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Student's (official) Name: Reyess Peh Qi Xun

Class: 3i4

Name of Teacher-Mentor: Mrs Wong-Tan Swee Lin Jenny

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Chapter 1: Introductory Chapter

1.1 **Background**

Black Mirror is a British science-fiction television series that first aired in 2011 on the United Kingdom's Channel 4. It was later bought over by the streaming service Netflix. Since then, *Black Mirror* has gained immense popularity, garnering mostly positive reviews and achieving numerous accolades, such as getting nominated for 14 British Academy Film Awards and winning 2 of them, and getting nominated for 15 Emmy Awards nominations and winning 9 of them (Wikipedia,2020). Despite the variety of sub-genres in the episodes, such as science fiction, horror, thriller and satire, most of the episodes are united by a common theme of technology, and the dangers of relying too much on it. *Black Mirror* seeks to identify the radical changes brought about by technology, and, at the same time, projects our contemporary experiences of the digital revolution to a possible, oftentimes dystopian, future. The episodes, though mostly set in seemingly futuristic and sometimes alternative universes, bring to the fore ideas and practices that are increasingly happening in our modern society. As such, *Black Mirror* episodes serve as cautionary tales to modern-day viewers, eliciting reflections on our slavish use of technology. Yet, at the same time, in watching the

stories through a screen, the double irony of such messaging, especially through the use of digital technology, would not be lost on

discerning audiences, and more effectively so with the title alluding to a mirror that is black, a mirror that actually uncannily reflects the viewers themselves.

This paper seeks to analyse certain episodes of *Black Mirror* through the lens of Sigmund Freud's theory of "The Uncanny" . The uncanny is described as the psychological experience of something as strangely familiar, rather than simply mysterious (Royle, 2003). This psychoanalytical lens is chosen as *Black Mirror* often depicts relatable technology-linked themes such as surveillance, cloning, automatons, and social media. The series delves into how technology can lead to Man losing their humanity and create extreme scenarios that make the viewers question the ethics of some new innovations and cautions the implications of their misuse.

1.2 **Rationale**

Black Mirror has been one of the most popular television series on Netflix, largely due to the unsettling, and sometimes eerie, dystopian premises the television series brings to the table. The show's appeal lies in its ability to retain the realistic and familiar aspects of technology in spite of the very original imaginative plots in the various episodes. As such, though the current society we live in is certainly not as technologically-advanced as some of the worlds depicted in the *Black Mirror* episodes, there is always a certain likeness embedded in each of the dystopian settings or issues raised in *Black Mirror*, which generates robust discussions of how near we are or already are in those kinds of scenarios. This research will, therefore, seek to uncover the way in which Freud's Uncanny and the Double shapes certain episodes of

Black Mirror into cautionary tales, and this paper will attempt to analyse what these effects are and how using this theory, *Black Mirror* warns viewers of the potential repercussions of their misuse of technology and make them look into themselves to check their own conscience.

1.3 **Research Questions**

1. What warnings on the misuse of technology are depicted in "White Bear", "Nosedive", "The Entire History of You" and "Fifteen Million Merits"?

2. How is the concept of "Double" in Freud's theory of "The Uncanny" used to build *Black Mirror* episodes as cautionary tales?

3. How effective are these depictions in showing the strangely familiar and what are their controversial implications?

1.4 **Thesis Statement**

Through the lens of Freud's Uncanny and the Double, *Black Mirror* serves as cautionary tales that instil fear through the depictions of the familiar for its viewers, leading the viewers to check the unacceptable parts of their own Ego and to reflect on how they themselves could have contributed to similar problems in their lives.

1.5 **Scope of Research / Delimitation(s)**

The research will analyze 4 episodes of *Black Mirror* through the lens of Freud's Uncanny and the Double, namely "The Entire History of You", "Fifteen Million Merits", "Nosedive", and "White Bear". These episodes are chosen for analysis as the specific aspects of technology being discussed are the most prominent and relevant in today's society, and are issues that viewers are the most familiar with. Based on the ratings each of these episodes received, with "Nosedive" garnering a high rating of 8.3/10 on IMDB and "Fifteen Million Merits" garnering a similar rating of 8.1/10, it can be inferred that there must be something in these highly-rated episodes that resonate to generate such a good following. These episodes were also widely discussed and debated in published research papers.

1.6 **Significance of Research / Usefulness**

This research paper hopes to add value to the current body of research on the ins and outs of the ways in which *Black Mirror* episodes, despite being set mostly in the future, serve as a reflection of our contemporary society, and also as cautionary tales of what is to come in the future should technology continue to be misused by humans. This paper hopes to determine how Freud's "The Uncanny and the Double" allows for the ideas and themes in certain episodes to parallel the digital age of the real world.

1.7 **Limitations**

This paper will not be covering all episodes in *Black Mirror,* even those with similar themes and topics on technology, as it would be beyond the word limit allowed by this research task for in-depth analysis and evaluation. However, some allusions and cross-referencing might be undertaken to show some common strands across the series and the episodes.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this literature review, the theory of "The Uncanny", as well as "The Double", will be discussed.

