

The Game is On Again

INTERACTIVE SCRIPT FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Lax, Annecy C

ICE&FIRE THEATRE | UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

THE GAME IS ON AGAIN....

Interactive script for Amnesty International

SCENE ONE

[ASHA and ITAN are sitting in separate spaces in the performance area.

Initially they speak to an unseen person.]

ASHA: I'm not a Christian, no. That is a statement from the aid agency. That is a copy, yes. Of course, it's a copy. Everything I have is a copy. I haven't read that much philosophy. Yes, this is based on a political opinion. You know I don't have my passport. My passport was taken from me at the border. Yes, I have a university degree. But, no, I don't know many philosophers. No, you can call me Asha. Just call me Asha. You are wrong, that is the old army, not the new army. We had to leave. I have a temporary passport and this registration card. Because I will be killed. Did you not know we are at war? I can't tell you the specific verse. I have my police documents. Yes, this is based on nationality. The whole country is on fire. My city has been tipped upside down. He was not a rebel. He was not in a rebel group. We left. We left because the side of our house has a hole in it.

ITAN: I don't have any family members here. I am alone here. I come from Kosovo. We are a very troubled people. I am a Christian. I don't understand you very well. It is my foot. I have the papers given to me by the police. They know. They saw what I was like when I first arrived. No, I am a Christian. Yes, I speak English. Some English, some Greek,

some Italian. I am a proper European. With a knife. They held me to the floor with a knife through my foot. See? No? You don't want to see? I didn't go to Bible classes. He was a farmer. Simple, like me. He was lucky he did not live to see what happened to me. My name is Fadil Maluku. They made us eat like pigs. From wooden troughs. You don't think you will, but you do. I might not be saying any of this right, I want to tell my story right. They have already taken my fingerprints and they checked my teeth. No, I don't know anybody in Serbia. Do unto others as you would have done to yourself. Proverbs. I don't know. I don't know anyone in London. I don't want to go back to Albania. They will find me there and kill me.

[ITAN and ASHA now move to address the audience directly]

ITAN: We knew the gang. Everybody knew the gang. We knew them as powerful men, but they had never needed to be concerned with us. Then they came and told us they were here to settle a score. We thought there was a mistake. My mother comes out of the house, wiping her hands on her apron and is smiling, asking them to come in for a drink, and we should talk about this and we could settle it all nicely over tea. The man punched her so hard she rattled about in the doorframe and her eyes began to bleed. Then they lined us all up outside and asked us who was the man of the house, and my uncle made one tiny movement, not even the beginning of a movement, more like the breath before the movement, and they shot him. They shot him first from 5 meters away, then they walked right up to him and shot him 5,6,7 times. His body was bouncing about in the dirt. Then they said they would shoot us like that too, unless we went with them.

ASHA: You have to understand. We believed we were living amongst good people. That whilst neighbours fought to the south and to the north, we believed that we had come to understand how-to-live-in peace. You have to understand. This was a place where you would not even think to worry about approaching another's door. We believed that you could just knock. Go in. You would not ask another of their religion, or their politics, or their race. You knew, you knew, so you wouldn't ask, and we believed it was never a problem. And everyone was talking the whole time, and telling intricate stories all laced together, and your learning you wore like your best clothes. We would swim in the sea, and picnic in the hills and tell each other how bright our good fortune had been to be born in such a place. Or at least that's what we believed. What we were told to believe. Before we were told to believe that there was only one true story. That there could only be one people. And that everything that came after, was somehow for the good of those people. What a terrible, terrible joke it has all been.

ITAN: We were kept in vans where we would sleep, eat and keep all our things. I mean, what things? We had no things. Little more than the clothes we were in. In our van there were 7 of us, at first there were 7 of us. 3 others from my region. We would be driven to different sites and have to work. Get out of the van and begin. Working in the fields, building, breaking, packing. Anything wrong, you would be hit on the head. Always on the head. You would feel like the world was always tipping over. Talking. You would be hit for that. Resting. Hit. Looking at them too much. Not looking enough. The rule was that there were no rules for them. When one man died, they just left him by the side of the road. I envied him. It was a living nightmare. I wondered if I would ever be found

alive. I wondered if my mother was still alive, I wondered where they had taken my cousins. My body was being broken apart.

ASHA: For three days we had been living in the little bathroom of our flat. At the back of the house, away from the street. Blankets on the tiles of the floor. My sister and her two children. Me and my husband. We didn't leave when the bombing started. We thought it would stop, like before. We kept all the lights off and would crawl to the kitchen on our bellies to get food. Until there was none left. Nothing of anything left. By the second day all the water was off. We had to use the toilet in front of one another, at first holding up a towel, but after a while, there was no point - the smell was terrible. And pains so bad you could barely stand. The children were beginning to get ill. Lying limp on that cold, glassy floor. Then a blast that covered us all with glass and brick dust. That's when we knew we would have to run. We put all our money together to buy a car, we paid 12-13 times the value of it, but we had no choice. In the early morning we left the city, I was praying, my sister was crying, my husband silent like a closed fist. We were stopped an hour from the border, and from the way they twitched with their guns, and chewed at their own faces, I thought we were going to die. But they mostly only wanted our belongings. Books, clothes, shampoo. My sister had to give them her wedding ring, twisting it off her finger with spit. It was the only way not to let them take the phone. We abandoned the car about five miles from the border and walked up and over to the meeting point. We were marching faster than we could run, with sticks pressed at our backs. At the top it was so cold I could hardly breathe. In all the panic getting down to the other side, we became separated. I have been alone ever since.

