ?”

“When I was nineteen... I called him” Phyllis explained. “He said he wanted to meet me”

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I had booked lunch at the famous ‘Caesar’ restaurant in the Italian Forum in Leichhardt.

*I wanted the meeting with Ivan to be in the most proficient place, and a friend told me:*

“You go to a Little Italy to enjoy the in-between-ness, to embrace while remaining in your own comfort zone”

The Forum was surrounded by flats with balconies, so the people in the piazza are looking into the flats and the people on the balconies are watching the crowd. The actual Forum could be judged as a new shopping complex which also houses a public library.



It seemed to me that the whole idea of locating the library in a high traffic area is to attract those people on the fringes of the community who would otherwise not find their way to the library. All the library will do is attract well-to-do shoppers and raise the rents on the shops around the plaza. I immediately fell in love with the place. It was the home of all the famous Italian brands in the world, Versace, Armani, and the list went on.

I encountered a sign on the door of a restaurant on my way to 'Caesar'. It said:

"This is the gate of Heaven. Enter ye all by this door (This door is kept locked because of the draft. Please use side entrance)"

"Hahaha...that's clever" I said to the owner.

"Si..." He spoke in Italian. "It attracts many customers" He laughed.

"Could you please tell me how to get to Caesar's?" I asked.

The man pointed at the stairs.

"Up the stairs...then keep walking left"

I was surprised to find Ivan already at the restaurant as I had planned an early arrival.

*My hand trembled nervously. Should I call him Ivan or dad* I thought.

"...ahhh...h-e-l- lo..." I stuttered as I shook his hand. Ivan smiled and sat down comfortably.

*He hasn't changed at all* I thought. *His face is just as I remember.*

I sat down nervously wondering how to initiate the conversation.

"It's been a while... ahhh...dad?"

It seemed to me that he missed my last word, as he stood as still as a statue.

"I hope you don't mind...I have already ordered for myself...I have to get home soon...so lets make this quick".

I though he was extremely rude and selfish. He had treated me more like a client than a daughter. I felt extremely hurt by his desire to rush home.

"Tell me something...why did you want to meet me?" he asked

"I thought you'd be happy to see me...." I said.

"Look... I haven't kept contact with you or your mother...doesn't that tell you something?"

"Why are you being so rude!" I screamed "What is your problem with me!!"

I was confused at his insolent behavior.

"Look... me and your mother never got along...I never really knew you"

I felt my cheeks burn up and my temperature rise.

"And whose fault is that!" I yelled. I clenched my teeth and gripped the knife on the table.

I felt my emotions take over my strength. He made me so angry.

*Ivan rose from the table and nodded defensively.*

"Thanks for the meal Dara...for your sake and mine...don't try to contact me again" he shrugged and started walking away.

I rose with the restaurant's knife clenched in my hand. I felt my face grow red with rage.

"You Bastard!!" I ran at him and stabbed him with the knife. His face wrinkled with pain. His eyes grew wide with horror. I felt my heart race.

"Zashto...?" He uttered as he fell to the ground.

There were numerous gasps and screams from the customers and the staff at 'Caesar'.

I turned and stared bluntly at their horrified glances. A woman was crouched under the table holding on to her husband's legs.

As I dropped the knife, a staff member approached me steadily. He glanced at the body.

I turned to see what I had done. Ivan was lying in a flood of blood, his eyes and mouth were opened in despair.

"...Wha...what have you done...?" The boy asked nervously.

I turned my head from the body to the staff member. I replied:

You can not keep me shut

I run on diesel.

You can not trick me

For I am Weasel.

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Dr John Kawasky removed his glasses. He looked up at Phyllis.

"I see..." He said.

*That's when it started* John thought. *That means that Phyllis killed him.*

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Dr Brian Mitchell was an expert in curing disorders. John had consulted him many times before about his patients.

“What have you managed to find out John?” He asked

“I know that Phyllis is the second personality...for sure...although she refuses to admit it”

“That could be hard then” Brian said.

“We’ll need a couple of specialists to work with Dara...I’ll work with Phyllis...”

“I can help you with Phyllis if...”

“No..!” John interrupted. “...She needs someone she can trust”.

