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UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Undergraduate assignment feedback form

(to be completed by marker)

Student Name: Prithi Sabrina Nathan Shukla	
Module Code **HPEN6024** – 3rd Year, Level 6, 2019 - 2020 *Module title: Scriptwriting: The Stage and Beyond:* **Assessment – PART 2**	*Student number: 1708142*
For completion by marker: *Comments:*	
Marker's signature:	*Date:*
Provisional mark: ***NB.*** *All marks are provisional until confirmed by the final examination board.*	

Scriptwriting: The Stage and Beyond HPEN6024

Assessment

Part 2

PORTFOLIO:

This portfolio includes the following:

1. **Logline**
2. **Treatment: 3 pages**
3. **Reflective Essay: 533 words + Bibliography**

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1. LOGLINE

Cara's Note: A family drama. After recklessly crashing his car, causing the death of his daughter, a footballer sets out to free himself, from both his struggle with his guilt and a malicious cousin seeking to ruin him.

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2. TREATMENT

CARA'S NOTE

Feature Film Treatment
By
Prithi Shukla

Logline:

After recklessly crashing his car, causing the death of his daughter, a footballer sets out to free himself, from both his struggle with his guilt and a malicious cousin seeking to ruin him.

Main Characters:
STEFFAN, an upcoming footballer in his late twenties, is the younger brother of Gwen. His reckless driving causes the loss of his wife Elin and his five-year-old daughter Cara, in a car crash, after a farewell luncheon with his sister. The accident leaves this former athlete with a severe limp, tremor and debilitating depression. He lives with Gwen. When she arranges for him to work at their cousin Sara's village shop, he feels obliged to please his sister. He makes it his personal mission to recover but struggles to handle his disabilities.

GWEN, mid-thirties, is Steffan's elder sister. She arranges work for him at Sara's shop. Sara is both a cousin and a friend. Worrying about sending her brother away, she shares her dilemma with Sara.

SARA is a good-natured woman in her mid-thirties and the owner of a small village shop in Wales. She is a committed single mother to her five-year-old daughter Becca. Although Sara objects to her brother Gareth's lax ways, she lets him live with her above the shop. To help her cousin and friend Gwen, she allows Steffan to work in her shop despite his disabilities.

GARETH, in his mid-twenties, lives with his sister Sara. An obstinate, lazy, individual, he shuns work at the shop. He hides his gambling habit from Sara and ruthlessly does whatever is necessary to feed his obsession. He feels particularly threatened by his cousin Steffan's arrival, is envious of his wealth and jealous of Steffan's bond with Sara and Becca.

BECCA is Sara's five-year-old daughter. She adores her ginger-haired cat MANGO and enjoys her Uncle Steffan's company.

ELIN is Steffan's wife and is similarly reckless despite being Cara's mother. Like her daughter, she dies when Steffan crashes the car.

CARA is Steffan and Elin's five-year-old daughter, killed in the car crash.

LUC & WILL are Gareth's scruffy petty-thieving friends.

OPEN WITH: A glorious summer's day. Steffan's red convertible with its roof down is parked askew in the driveway of Gwen's well-kept thatched house.

ACT ONE

Steffan is in the back garden with Cara and Elin at Gwen's home. They are at a farewell luncheon organised by Gwen before the family depart for their new house in the country.

Before leaving, Steffan kicks a football in the driveway, aiming for an elm tree. Elin and Cara are in the car. Gwen stands beside the convertible. Steffan hits his target and is jubilant. Cara proudly claps at her father's success. Steffan jumps in behind the wheel. He hands Cara an envelope to give to her Aunt. Gwen opens it and unfolds a sheet of notepaper. A small red finger paint handprint marks the page. 'CARA' is written below. Gwen is touched. Steffan pulls out of the driveway. They wave.

Steffan accelerates down a country lane, facing a long drive. Later, thirsty and hot, he pulls into a layby and stops. Becca is asleep. He pulls out a champagne bottle from behind the passenger's seat and pours the alcohol into two glasses, giving one to Elin. She accepts it gladly, with a raucous laugh.