ITAN: Then one day, we all have to leave very quickly, and the gang-men are all looking panicked and we are all throwing lots of boxes in the back of the vans and then we drive for a very long time. It must have been because of another gang. We knew they weren't scared of the police. We knew they knew all the police. When we were moved to another van, a bigger van, then a lorry, then we knew we were crossing the border. There were now thirty men together in this lorry and it was a pit of disease and filth. The smell was terrible. In total darkness we were then put on a boat, so small you could sail it yourself, until they stopped in the sea and told us to swim ashore. All we could see were dots of light. I can't really swim, but I managed to drag myself through the black water. I couldn't have run away if I'd wanted to. We were then met by another van near the beach and were taken to work in a warehouse. I knew it was on a farm. I knew there was a busy highway nearby. It was only when the police came and broke the business apart and arrested everybody that I knew for certain that I was in England.

SCENE TWO

[At the offices of 'REFRAME', a charity campaigning for improved treatment of asylum seekers and increased support for refugees.

MICHAEL is waiting for his colleague to arrive. His clothes are sharp, his style is sleek and minimal. He has all the tech. His annoyance at being kept late is held in place by his control over his emotions and an ability to play the long game.

NADIA bounces into the office. She chooses to externalise her creativity and demonstrates it in her personal style. She is energetic, friendly as a puppy, and probably a bit hung-over. Her intelligence is belied by her studied flakiness.]

NADIA: Hello babies!

MICHAEL: Yeah.

NADIA: Christ. You having a bad day already, darlin'?

MICHAEL: I wasn't.

NADIA: Sake.

MICHAEL: I'm sorry? Did I miss something?

NADIA: Oh, I doubt it.

MICHAEL: You're late.

NADIA: I can't help it, I'm an optimist.

MICHAEL: 'I'm sorry' is what I think you might have been reaching for.

NADIA: Come on. I was busy. It overran. It happens.

MICHAEL: To you, yes. It seems to happen all the time. To me, no. I've been here for twenty minutes preparing for the meeting, reading all the background materials, beginning to the score-rating for the analysis. I'm not sure why you think your time is somehow more important than mine. Especially as we don't have very much time to do this / this has to be done by close of play, today.

NADIA: [*with a sigh*] Yes. I think we're all aware of that –

MICHAEL: And I'm actually very busy at the moment / I've got the frontline report to complete, I am supposed to be meeting with Hari to talk about the New Year resolutions campaign, and Liz wants to see the preliminary research on the outreach work.

NADIA: We all are. We are all busy. We are all having to take on extra.

MICHAEL: Which wasn't even my initial responsibility. It was something I agreed to – was made to – take on, despite the fact I am already leading on a significant number of projects.

NADIA: Just goes to show – your t-shirt was right, not all heroes do wear capes.

MICHAEL: You find it really difficult to be serious about anything, don't you?

NADIA: Such shade, Michael. Perhaps you could try taking yourself a little bit less seriously.

MICHAEL: I am proud that I take my work so seriously. I am very proud to do this work / I personally take pride in being fully committed to the work we do.

NADIA: And that just applies to you, does it?

MICHAEL: And the changes we make to people's lives. The way we are able to offer people real change, real hope. That matters to me enormously. That's what I take seriously.

NADIA: Have you finished?

MICHAEL: Can we get started?

[The scene breaks, and NADIA addresses the audience directly]

NADIA: You know, when Michael first arrived here, I was so pleased. Someone with real big-weight brains and who plays principles with their sleeves rolled all the way up. I thought we were going to get on like a house on fire. I thought we would be an unassailable team, and actually he just perfumes everything we do with opposition and competition and bloody mindedness. He won't listen. He won't bend. It's like working with concrete. And of course, all senior management love him. You might have heard

him complain about all the work, but don't be fooled, it's a humble-brag because he's really advertising how many lead projects he's working on. Promoting himself as some sort of expert. And can I let you into a little secret? He's not always right. And it might blow a hole in his little world, but sometimes there are other ways of looking at things. But the more he tries to bulldoze me, the more he pours down his concrete, the more it makes my hands and feet catch fire; the more defiant I am.

[MICHAEL addresses the audience]

MICHAEL: She prefers to talk rather than to read. She does most of her work from the brains of other people. Every corridor you walk down in this building has her leaning against the wall, laughing and spilling her latte on the carpet. Picking through their brains and scratching through their ideas instead of sitting down and doing the hard graft herself. She is as busy as an ornamental bird. Whereas for those of us that live down on the ground, we are in permanent threat of going under, real danger of folding, if the public mood inflames against causes like ours. And I don't know how long I can keep putting out fires. We have a good group of people but – people who are leaving because they are burnt out. We've got serious problems shouting themselves all around us, and she goes around the office sticking smiley faces on people's office chairs.

[The scene resumes from where it was left]

NADIA: Have you got any more speeches you need to make?

MICHAEL: Plenty. But for now, can we look at the case of Asha Kawaf. She arrived in this country in March of -

NADIA: As it happens, the reason I was 'late' was because I was speaking to Taz about the case of Fadil Maluku and I think we should lead with this case -

MICHAEL: The human trafficking case?

NADIA: Amongst other things, yeah. / And I think I've nearly persuaded her -

MICHAEL: With the greatest of respect, Nadia. That's not going to work.

NADIA: Errr. With the greatest of respect, Michael. I think it will. And Taz was interested -

MICHAEL: Did you not get the 'opportunity' to actually read the case? He's from Albania.

NADIA: And?

MICHAEL: They are not at war. There is no state or civil warfare there. It is very difficult to make the case that he could be a refugee.

NADIA: Yes, I understand that its difficult - but that's why I think we ought to promote / this case, get the campaigners out for this one.

MICHAEL: Do you have any idea how many asylum seekers are returned back to Albania?

NADIA: Yes. Over 85% of all claimants.

MICHAEL: So, why would we –

NADIA: That's precisely why. Because there are young men like Fadil who are placed in real jeopardy because of the narrow definition of asylum / that is deployed when assessing these cases.

MICHAEL: But we're not going to change that are we? We aren't going to convert any immigration officials. We could spend the next two or three months chasing our tails on this story and it will have no traction in our lobbying or with our base of public support.