“Very well...I’ll call the others...we can start this Friday”

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“Now that the cause of the second personality has been discovered, we need to combine the two” Dr Brian Mitchell explained to the specialists.

*He turned to John and whispered:*

“Are you sure Phyllis is the second personality...it could be extremely dangerous otherwise...”

“I am aware of the consequences Brian...I’m sure of it.” John said.

“If Phyllis is the main personality...we could destroy her completely...the wrong characteristics may merge...we don’t want to create a murderer”.

“Dara is not a murderer...she’s the main personality...I’m sure of it” John said.

“Very well...let the process begin” Brian said.

Dara was confronted by two psychiatrists about the emotions she felt for her father.

“Her childhood was the main cause of these emotions,” John told them.

“We need to work on that”.

After therapy, Dr John Kawasky had explained to her that combining the two personalities was an easy process as long as the two agreed.

Phyllis had resisted the idea at first, accusing the Doctors of trying to destroy her. John had explained to her that apart of her personality will always exist within Dara.

“Phyllis... your characteristics will merge with Dara’s to form one strong personality” He said. “Nothing will be destroyed”.

“No...Dara is the second personality !!” She yelled.

“That’s not important Phyllis...after this process, your characteristics will merge...both of you will be cured” He said.

Phyllis was forced to agree. The process had taken three months.

The Doctors had kept her for an extra month just to make sure that the *mind* was completely cured. They had allowed Dara to discuss her feelings about prison. The aim was to *heal any scars that may cause another disorder*.

“There is a positive change in Dara” John said to Dr Mitchell. “She has become more expressive of her feelings”

“I hope you’re right about her John” Brian said. “She’s almost ready to go”

Dara happily anticipated the day until she would be allowed to leave.

“This is your last day Dara...how do you feel ?” John asked.

“Never better John...all thanks to you.” She replied.

“There is still one more thing before you go...”

“Shoot” She said.

“You’ll be required to make monthly visits...only for a while...” He said.

“It’s a requirement by the Supreme Court...because of your crime”

“No problem” Dara said. She shook his hand.

“Dara...do you have anywhere to stay...I could arrange...”

“No worries John...you’ve done enough for me already” She smiled and waved to him.

*It was good knowing you Dara* he thought. *Take care.*

Dara walked out of the building, feeling more radiant than ever. She had seen the building on the outside once before on her arrival here from prison.

It seemed much more elegant than on the inside. The architecture was uniquely painted in turquoise and the few windows had been washed well. *Such a soothing feeling* Dara thought.

Men in suits were rushing past her to get to work. The sound of horns beeping brought a smile to Dara’s face as she sensed her freedom at last. She made her way around the city *humming to herself in relief.*

You can not keep me shut

I run on diesel.

You can not trick me

For I am Weasel.

STORY TWO:  
“THE REAL H.S.C”

STORY 2: "THE REAL H.S.C"

Nick slammed down the copy of "Who am I" on the coffee table.

He let out a deep breath and rolled his eyes dully.

"Well...what did ya think?" Julie asked him excitedly. She had been pacing up and down the living room waiting for Nick to finish her story.

The living room was made up of fine leather furnishing with a marble coffee table in the center. Two meters away from the couch stood a surround sound, eighty-centimeter television swamped by the latest DVD's.

Nick diverted his attention to Julie.

"...This is really good Jules !...it's excellent...the Board of Studies will love it !!" He prided himself on his ability to mangle on the spot.

"..Really?" Julie jumped excitedly. "Which parts did you like?"

"...ah...all of it...it's very... good !!" Nick had skipped a few paragraphs in the hope that he wouldn't be questioned.

"No...but which parts did you really like?" Julie pushed.

"...ahh...I liked the prison part...it was...interesting" he nodded his head frantically, dramatizing his excitement.

"You didn't like it !!" Julie knew her friend very well. They were both known around school for their excellent cons.

She remembered one of the greatest trickery that they had successfully performed.

This cheat made drama lessons worthwhile.



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It was a beautiful Wednesday morning, too beautiful for school. The lesson was Legal Studies, the con was getting out of Legal Studies. Nick and I sneaked out with the request for the toilet, only to sit outside the quad chatting about our weekend. At least ten minutes later, we were to discover two teachers stomping towards us in dismay.