They resume their journey in high spirits. Steffan's speed increases down the hilly country lanes. The car's wheels screech as the red convertible swerves around blind bends. Elin hangs on to her hat and the dashboard, swearing nervously. A tractor swings around the corner. Steffan swerves off the road into a drainage ditch. The car flips over. BLACKNESS.

FADE TO:

Sara arranges fresh fruit on shelves stacked with provisions in her village shop. A CCTV points down at the till from the ceiling. The rear of the shop has an open doorway with stairs to a basement and Sara's flat upstairs. A window with a blind drawn down overlooks the back yard. Becca is asleep in a pushchair. The shop bell clangs as Gareth enters hoping to get money and a hot meal from his sister. He reluctantly responds to her request to remove crates to the basement and then disappears upstairs. Sara hears keys CRASH in the back yard. Through the slats of the blind, she observes Gareth skulk out of the back gate.

Gareth is at the pub with his scruffy friends, Luc and Will, at the slot machines. Luc mocks Gareth each time he loses. Gareth grabs Luc but Will breaks them up. They observe a man at the bar place his wallet in his jacket pocket and head for the door. They follow close behind. Gareth slips his hand into the man's pocket and steals his wallet. Gareth, Luc and Will examine the wallet in a narrow cul de sac. Gareth distributes the money.

ACT TWO

Gwen, Steffan and Sara are at the cemetery. Steffan is in a wheelchair. A funeral is in progress. Two coffins are lowered into the grave. Sara leaves after the funeral and returns to her shop. The next day Gwen informs a despondent Steffan lounging on the sofa that Sara is looking for a shop assistant. Sara calls enquiring if Steffan will assist. Gwen is sad to lose him but knows the work will help Steffan heal and decides to drive him down the next weekend.

At the physiotherapy centre, Steffan watches a deaf boy eagerly practising on his prosthetic legs. His determination encourages Steffan who then makes it his quest to improve his life.

When Gwen drops Steffan off at the village bedsit, she hands him Cara's handprint note. Steffan struggles at the shop initially, clumsy with the goods, he drops a box. Gareth enters the shop. He resents Steffan's presence and pushes him to the floor. He loathes the intrusion of his cousin and threatens Steffan. Gareth then joins Sara at the counter, secretly observing her punch in the till code. When Gareth leaves Steffan joins Sara. She orders him to buck up.

With Sara's help, Steffan becomes more confident. She shows him how to use the till. She allows Steffan to stay in the basement only as he has no other place to go to except the bedsit. Missing Cara, he bonds with Becca, rescues her runaway cat Mango and gives her his red cap.

The next day Becca looks glum because Mango has run away again. When Sara shares Becca's dilemma with Steffan, Gareth is jealous and calls Steffan a 'murderer'. Gareth does not fix the CCTV when asked so Steffan does it that night. He is unable to sleep after Gareth's comments. Early next morning Steffan still upset, leaves through the back gate and walks across to the field. A sudden crash outside wakes Becca. From her window, she sees Mango in the backyard. She runs out to greet him but startled by her appearance he heads for the field. Becca follows.

ACT THREE

Mango climbs up onto an overhanging branch of an oak tree growing on the bank of a small lake. Becca looks up and falls backwards into the water. Steffan appears on the opposite side of the lake. He sees Mango, Becca's red cap near the tree and Becca in the water. He pulls her out and heads for the house.

Sara and Gareth notice that Becca is missing. Gareth suggests Steffan has taken her. Hurrying outside to find her, Sara spots Becca's hanky on the street near the field. Gareth notices a track in the long grass. A flock of jackdaws suddenly take flight over low trees. Sara follows the track. Gareth heads for the trees. Mango is harassing the birds. Gareth's mobile is at home, so he heads back to the house, where he stuffs money from the till into his pocket. Back in the field, he spots Steffan carrying a drenched Becca. Sara is behind them. She informs Gareth that she has called the ambulance.

The next morning Steffan has taken the day off. Sara finds the till drawer empty. Gareth accuses Steffan and urges her to call the police, then does it himself surreptitiously. A police officer informs her by phone that they have Steffan. Just then a policeman walks in. He takes the CCTV recording, although Sara informs him that the CCTV is broken. That afternoon another policeman enters the shop with Steffan. Gareth is upstairs. The policeman explains that Gareth had been recorded stealing the money as Steffan had fixed the CCTV. Sara starts crying. The policeman arrests Gareth.