NADIA: His family was shot in front of him. He was kept prisoner and beaten / and because of the relationships between the traffickers and organised crime, it isn't safe for him to go back.

MICHAEL: I read his case. Yes. It is awful. It is horrific. It is futile.

NADIA: We would be showing another side of the refugee crisis, making our supporters aware –

MICHAEL: Our supporters are aware that Albania is a stable democratic parliamentary government in trading relationships with the European Economic bloc, and with relative control over the security services, / and any paramilitary organisations.

NADIA: He's actually Kosovan. Well, not from Kosovo, but he has Kosovan heritage.

MICHAEL: You're just muddying the waters. This story just muddies the waters.

NADIA: But if you are telling me that you read his story, then you will have read about how he was kept like an animal, how he was stripped of all human dignity and how he will be killed if he returns. He deserves our protection.

MICHAEL: They all deserve our protection. Please, Nadia. I don't want to waste time going back to first principles here. We can't think about this too emotionally. We can't become too personally invested in the story of this guy – remember, we don't get too close.

NADIA: So, helping people is only right as long as we never test the rules. As long as we are well behaved.

MICHAEL: We are in danger of discounting other stories that are just as deserving, just as challenging - just as tragic, but stories where we have the chance to mount an action that keeps the refugee crisis on the agenda and grows real support for individuals at great risk.

NADIA: We don't just parrot the bosses. / That's not why we're in this work.

MICHAEL: Which is why, strategically, we ought to prioritise the case of Asha Kawaf. A young woman, separated from her family, running away from the brutality of civil war and military brutality.

NADIA: But haven't we already run enough campaigns with people like Asha / as the figurehead? This is, is generic content, almost stock footage. This is why I think we should take a risk, move on to something different.

MICHAEL: People 'like' Asha? What does that even mean? That the novelty has worn off?

NADIA: Our last five years have all been about that conflict. Most people won't even work here for that long! That's practically the only story we've told in the last five years. / And you know it, our supporters are getting – fatigued - of seeing the same stories.

MICHAEL: Because the war is still going on, because people are still being killed in the streets, because the country is in ruins, because the knock-on effects of the displacement of millions of people is fuelling right-wing sentiment across all of Europe.

NADIA: Yes, and meaning that we continually divert our attention from other desperate situations where previous conflicts have left state corruption / and immunity from prosecution –

MICHAEL: And we cannot afford to divert our attention from people who really need our help, just because they are no longer a novelty.

NADIA: People like Asha have already had a lot of help / compared to Fadil.

MICHAEL: She is living alone in a shared house with strangers, clearly suffering substantial mental health issues, not knowing when she'll be reunited with her family, not knowing when she'll be moved on –

NADIA: Yes, and she was fast-tracked to the UK on a flight, and has been given relatively decent accommodation. She is highly-educated and comes from a wealthy background –

MICHAEL: And what does any of that matter now, when she has nothing?

NADIA: Fadil has been treated like the lowest of the low since he came here to the UK. Because he is a young man on his own, he is treated like a criminal. He has been shunted about from location to location, and was attacked in one of the hostels.

MICHAEL: I have questions about his case.

NADIA: We have the opportunity to take a risk here by campaigning on his story. We have the opportunity to make a change in the way people think about refugees.

MICHAEL: There are too many problems with his story, too many gaps in the story, too many brushes with criminals who are causing real damage to the human rights of others –

NADIA: But we need to have vision if we want to change things, take a risk, get creative with it –

MICHAEL: With what? With no resources, no people and no time? We are all sinking, and now you want to burn the bridges we stand on.

NADIA: This isn't about more work; this is about shifting priorities.

MICHAEL: Putting us on shifting sands. We can't jeopardise anything at this point.

NADIA: We're always living with jeopardy. If not now, when?

MICHAEL: This is a numbers game.

NADIA: This is not a game for people pushed out of mainstream stories.

MICHAEL: This is about winning hearts and minds.

NADIA: This is about changing minds.

MICHAEL: Nadia, this is not our cause.

NADIA: Then, what is?

[The scene is then put across to the audience; they are asked to how they might help resolve this conflict, and help the characters move from an impasse to a joint decision.

The audience are split in two and asked to advise one character only. Any audience member can stop the scene when they see something, some behaviour that they think the character can improve.

The characters take the advice of the audience and then replay the scene, picking up on the skeleton of the script, whilst improvising the new direction.

At any point the characters can opt to break out, get some advice or new lines of argument and persuasion from their audience group.

The rules are – you cannot change someone’s personality or style. You cannot ask them to renounce their beliefs. You cannot offer them magic solutions. This is about helping the character be the ‘best version of themselves’ rather than changing the direction of the scene in totality.

The character will acknowledge advice and agree to act upon it but will only do as far as their personality or principles will allow. They have a right to say no!

If the characters do not come to a decision via the advice and new arguments given from the audience, then the group will vote.]

SCENE THREE

[In this scene we are given letters and pieces of information that so far have not been revealed to the audience. Certain groups are given certain pieces. Initially, no one is given all the reports, though the recipients may choose to open this material to the whole group]

Depending on the path we have chosen, we are given the information for ITAN or ASHA.

This information includes i) a medical report ii) a police background check iii) a psychological report iv) additional testimony taken by advocates.

All documents are read and not performed. We are invited to think about what and how we share information from these reports. We are invited to think about our approach and our standpoint.

We are invited to work out how to take this information forward to support the person through their immigration interview.]

ITAN

MEDICAL REPORT 08/07: EXTRACT

I met Fadil Maluku in my clinic today on Monday 4th October and had the opportunity to conduct a medical examination as directed by the regulations we have under our contract with Immigration Enforcement, and the Home Office of the United Kingdom

[ETLR5 of Part 2 under paragraph AR(EU)1.1A.]. His overall state of health is reasonable with numeric indicators showing that has slightly elevated blood pressure (140/90) for a man of his age (28) and a weight that is at the lower end of acceptable for his height (63kg). He claims that he has gained weight in the past few months, but I would still flag that keeping such a low weight may have longer term consequences on bone density and other muscular-skeletal co-morbid factors. He complained of oral ulcers and tooth pain, and advice was given on remedial treatment and on stopping smoking.