We had to think quickly, for one mistake could destroy an entire academic reputation and possibly our academic future.

Nick put his arm around me in comfort. We started walking away steadily.

“Nick !!!...Julie !!!...why are you two out of class ?!” One of the teachers called.

“She’s emotional sir !” Nick replied solemnly, trying not to laugh.

I put my head down and crouched my back.

“Ohh...is she alright ?” The teacher asked.

“Yeah...she’ll be fine” Nick said sadly, rubbing my back.

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Nick put the story down and browsed through the DVD’s. He picked one up in disgust.

“Blade Runner !!” He cried.

“...It’s for school !!” Julie yelled defensively

“...how much did you pay for this ??”

“...around thirty dollars...my teacher said it’d help me get good marks”

“...you should have bought the book...” Nick said

"I did...I bought the Longman Literature Guide and Cliffs Notes...only twenty dollars"

"No...you should have bought the Excel one by Megan de Kantzow...its pretty good"

"Ohhh...I'll make sure I get that one..." Julie said.

"So...about my story...you think I should just quit?"

"I don't know...it might scale you up heaps" Nick replied.

"Why don't you just call the Board?"

"I already did..."

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"1800 334 733, student inquiry line, how may I help you?" A lady asked.

"...ahh...hi...I wanted to talk to you regarding the H.S.C" I said

"Are you interested in getting into university?"

"...yeah...but I wanted to talk about the H.S.C"

"Just a moment please" the lady said.

I stood in my study room, holding the receiver. As I observed my surroundings, my right ear was entertained by a soft tune. There was a white desk leaning against a wall that was covered in 'Student-Planner' posters. On the desk was a small computer that contained the contents of all my major assignments. Each assignment had taken me numerous trips to the library. Each required at least five books.

It would only take one minor virus to wipe out months of hard work.

"1800 334 733, student inquiry line, how may I help you?" A man asked.

"...ahh...hi...I wanted to talk to you regarding the H.S.C" I said.

"Are you interested in getting into university?"

"...yeah...but I wanted to talk about the H.S.C"

"Yes...what would you like to know?"

"Well...I was thinking of dropping a subject...ah...four-unit English...and I was wondering if it might affect my marks a lot"

"Yes...well obviously dropping a subject might affect your marks...it really depends on how you go at it"

"...well yeah...see I was wondering if it'll scale me up heaps because it is a pretty big subject" I asked.

"Ohh..I'm sorry...we don't know much about the scaling process...maybe you should try logging on to [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au)"

"Ohh I've already tried that...it only states what happens once you get into university...nothing about the H.S.C"

"Ohh...maybe you should try calling the Board of Studies Switchboard on 9367 8111"

"Okay...thank you" I hung up the phone and picked it up again.

"9367 8111, Board of Studies, how may I help you?" A man asked.

"...ahh...hi...I wanted to talk to you regarding the H.S.C" I replied.

"Just a moment please".

I stood in my study room, holding the receiver. My right ear was entertained by a soft tune that repeated its notes.

"9367 8111, Board of Studies, how may I help you?" A lady asked.

"...ahh...hi...I wanted to talk to you regarding the H.S.C" I replied.

"Yes...what would you like to know?"

“Well...I was thinking of dropping a subject...ah...four-unit English...and I was wondering if it might affect my marks a lot”

“Yes...well obviously dropping a subject might affect your marks...it really depends on how you go at it”

“...well yeah...see I was wondering if it’ll scale me up heaps because it is a pretty big subject” I said.

“...The scaling process is very hard to determine until we get all the marks in”

“...okay...but four-unit English would get scaled up right ?”

“...Like I said...the scaling process is very hard to determine until we get all the marks in”

“..Lets say I was at the bottom after all the marks come in...would that still scale me up ?”

“...well now you’re referring to UAI marks and that has nothing to do with us...you should call the student inquiry line on 1800 334 733.”

“Okay...thank you” I hung up the phone.

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“There are exactly three weeks until the H.S.C...if you haven’t studied by now, don’t bother....you’re gonna fail ” Miss. Ritchie said.

“Miss...what should we study ?” Julie asked.

“Study everything”

“But that’s more than eighty pages... which parts in particular ?”