Despite Sara's apology, Steffan decides to leave. She offers to drive him down to the hospital to see Becca. Steffan explains he had taken the day off to collect the car he had ordered. The police had arrested him when he was at the car dealers. The salesman agreed to deliver the car to the shop that afternoon. He tells Sara he will follow her in his car and leave for Gwen's from there. Sara awkwardly explains to Steffan that she had not informed Gwen. She decided to wait before she called her cousin. Steffan is relieved.

Sara, Becca and Gareth are in the hospital car park exchanging goodbyes. Steffan mentions he may return to football and become a coach. Sara is happy for him. They both get into their cars and leave.

FINAL SCENE: Steffan drives slowly down the highway. He peers into the rear-view mirror. The village houses recede into the distance. He smiles and refocuses on the road ahead of him with hope and a sense of a fresh beginning.

FADE TO BLACK

3. REFLECTIVE ESSAY

The module *Scriptwriting: The Stage and Beyond* has been both instructive and empowering. As an aspiring screenwriter, the course provides me with a framework for developing my own creative approach and style. Every lecture has been engaging with screenplay examples, movie scenes, documentary clips, workshop exercises, handouts, concepts on the art of scriptwriting and proposed reading. Using the headings 'Elements of Screenwriting', 'Creative Mediums' and 'Logline, Treatment, Pitch', this essay will reflect on the techniques taught, course experience and skillsets acquired from the module.

Elements of Screenwriting:

The lectures on the principles of film narration, the aspects of screenwriting and how to skilfully reach an audience have presented me with a rewarding process to write screenplays. Classes on genre, theme, dramatic structure of a three-act story, the role of the character, the hero's journey, archetypes, plot, beats, subtext, dialogue, Mise en Scène, imagery, exposition and sound have all been informative, enriching my screenwriting skills. I applied these elements as points of reference in class exercises to help develop a cinematic drama with a network of characters. This approach made it easier for me to write my screenplay *Cara's Note*. Feedback from both the lecturer and students fuelled fresh inspiration.

Creative Mediums and Personal Experience:

Advice on how to explore both creative mediums such as film and literary sources, coupled with employing personal experience, have given me the confidence to write screenplays in diverse genres and themes. Furthermore, screenwriting adaption techniques and the 'Kuleshov effect' furnish an appealing style to cultivate creativity.

Film:

An array of films shown in class offer a new world of structure and imagination. *Taxi Driver* reveals how dialogue can inform the audience about a character. *Harry Potter and*

the Philosopher's Stone highlights the ordinary world of the protagonist whilst *Lost in Translation* demonstrates an interesting three-act structure. *Pan's Labyrinth* exhibits how sequences can be used to cut screen time.

Furthermore, the course has helped with my research on screenwriters. Quentin Tarantino creates exhilarating three-dimensional characters through his powerful writing techniques and expressive style of crafting dialogue.

Literary Sources:

The recommended books particularly *The Screenwriter's Bible* by David Trottier and *Save The Cat!* by Blake Snyder, effectively present the theoretical and practical fundamentals of screenwriting.

Personal Experience:

Learning the significance of building a story through personal experience and emotion helped *Cara's Note* attain depth through the sentiments of loss and hope.

Logline, Treatment, Pitch:

Writing loglines helped develop my skill in taking a raw idea and translating it into one or two sentences, essential for a thirty-second pitch. The logline workshop exercises utilising different genres each time, evoked imagination. Crafting a logline for *Cara's Note*, allowed me to pin down the essence of the story, keeping in mind the genre, theme, protagonist, antagonist, setup, action and suspense. To expand my idea into a full story, a written synopsis was followed by a three-page treatment with character descriptions. Lectures on effective pitching delivered concepts to hook the listener.

Conclusion

We can thus conclude that the module has enhanced my creativity and has greatly enthused me with new ideas. The expertise gained through *Scriptwriting: The Stage and Beyond* will empower me to accomplish my ambition as a professional screenwriter.

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