With specific regard to this young man's claim, we noted that he has several scars on the upper part of his body, and more particularly on the trapezoidal area, measuring between 2cm-10cm in length. Looking at the patterns of healing, most were sustained more than a year ago, and would appear to have been made by a jagged instrument, but something ad-hoc, not a conventional weapon. There are newer scars on the upper arms and forearms from wounds in the past 6 months. We also noted there is some evidence of head injury, and there are two discernible scars on the rear of the crown; though the number of marks were not consistent to the amount of injuries the patient claimed.

The foot injury is substantial, and it is my opinion that this will impair the patient's mobility for the remainder of their life, though we see this as limiting rather than a debilitating injury. The foot injury may have been caused by a large blade as asserted, but it would not have been a conventional knife wound, and though there are enduring questions here, the difficulties associated with healing in this part of the body do not enable us to infer anything definitive from the medical evidence presented today.

This professional report has been authored by Dr Rosemary Clark, Senior Clinical Psychologist (CPsychol), and is a record of a commissioned appointment with the client by the organisation, REFORM. This is not an official Medico-Legal Report and should not be submitted for adjudication purposes without this caveat.

I met with Fadil Maluku at my practice last week and found him to be an individual of considerable intelligence, of lively conversation and with a playful disposition. In summary, this is in an individual with keen awareness and insight into his current situation, but with that knowledge comes a high degree of stress and anxiety. Though largely pro-social in outlook, Fadil demonstrated a number of rapid and stark shifts in mood and could be challenging and on occasion prone to venting his frustrations. Though he was happy to apologise for any irritation on his part, he had difficulty acknowledging his own anxiety and low mood which could be a barrier to further treatment. In my professional opinion, this is consistent with an experience of profound trauma, problems in emotional integration, and could indicate that his story has grounding in truth. There is further analysis of this included in the body of the report below.

There are fluctuations in the details of the story provided (see the section on page 3 regarding location) some of which would align with the presentation of posttraumatic stress disorder and an inability to recall details from the originating incident, but there were other mobilities in information that are not usually associated with this psychological state – basic historic and long-term information was inconsistent. None of which is to make a judgement towards intent, but moreover, that errors in the testimony, combined with intervals of hostile reluctance are also consistent with the refugee experience to be cautious about revealing personal information.

There is no doubt in my mind that Fadil's command of the English language is far superior to his initial presentation, this is demonstrated in an increased fluency in times of emotional distress or pressure, and a sophisticated use of rhetoric and lexical flexibility to make a point.

EXTRACT OF REPORT FROM EUROPEAN BORDER & COASTGUARD AGENCY

Noted: Image match two existing records: LUIS VASSILIADIS (M.30) and ITAN META (M.31). There is an outstanding alert on META for absconding from criminal proceedings. There is data on the requested search of FADIL MALOKU, but there is no image match here. Please note that the image bank on MALOKU is limited, but from the information provided on the current claimant, there is a disparity in likely age with the records held in the country of origin.

The profile for VASSILIADIS, a Greek National, is nominal and there is no real substantiating background data or sustained activity to indicate this anything more than a proxy. VASSILIADIS has been logged as crossing the Greek-Albania border on 4 occasions in 2017 and travelling to Serbia and Hungary in the same year. The use of this identity seems concentrated to a period of less than 8 months. FRONTEX flags this as a channel for non-regional migrants as well as local interstate travel.

ITAN META, an Albanian National, has also been previously known as ITAN GJONI. The records were amalgamated in 2013. META has two criminal charges on record. One served prison sentence for criminal damage in 2016, detained for 9 months in Jordan Misja Prison. We note there is currently a red-flag on conditions in that closed facility. Outstanding arrest warrant for META for serious assault in 2017. The victim was

reported to have sustained substantial injuries inflicted with a weapon with the assailant absconding from the scene.

ITAN META also occupies the online and print alias 'Meta-Man' and has been linked with both left-wing radical groups, and right-wing media organisations. Publicly campaigned for 'Party for Justice, Integration and Unity' at the last election, a party that has since been linked to a regional organised crime syndicate, after the trial of a member of the party.

EXTRACT OF FADIL TESTIMONY TAKEN IN MEETING - RECORDED 21/08

"No, I was not a journalist. But yes, I was writing about things. It was not even writing. I wasn't a proper writer. I was just chatting to others who felt the same as me. I didn't work for any newspapers. I didn't know anybody who worked for the newspapers. Stupid, really. Juvenile stuff. Look, I needed the money. I made a couple of hundred Euros for putting out some online posts. It was pocket change, that was all. Just some pieces to stir up the public, to get people going. You call it 'click-bait'? Yes, exactly. Just creating some noise, some big, ugly background noise. Banging a noisy drum. I was doing what hundreds of other people were doing. Going online to speak about the problems in my country. Because they are corrupt. They are all corrupt. The police, the judges, the politicians. All corrupt men trying to make sure the rest of us live like peasants while they float about in their swimming pools. So yes, I might have written a few things about that, about those people, and I guess that's why I came to the attention of certain people, certain powerful people. That's when I was taken, from the house of my parents. Taken by evil men. They imprisoned me and treated me like a dog. I

thought I was going to die. You know what I have been through. I want you to believe me”.