“Study everything”

“What’s a good way to study ?” Julie asked.

“Do practice essays and read through all your notes...but most importantly...eat healthy”

Julie walked out of class and met up with Nick in the quad. The school consisted of three large buildings parallel to one another, a canteen and a library.

Year 12 normally hung around the quad for two advantages. It had enough space for all and was the closest spot to the canteen.

As the food at the canteen had become unhealthier, the price also increased. Looking around the quad, Julie could see the entire senior body masticating on fried chips and chicken burgers that were advertised to both cure the gluttony and amplify the student’s energy level.

“How can you eat that stuff ?” Julie asked.

“...It fills me up...” Nick replied. “That’s important when studying”

His tone was so apathetic it was as if he was programmed.

“I’m really worried about English...I don’t think I’ve enough info...” Julie said.

“hhmmm...you should have gone to the lecture” Nick replied.

“I did...”

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Dr John Watson was to explain the concept of powerplay to a swarm of students that had been sent by three different schools.

For forty dollars, I was particular about engaging a front row seat.

The man had worn a simple suit. He spoke a formal greeting and almost immediately began his lecture.

“Powerplay...I don’t know what the word means... just trying to figure out it’s meaning is a powerplay.”

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“Not that one...you should’ve gone to the one with Professor Andrew Milner” Nick said

“I thought we went to that one...?” Julie asked. “He spoke about Julius Caesar...right ?”

Confusion crossed her face.

“No...you’re thinking of the lecture with John Bell...the Professor spoke about Brave New World...it was really good”.

“Ohh...I’ll make sure I get notes for that” Julie replied.

“Have you decided what to do about your story ?” He asked

“...It doesn’t really matter anymore...”

“Why... what happened ?”

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I walked towards my study room. All I had to do was press the print button on my computer. My hands trembled with excitement. I had been anticipating this moment all year.

“Jules... can I use your computer... I just need to check my mail” My mum called.

“Yeah alright... I’m already logged on... just call me afterwards” I said.

I paced up and down the hallway, waiting for mum to finish.

“I’m done !” My mum called.

I walked inside my room. After this assessment, all I had left was the H.S.C.

I should take a small break first. I felt too tired to study and I had too much to study to sleep.

I opened the file of “Who am I” only to find that all my letters had transformed into symbols.

“Mum... what happened to my doc files ?” I asked nervously.

“Ohh... one of my mails was a virus... I accidentally opened it up... why... what’s the matter ?”

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"Did you have a back up file?" Nick asked.

"No!"

"Did you save it on disc?"

"No!"

"Did you make any copies?"

"No!"

"Well... all that's left now is the H.S.C... and then we can go out" Nick said.

"I have no money"

"Non at all?"

"I spent it all on the lectures and study guides... I don't have any money" Julie said.

"Well... you can make some after the H.S.C" He said.

"Yeah... I'm relying on my H.S.C to get a good job... it shouldn't be a problem".

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For the next three weeks, Julie had devised a plan, which if followed accordingly, was guaranteed to score her optimum marks on each exam.

She was to wake up at six-thirty each morning. Run for one hour to release the stress.

Then study for the rest of the day, with only few breaks in between.

By the end of the three weeks, nearly everything had been precisely followed.

Studying had certainly paid off.

*It's time to take the biggest exams of my life* she thought.



Julie approached the examination room, feeling more confident than at any other time before an exam. She waited in line, analyzing the surroundings.

The entire hall was made of light hardwood. The floor had been covered with a blue carpet. The color was supposed to soothe the nerves of the many anxious students.

Each student had walked in apprehensively, step-by-step without speaking a word.

They looked like robots as they sat at the parallel desks, each exactly ninety centimeters apart.

*It was finally Julie's turn. She steadily advanced the exam room, only to be stopped by a man in a dark, expensive suit.*

"...ahh...hi...I'm ready to sit for my exams." Julie said.

"Yes...that'll be fifty-two dollars and eighty-three cents...thank you !"