EXTRACT OF TESTIMONY FADIL MALOKU TAKEN IN INTERVIEW 14/11

“I got myself arrested. You went through the door and it was like going inside a terrible story. The sort of thing you’d only believe in a story. What was outside the door and what was inside the door didn’t make sense to one another. Men would hang themselves and the guards would kick them to see them swing. I was beaten. You were hit regardless of what you did or how fast you did it. There were no rules for them. And always hit around the head. You felt as though your brains were tipping out of your eyes. It was a set up. I was attacked by a man with a large knife and a metal bar. It was in the street by my front door and nobody came. Nobody came out because maybe they had been warned, they do that sometimes, or because they were all too scared. Yes, I stabbed him. I was trying to save my own life. I was trying to stay alive. They said I killed him, but I saw him climb into a car and drive away. There were no pictures of the body, nobody saw the body, because there was no body. I stabbed him in the arm and ran away. It was a built-up charge. I agreed to go with them because they could protect me, I could disappear with them. They were more powerful than the police. Yes, I knew some people. But no, these people were not friends. These people are evil. They kept me and treated me like a dog. I thought I was going to die. And that’s the truth. You know what I have been through. You have to believe me.”

ASHA

EXTRACT OF REPORT FROM RED CROSS REPORT TO HOME OFFICE 18/02

This is a recommendation that Dr. Asha Kawaf is placed on the 3rd March scheduled flight from Beirut to Glasgow as part of the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme. Dr Kawaf was recently based in a camp in the Beqaa Valley (245W+H4 Safiyeh) after having been moved there from the clearing of the unofficial Aarsal camps by the Lebanese Authorities. Dr Kawaf is at the refugee camp alone, having travelled from Homs in Syria with her husband (Dr Mahmoud), her sister (Sahar Hassan) and her two nieces (Zeina, 8) and (Emina, 6). Dr Kawaf knows her family to be in transit camps in Serbia and Bulgaria respectively. They are in sporadic contact over email and phone. Dr Kawaf is an academic and was located at Al'Baath University researching and teaching on pharmacology. She has built an international research profile and has visited the UK previously. She speaks English fluently and therefore will have fewer challenges assimilating in the country.

Dr Kawaf was commended to the VPR scheme by UNHCR workers who had engaged with her after she was taken to hospital. Dr Kawaf had been hospitalised for some time after an attack and had been unable to return to the camp. UNHCR had found her an interim place in a refuge. We were asked to consider her case as a priority under the categories of i) maternity requirements, ii) alone woman, iii) physical impairment, and as such are satisfied that we can recommend her to you as meeting all of the necessary criteria.

MEDICAL REPORT: EXTRACT 28/05

I met with Dr Asha Kawaf today in clinic and am satisfied with the improvement she has made to date, and as such she will be formally discharged from our care. It is my opinion that she is on course to make a full physical recovery, though her progress might be assisted if she were to have access to an improved standard of living. From my discussion with the patient, I note that she has no access to any real cooking facilities where she resides, and it is my belief that this is having a detrimental impact on her general health. Blood tests (full report follows) demonstrate critically low levels of iron, and low levels of vitamin D and potassium. This would be consistent with the physical symptoms she is experiencing (low blood-pressure, cramps, night sweats, restlessness and shortness of breath) all tangible factors that are contributing to the frequent 'panic attacks' she has been experiencing. I have provided her with a three-month prescription for supplements on discharge but there needs to be longer-term monitoring of her baseline measurements through the GP service. I would advise that she has another Full Blood Count in two-months from the date of this letter).

Her injuries are healing as expected, and I am pleased to say that the minor gyn-obs surgical intervention we made in April means that the patient is experiencing much less day-to-day pain and has a better experience of movement and toileting. I discussed with the patient the prognosis for her maternal health and that I see no reason why she should be concerned about future problems.

PYSCHOLOGICAL REPORT 14/07: EXTRACT

Given the limited nature and scope of this report, this document should only be used as evidence on any future immigration decision, in context of further and fuller assessments. The contents of this professional report are the observations and findings

of Dr Ashtar Al-Rubeyi (RCPsych), Clinical Psychiatrist for Strathclyde CMHT. Ms Kawaf was seen in my clinic on referral from QEUH by Ms Caroline Barrett, OBGY Consultant Surgeon. The meeting lasted approximately one hour where we discussed the possibility of requesting additional counselling support through her local GP service, as well as beginning on a course of SSRIs. The patient was not optimistic about her ability to follow either recommendation, and was concerned about known side-effects and published contra-indications of a number of options, but did agree to take a prescription for 120 Citalopram.

The patient was reticent and self-protecting during our meeting, seeming unable to disconnect the purposes of this assessment to conversations that she might have with Immigration Enforcement officials, despite all reassurances to the contrary. This meant that sometimes very simple questions about mood, about outlook or thoughts about the future were interpreted as hostile, and therefore progress was limited. The patient is clearly in a high state of anxiety and is deficit in basic rest and reset functions.

Psychological counselling might usefully explore whether a diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder would be fitting and a useful pathway to further intervention and treatment. Though the patient is evidently distressed and demonstrates low-level paranoia and feelings of persecution, they are fully cognisant of their surroundings, are not experiencing any visual or auditory hallucinations and have good insight into their current position. Whilst I have strong concerns for this patient's welfare, I do not believe they are at risk of self-harm or taking their own life.

EXTRACT OF TESTIMONY FROM ASHA KAWAF 1/2 - RECORDED 22/09

“Yes, I came on an aeroplane. Yes, I was ‘lucky’ in that respect I suppose. Yes. I was lucky to have a seat on the aircraft, I know that. I was lucky to make it to the UK without having to travel in a lorry, or to fold myself under the seat of the car, or to climb into a little plastic boat. I wasn’t washed ashore. I was lucky. Bright in my own good fortune. Unlike my sister. She and her children were on a boat that was dead in the water for three days. Somewhere between Africa and Greece, but not close enough to Greece, with no sight of any land. And some of the men in the boat threatened to throw Yasmine into the water. She is eight years old. Just a little girl and they wanted to throw her off the boat. She was sick and they thought they might catch something from her. But the other women protected her, protected my sister when she was so frightened, when she thought all was lost. Strangers. Strangers forming a ring around the girl, growling like lionesses at any of the men who so much as looked in their direction. They finally made it to the island and an old Greek grandpapa carried Yasmine off the beach. His wife gave my sister her hairbrush. So, yes. I suppose I was lucky”.

EXTRACT OF TESTIMONY FROM ASHA KAWAF 2/2- RECORDED 22/09

“I was lucky that I was given a place to live quite near the marketplace and the shops. There are also schools there, where the children can even learn music, and a hospital, and they were talking about opening up a job centre when I left. There are paved roads and some of the buildings have solid walls. But it is so flat. Flat and grey with dust for as far as the eye can see. If you wanted to walk around the edge it would take you all day and into the night – but you would never want to walk around the edge. It is wilder at the edges; there the men stand on the rooftops and they sometimes set fires. Mostly, they are just young boys. Some no more than 15 or 16. They are all alone and so they try to make themselves like a bear. You know, standing on their hind-legs and shouting

louder and louder about revenge. You would never leave the camp because outside they think of us like parasites. So yes, I was lucky to be in the middle of the camp with the crying babies and the crying mothers and the once mothers who sat dazed and absent with their empty pots outside their tents. I stop noticing them after a while, the people become like furniture around me. I cannot be broken every day; I have to hold on to myself. The sound of the flapping cloth is like the sound of the ripping of the sky, like a boat breaking in the water. And I waited there for a year rocking back and forth between wanting for my husband to come and get me but wanting him to stay as far away from this hell-on-earth.”

SCENE FOUR - ITAN

[Depending on which pathway we have chosen, we either follow ASHA or ITAN and the relevant scene is the only one played]

[MAYA and ITAN are both on the phone to unseen interlocutors.]

ITAN: [*on the phone*] Yes. Yes. I understand you. I understand what you want. I’m not going to - I will not say anything about that. I will not say a thing. I understand. You have to believe me; I don’t want any more trouble from you. Please. I just want to move on from this. I won’t say anything that will threaten your position. Nothing. No details. Believe me. I want this to be over.

MAYA: [*on the phone*] Yes. Yes, I will. I promise. No. I feel a lot better now. I don't know what. I will. I will. It's just getting an appointment, isn't it? I'm fine. No, really, I'm fine and you know what, this is beginning to piss me off a bit, you know. Like you've all been having a nice little chat behind my back and decided that I'm somehow not coping. Well. I think you are. I think you are saying that. Well, I'm calling bullshit to that. Look, I've got to go in. I love you too. Believe me. I just want this to be over.

[MAYA is sitting at the table leafing through a bundle of papers. She has her laptop open in front of her and is trying to fill out the pre-interview form on the screen. ITAN prowls around the room with tigerish energy and high boredom.]

ITAN: I'm hungry. What did you bring?

MAYA: [*resigned*] Banana or biscuit bar?

ITAN: I haven't eaten since yesterday and all you bring with you is baby food.

MAYA: [*busy with paperwork*] No. I brought my lunch with me.

ITAN: What about twenty pounds then?

MAYA: You know, even if I had any money on me, I wouldn't be allowed to give it to you.

ITAN: No one would need to know.

MAYA: But I would.

ITAN: Ahhhh. So, it would be one less bottle of that expensive wine you like.

MAYA: Shall I put them back in my bag, then?

ITAN: [*taking the food and beginning to eat it*] Maya, Maya, Maya.

MAYA: Fadil. Fadil. Or Luis. Or Itan?

ITAN: You must not make fun of my mistakes.

MAYA: Your problem is that you got caught.

ITAN: I was speaking for my life. What else was I supposed to do?

MAYA: Tell me the truth.

ITAN: You think it can be as simple as taking off a coat and putting on another?

MAYA: No. I know, I know. Eat your banana.

ITAN: What was I supposed to do?

MAYA: I'm just thinking that all this might be a bit simpler if you had told me the truth last time you solemnly and faithfully said that you were telling me the truth.

ITAN: I was telling you the truth.

MAYA: Itan, you have a criminal record / You have a criminal record that you didn't tell me about.

ITAN: That doesn't mean that I wasn't telling you the truth, or that the criminal record is the truth.

MAYA: It puts me in a very difficult position though, doesn't it? / It puts your claim in a very difficult position.

ITAN: You – you are not in a difficult position. / Come on. What is this moral bullshit we have brought with us today?

MAYA: And how is trying to bait me going to help you prepare for your interview?

ITAN: Nothing is going to help.

MAYA: It tastes like floor sweepings, but the bar is very high in protein. Don't be put off and don't give up.

ITAN: It'll build me up, ready to go back to jail.

MAYA: And I want us to try our best to avoid that. So – tell me again about how you were given this criminal record? / From the start. With nothing left out.

ITAN: It's not real. It is made up. It is all made up.

MAYA: And we both know that is the central problem. What is made up and what is real? / You have blurred the line too well. And now we have to find a way to find a path back to the truth.

ITAN: It was a conspiracy against me... As if there is just one truth, Maya.

MAYA: We can't just hand them a knot and ask them to unravel it themselves. We have to make your story work, somehow. To put an explanation to the trail of inconsistencies.

ITAN: They are not 'inconsistencies', they are me trying to go into hiding. Trying to present other mes to keep the real me locked away somewhere safe. Have you not been listening to me?

MAYA: I have worked unpaid overtime listening to you, Itan.

ITAN: I have been beaten, I have been stabbed, I have been whipped, I have been threatened with a gun, with fire. And you want to obsess over details.

MAYA: Yes. Yes, I do want to 'obsess' about the details. As we have discussed, every little tiny inconsistency, every iota of difference is enough to get you deported? I've seen people put straight on flights back to warzones after they mixed up the names of obscure border towns they had only ever been through in the pitch black while running for their lives.

ITAN: Next time bring me chocolate. A big wall of syrup cake and a pack of cigarettes.