# REFLECTION STATEMENT

## REFLECTION STATEMENT

### SYNOPSIS OF "WHO AM I?"

Phyllis has lived through a terrible childhood. She hardly knows her father, and has a good but distant relationship with her mother. Her father leaves the family when she is at a young age. As Phyllis grows up she decides to search for him. At their meeting Phyllis is so overcome by rage that she kills him. At this point Phyllis develops an extra personality called Dara. She is sent to prison, but is soon released as a result of her disorder. Dr John Kawasky is assigned to cure her. The problem is, John determines that Dara is the original personality. He is required to find out the exact time that the extra personality emerged. He asks both personalities about prison and their childhood. The twist occurs when John cures the wrong personality. As a result, a killer is on the loose.

### INTENT / PURPOSE / TARGET AUDIENCE

I chose to write a short story due to my passion for writing. My goal is to write a conclusive and successful story that will entertain my readers but also educate on:

- Prison
- Multiple Personality Disorder
- Importance of a healthy family

I acknowledge that my story is completely based on independent research and follows all the requirements of the syllabus.

My target audience is aimed at people over 15 years due to themes of:

- Some course language
- Violence
- Drug-use

The purpose of these themes is to depict the cruelty of prison. The purpose of my story is to educate on the above points and entertain my responders. The purpose of writing a short story was to provide me with a deeper understanding and passion for writing.

### RESEARCH ON FORM / CONTENT / CONCEPTS

I have researched four texts that crown the form of my work. These include:

- 1) 'The Writing Book' by Kate Grenville
- 2) 'OTEN--short stories'
- 3) 'Everything I know about writing' by John Marsden
- 4) 'Short Story Arena' edited by Walter McVitty

There are three extremely important issues that I have researched to construct the content of my major work:

- 1) Prison
- 2) Multiple Personality Disorder
- 3) Italian Forum at Leichhardt

### Impact of Link between Independent Investigation and the Development of Concepts

The development of concepts has occurred through extensive research concerning six major areas:

Researching Prison has had a great impact on the development of concepts for my short story through themes such as drugs and conflict. I have had to develop my story with concepts concerning drugs and gang fights in order to link them to the concepts that are normally used in prison. This is extremely important as it creates a realistic texture to the story.

Researching the Italian Forum has had an impact on my story as it has allowed for the use of symbolism. The Italian Forum consists of a restaurant called "Caesar". This links to my story, as it is the setting for the crime of murder. Symbolism is used as this restaurant *is named after the great Julius Caesar who was also murdered*. The concept "Caesar" creates a historical perspective. History is important to my story, as it is a reference used in short stories which brings out a sense of honor and high morality. Mentioning history also gives the audience a common understanding--a common basis in which they unite and in which they are equal.

Consequently, the use of symbolism and history has successfully impacted my story as it has allowed me to use explicit language, add morality to my story and give the audience a general understanding of where the story may go.

Researching Multiple Personality Disorder was vital to the concepts I was required to use in order to shape the personalities of my characters. As my character has a split personality, I was required to use two different sets of concepts.

The use of different concepts for the two personas has provided a successful impact as these concepts have shaped the personalities of my character. The persona Dara is portrayed as shy and weak in her language while Phyllis is portrayed as strong and independent.

Researching multiple personality disorder was extremely important to the choice of concepts. The research has taught me that in such a disorder one personality is dominant while the other is weak. This information allowed me to choose the concepts and the language of my characters in order to shape their personalities.

'The Writing Book' by Kate Grenville was important to my story. It has helped me to decide on using third-person narrative. This has had a strong impact on my choice of concepts as it allows me to describe things from more than one character's perspective. *First-person narrative is used to show the flashbacks. This affects the descriptions in my story as they are more emotional and expressive.*

'Everything I know about writing' by John Marsden has had a successful impact on my story. It encouraged me to use concepts that are based on personal experience. As a result, I have written about my character's childhood through my own personal experiences and have used my Bulgarian culture. This book was important as it also inspired me to use less clichés.

'Short Story Arena' edited by Walter McVitty has had a significant impact on my choice of concepts as it has encouraged me to write descriptively in a way that I use verbs and nouns with enough impact that the use of adverbs and adjectives becomes unnecessary. This is important to my story, as it has allowed me to describe my features effectively *without using too many powerful words.*

## REFLECTION

- 1) Dr John Kawasky adjusts his glasses after each flashback. Near the end he says "I see". Unexpectedly wearing glasses symbolizes the lack of understanding and inability to see. This is depicted in John as he fails to see that Phyllis is the original personality.
  