MAYA: Itan, I'm worried that there won't be a next time for us to meet, unless you give more details about the people that held you, / how you got into that -

ITAN: I'm going to smoke myself right into a hospital bed.

MAYA: I don't know if that's the most time effective plan. You need to authenticate your story by giving some names, some place names, times and dates.

ITAN: Or I might as well throw myself off a building. Beat myself up first. Smash my own teeth. Then when they find my body, they might believe how much danger I was in.

MAYA: You don't want to tell me anything more about who you were working for?

ITAN: No.

MAYA: Nothing more about who you were writing about? About what you found out in your investigation?

ITAN: I can't.

MAYA: [*finding a document from her bundle and pushing it across the table*] If you acknowledged you are this writer, then we might be able to strengthen your case as a persecuted journalist.

ITAN: [*briefly scans the documents*] I'm not as good a storyteller as this writer.

MAYA: I know this is your writing, and if I can see that, then it won't take the immigration service long to find out either. You are better to have claimed this, owned this, rather than let them discount this as yet more 'lies', more fictions from you.

ITAN: You always say they are incompetent.

MAYA: Yes. That's true.

ITAN: I can't be associated with those comments. Those are not my findings. Those are not my opinions.

MAYA: I understand that you are scared, but there are protections for people in your situation –

ITAN: There are no protections. There are no protections you can offer me.

MAYA: Sometimes staying under the radar doesn't help. Sometimes making yourself visible is what offers you protection.

ITAN: Sometimes. Sometimes. Is that a risk you would be willing to take?

MAYA: I can't lie to you.

ITAN: And I can't do anything else.

MAYA: Shall we begin to write down what you want to say then?

ITAN: Where would you like me to start?

MAYA: You tell me.

SCENE FOUR – ASHA

[ASHA and TOM arrive independently to the building's reception desk. They speak to an imagined receptionist across a considerably sized desk]

ASHA: Asha Kawaf. Asha. Kawaf. Like on this letter here. It's typed out in black and white in front of you. I am not being angry. I am worried about being late. Yes. This letter here. Fine. Here, have this as well. Well, of course it looks different, it is different. It is a temporary passport. Look, I don't really care – I would have thought you

understood. What do you want a picture for? Really? Fine. Yes, I'll stand there. Thank you. No. Thank you very much.

TOM: Morning. Tom, Tom Woods. Yeah, sure. I've got my ID card somewhere here. I know, yeah it was supposed to be Dr. Howe. Urgh. I can't find it. Yeah, she's not – she's had to take some time off work. Yeah, I hope so too. I'll tell her you said hello. Damn, it's not here either. I must have left it in the office. Ah, cheers mate. Thanks for that. Stand just here? Thanks. Christ, that's not the most flattering picture. Tell me about it, I guess I'll sleep when I'm dead.

[ASHA is sitting waiting in the interview room. TOM enters flustered and disorganised with a stack of papers. He is dressed in a suit that appears to be fighting to get off him. He receives messages and notifications from his phone all through the meeting.]

TOM: [*sitting down opposite her*] Asha? Asha Kawaf, right?

ASHA: Yes, but I thought that –

TOM: Good. We don't really have much time to go through the case notes today, so if it's all right with you / I thought it would be best if we just skip to -

ASHA: Where is Maya? Is Maya coming?

TOM: No. She can't be here today I'm afraid.

ASHA: Why not? I've been speaking with Maya. Maya knows all about my case.

TOM: Well Asha, you have me to talk to today.

ASHA: I'm only going to speak with Maya.

TOM: Then this is going to be a very short meeting.

ASHA: I got up at 4am this morning to be here / This is a complete waste of my time.

TOM: Yes, and I didn't stop working till 4am this morning, so Asha shall we try to make the best of the situation.

ASHA: Don't use my name like that. Like its some way we are going to be friends. I don't even know you.

TOM: Well, I feel I know a little about you. I have been reading all about you and your case.

ASHA: We still have a few days before the meeting. I could wait and speak with Maya -

TOM: Asha - it is very unlikely that Maya will be back at work before your substantive interview. She is unwell and needed some time off.

ASHA: Then she is lucky to have that choice.

TOM: What I want to try to do today is to think about how we are going to present your case in the best way possible. Put your story in the best light –

ASHA: It doesn't need a new light, or the best light, or any kind of light. We are not tabloid journalists looking for an 'angle'. What I have said is what I have said and that is enough.

TOM: We are afraid it might not be.

ASHA: I know I meet the qualifying criteria for refugee status/ and I expect you to act on that case.

TOM: Yes, I understand you meet those basic criteria. But if we cannot demonstrate why you are at a particular vulnerability –

ASHA: Am I having to tell you your job? Do you not understand even basic pieces of law? / I want you to listen very carefully to how I want you to present –

TOM: I am not your lawyer, Asha. I am a lawyer, of sorts. But I am not *your* lawyer. So, I'm sorry but you don't get to instruct me. / I am your advisor and I have reviewed your casefile ahead of your interview and -

ASHA: I have run away from a country at war. My home is gone. My friends are gone. My family is scattered everywhere. I was abandoned to a refugee camp. What more? What more can I possibly say?

TOM: We felt that you might need to bring other aspects more to the forefront.

ASHA: And who is 'we' in all of this? / Another set of Matts and Joshs and Bens, or whatever you keep being called -

TOM: Because we at the advice service were reviewing your case - and we know that this case, your story, will get kicked into the long grass. What I mean by that is that it will get deferred and deferred because your claim does not mark you out as a priority case.

ASHA: This is my story and I know best how to tell it.

TOM: We are trying to help you. I am trying to help you. I want to help you, and to do that I need you to help yourself by putting all the information forward.

ASHA: I know the rules. I have been studying the rules.

TOM: Look, I know the rules very well. It's my job. But there are the visible rules and the invisible ones. And I know that there are 'certain things' it would be helpful to say, / to present more detail upon, that would clarify why you might qualify as a vulnerable case.

ASHA: You are trying to pressure me into saying certain things. You think you know me and my story far better than I do myself, that you can rewrite my story in a better way.

TOM: Not in a better way. In a way that is more likely to get you through that interview and get you on a track to full refugee status. Listen. I have dealt with a number of cases like yours / where the medical records have a substantial influence.

ASHA: I am so very sorry to be so repetitive. / How very boring for you to have to go through this again.

TOM: Where the doctor's notes indicate that there might be a critical – and let me emphasise that here for you – critical addition to your case / that marks you out as a maltreated person that has additional vulnerabilities.

ASHA: You are just seeing what you want to see. Putting there what you want to put there.

TOM: Perhaps we could think about this another way?

ASHA: What do you mean?

TOM: Perhaps this helps if you can think of this as not just about you? Are you not also trying to bring your husband here to live with you?

ASHA: [*shouting*] How dare you? How dare you try and make that my problem! How dare you imply that the debt rests with me? That I am the one who owes? / I am the one who has been left with the burden -

TOM: Okay Asha, calm down. Calm yourself, please.

ASHA: [*distressed*] I am the one who shouldered all the burden. Who sold everything I had, every part of who I was to get out. / I am the one who paid the price.

TOM: I hear you. I hear you and I am listening.

ASHA: I am the one is owed some kind of safety.

TOM: All right. I know. I understand that. I believe in that. [*pause*] Look. We didn't get off to the best of starts.

ASHA: I'm just – I'm just like a cat on hot bricks. I just can't – This is all too much. I'm sorry.

TOM: No. I'm sorry for you. Sorry you have to sit there. Sorry I have to ask you all these questions.

ASHA: They will ask me worse. That's right isn't it.

TOM: That's likely.

ASHA: See, you are just like a proper lawyer.

TOM: Shall we begin again?

SCENE FIVE - ITAN

[The final monologue is performed to the whole group. The group hears the testimony from the character they have chosen to track]

ITAN: I've been really going off Facebook, you know? I've been feeling really like the platform has been compromised. All this stuff about Zuckerberg selling everything off to the Russians. I've never really trusted him, but this was making me queasy. Don't get me wrong, I'm not a communist. We tried that, and look where it got us? Albania is fucked up, people, and I really love Albania. But I was on Facebook looking for news on a friend, and that's when I saw the story. I read this kid's story on Facebook, all about how he had been trafficked as a result of an old family blood-feud. Because that's what they do in those mountain villages. They live like it's still the fourteenth century. He was writing from the UK and telling his story of how he escaped slaving for the gangs. How he was still so frightened but wanted to find other Albanians. So, I took his story. Honestly, it wasn't very well written, and I think I have told his story much better. In some ways.

ITAN: Honestly? My name is Itan Gjoni and I am from Albania. I was writing about state corruption when I was taken to prison for some bullshit charge. There I was beaten so

badly I could not see, and I lost control of my bowels for days on end. I was just leaking out of my own body. About six months after leaving prison, I had begun to write again, but covertly I thought. I thought I was being so clever. But one night I was coming back to my house and I was attacked. He stabbed me in the foot, and I stabbed him in the arm. Tit-for-tat, really. No, I haven't killed anyone. That's a joke. But, believe me, they would have killed me if I had stayed. And that's not so very funny. Someone in government, but they're sitting behind people, who sit behind people, who get other people to do their dirty work for them. But that's the thing about my country, we all have friends, and a friend of a friend told me that they could put me in touch with friends who could help me disappear. Yes. Yes, I knew who they were, and I knew they were criminals. I knew they also had blood on their hands. I thought we might understand one another, I thought we might have some common cause. But they just understood money. Even though I had paid them, they treated me like a dog. They didn't care if I lived or died. I could have died in that boat and no one would have blinked more than to rid their eyes of the salt from the seawater. They kept me prisoner on the farm when we arrived in the UK. I worked 16-17 hour days for no money and sometimes no food. Sometimes they would kick the food out from our hands just to make themselves laugh. That is the truth. The truth is they would have butchered me if I'd tried to escape. The truth is I was afraid for my life. I have told you the truth. Are you happy now?

SCENE FIVE - ASHA

ASHA: If everybody knows, then why do you need to ask? If everybody who has seen my body knows what has happened to my body, then why do you need to keep asking me?

It is an animal that I live with, not you. You want me to say it out loud? You want me to speak out the words to you? You need me to tell you when I have already told you.

There really isn't any more to say. I am the one who was lucky, remember? This was the price I paid to get on an aeroplane and come to the UK. Remember? That you liked me because I didn't complain. That I am compliant. That I didn't shout like the others you see. You told me that I was one of the lucky ones. Well, someone like you then. Someone wearing the same sort of clothes as you, who had the same sort of hair as you. You are all you to me. I am the only thing I have of me anymore. You want to take more of me. You know what happened to me. You know what happened to me. You know what happened to me. It's in your notes. It is there in front of your eyes. It's all there right in front of your eyes. Now, what more of me do you need to make your decision?

ASHA: I hope that we will be reunited. There is such a lot in that one word, don't you think? 'Re-united'. It comes from the Latin; to be as one. What a promise that holds! I hope my husband will join me. I hope he might want to come from Italy and be here with me. I hope that we are still like husband and wife after all this time. I hope he can forgive me. I hope I can forgive him. I'm no longer asking for forgiveness from any higher power. We live in such wicked times, after all. I know he has a decent life in Italy, he lives with other people from our region. They cook together and eat together, whilst I eat white toast in my bedroom. But we cannot live together in Italy, he says that the mood is turning, that there are sometimes political parades through the town and they sometimes have to stay indoors. I need to have my status confirmed before we can even begin the process of reunion. I need to be a refugee. That is all. To be what I am is all I am asking. To be seen for what I am is all I am asking. What I have said to you has to be enough, because there isn't any more to say.