- 2) Dara describes the outside world subjectively: "Stirred the slender trees." She describes prison objectively: "Each cell was 2.5 by 3.5 meters." This symbolizes her appreciation of the outside world compared to the one she is forced to live in.
  
- 3) The poem: "For I am weasel" is repeated by Phyllis. Weasels symbolize the criminally orientated side of ourselves. Phyllis says it after she kills her father and once again when she is released. This symbolizes her desire to commit more crimes.
  
- 4) Irony is used as Phyllis is a criminal but in prison she states: "Justice was not served".
  
- 5) The division of 'Lesos', 'Wogs' and 'Skips' symbolizes conflict and the harshness of prison.

6) The use of drugs emphasizes the harshness of prison.

7) Hint to the responders that Phyllis is the main personality occurs when Dara says:

“I remember some more stuff about prison”.

She says this after Phyllis tells her story of prison. The responders already know that the second personality can hear the conversations of the first one.

8) Betrayal of Caesar is appropriated to depict the betrayal of Phyllis and her father.

This is portrayed in:

The name of the restaurant “Caesar”

Phyllis shakes her fathers hand before she kills him. This is symbolic of the *relationship between Caesar and Brutus*.

Phyllis describes her father “As still as a statue”. This is symbolic of the statue of Caesar which is covered in blood.

9) The purpose of Imagery is to make something abstract appear more concrete.

Simile: “Like a soft whistle” emphasizes the importance of the outside world.

Alliteration: “Despite our disputes” , Onomatopoeia: “Banged” ,

Rhyme: “Face/ Place” emphasizes the harshness of prison.



## CHARACTERS

Dara: is portrayed as weak and unstable:

- She keeps stuttering and apologizing
- “She looked down at her feet”
- “She bit her fingernails”

This is done to evoke an emotional response and pity from the responders.

Phyllis: is portrayed as violent and out of control.

- “Grabbed the magazines and threw them at his face”
- “You’re trying to get rid of me !!” she yelled.
- “Not bad for a prison story...ey”

This is done to depict the terrible outcomes of prison and a rough childhood.

Dr John Kawasky: is smart and dedicated.

- “He was dressed in an elegant suit”
- “I’ll work with Phyllis”

Ivan: is cold hearted and mean spirited.

- “He walked past my mum”
- “Why did you want to meet me”

This is done so the responders don’t feel sad when he is killed. This character is important as he depicts the importance of a loving father.

REFLECTION OF "THE REAL H.S.C"

The stories are linked as my character in story two has written story one. This story is an inspiration from Tom Stoppard's "The real Inspector Hound". Stoppard criticizes life and the crime fiction genre.

I am criticizing the H.S.C by using the theory of existentialism.

This story aims to express my views:

- *Repetition through the phone call shows the meaningless of the H.S.C.*
- Future thought that the H.S.C will cost money is absurd.
- Relying on technology is absurd.
- The food we eat is absurd.
- The expectations of us "Study everything" is absurd.

The idea for this story came as I have experienced almost every issue.

The entire story is based on personal experience. As a result no research was required.

## ENGLISH EXTENSION 2 — Short Story

[View Sample](#)

### Band E2/3

Sample 4

#### **Title: Who Am I**

Through 'Who Am I' and 'The Real HSC' the candidate demonstrates developing insights into narrative construction and the use of intertextuality. The candidate also demonstrates some ability to formulate and communicate complex concepts about self reflexive writing and mental illness supported by independent investigation into form, but has limited investigation into concepts. Greater textual integrity would have been achieved with more research.

The story is substantial, sustained and original but could be stronger in these three areas with enhanced research and more thorough and effective editing. Audience engagement would also be sustained with refinement of each story's conceptual realization and more believable and thoughtful links between the two stories. The two-part narrative is appropriate to audience, purpose, concept and medium.

The quality of the Reflection Statement would have been enhanced by a less truncated form and with more consistency in the reflections about research. Nevertheless the candidate does exhibit sound ability to articulate, monitor and reflect on processes of investigation, interpretation, analysis and compensation.