2.1 The Uncanny

The psychological concept of the Uncanny was first explored by Ernst Jentsch in his 1906 essay "On the Psychology of the Uncanny", where he ascribed the essential factor in the evocation of the feeling of uncanniness to "intellectual uncertainty, such that the uncanny would always, as it were, be something one does not know one's way about in. The better oriented in his environment a person is, the less readily will he get the impression of something uncanny in regard to the objects and events in it" (Jentsch,1906). Jentsch opined that the feeling of uncanniness only arises when there is uncertainty in someone about what an object is supposed to be. Jentsch proceeded to exemplify his definition of the Uncanny in

fiction, specifically, in the book *The Sandman*, written by E.T.A Hoffman. Here, Jentsch explained that the feeling of uncanniness is embodied in the lifelike doll, Olympia (one of the characters in the book), supporting his thesis with the reasoning that though Olympia is a lifeless doll, it is portrayed in such a manner that allows it to appear as if it were animate, therefore casting doubt upon readers as to whether Olympia is considered an animate or inanimate character. He specifically stated in his essay that the best method to create an effect of uncanniness was to "leave the reader in uncertainty whether a particular figure in the story is a human being or an automaton and to do it in such a way that his attention is not focused directly upon his uncertainty" (Jentsch, 1906). It was with this reasoning that allowed Jentsch to identify Olympia as the story's main portrayal of the Uncanny. In conclusion, Jentsch "sees the undecidability of the inanimate/animate opposition as one source of the uncanny" (Gray, 1919).

This definition of the Uncanny was further refined and developed by Sigmund Freud, in his 1919 essay "The Uncanny". Firstly, Freud defined the Uncanny as a "class of frightening things that leads us back to what is known and familiar"(Freud,1919) , referring to the two German words, *heimlich* and *unheimlich,* in his explanation of the Uncanny. The word *heimlich* embodies connotations of privacy, and refers to things that are "known and familiar"(Gray, 1919). Freud thus associated the *heimlich* with the "private parts"(Gray,1919), the parts of the body that are the most intimate and familiar to us, and thus subject to most concealment (Gray,1919). As such, Freud also considers things that are concealed from the self to be the *heimlich*. (Gray,1919). The word *unheimlich* refers to things that are "unfamiliar, frightening" and "unconcealed"(Gray,1919). As such, the *unheimlich* can be seen as an unexpected self-revelation(Gray,1919). As such, Freud used these two

words, *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, to come to an eventual conclusion that the uncanny is the "revelation of what is private and concealed, of what is hidden; hidden not only from others, but also from the self" (Gray,1919). He then went on to criticise Jenstch's definition of the Uncanny that the evocation of the feeling of uncanniness is subject to one's intellectual uncertainty, by arguing that the main instance of uncanniness in *The Sandman* was in fact not embodied within the undecidability of the animatedness of the lifelike doll, Olympia, but rather within the Sandman and the idea of being robbed of one's eyes (Freud,1919). Freud argued that intellectual uncertainty about whether an object is alive or not is not a favourable condition for the awakening of uncanny feelings like what Jentsch had stated. In the context of *The Sandman,* Freud stated that the idea of a living doll, much like Olympia, elicits no fear whatsoever in readers, whereas the fear of losing one's eyes, evidently present amongst children, is still retained within them even when they grow to become adult(Freud,1919) To Freud the prospect of a living doll elicits no fear in readers, and as such would not be an infantile fear that readers will have, in contrast to the fear of losing one's eyes that is deeply rooted amongst many people since a young age(Freud,1919) Thus, Freud suggested that rather than intellectual uncertainty, the ability of a certain event or object to appear familiar to a person and to reawaken fear in a person, is the essential factor in the evocation of feelings of uncanniness in a person.

2.2 The Double

The "Double" is a theory introduced by Otto Rank, in his 1925 essay *"Double: A Psychoanalytic Study"*. The "Double" refers to " a representation of the ego that can assume various forms (the shadow, reflection, portrait, double, twin) that are found in primitive animism, as a narcissistic extension and guarantee of immortality, but which, with the withdrawal of narcissism, becomes a foreshadowing of death, a source of criticism and persecution" (Encyclopedia of Psychoanalysis, 2019). Sigmund Freud, in his essay "The Uncanny*"*, posited that the concept of the "Double" can be viewed as an instance of uncanniness. Freud argued that though the "Double" first serves as an insurance against the destruction of the Ego, "the primary narcissism dominates the mind of the child and of primitive man"(Freud, 1919). Once this stage is over, "the 'double' reverses its aspect. From having been an assurance of immortality, it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death"(Freud, 1919). Freud often referred to the "Double" as the "Narcissism of the Child". Freud described this as "when a child creates multiple projections of himself/herself; which later is overcome and the child develops his/her ego" (Boyle,2016). This, in other words, refers to the repressed Id of the child, the impulsive and unconscious part of one's psyche that responds directly to one's basic urges, needs, and desires. According to Freud, the double represents the unacceptable part of one's Ego, the part of the Id that has been modified by direct influence from the outside world (Freud,1919). The "Double" is as such "a visual representation of the darker parts of the individual psyche humans deny so that they're seen by other people in society in a better way, as opposed to who they truly are at their core" (Boyle,2016). It is what people deny, so as to preserve their public image. Thus, Freud argues that the effect of

uncanniness arises when people once again encounter the "narcissism of the child" later in their life, as it causes them to return to their repressed, primitive stages of life.

Chapter 3: Methodology

5 episodes from the *Black Mirror* series will be selected, and links will be drawn between specific episodes and current similar technology and situations in the real world. Using the ideas posited in Freud's "The Uncanny and the Double", a comparison will be made and an analysis done to show how these episodes work on the audience's unconscious to delve into its repressed Id, so as to warn the audience of the role they themselves play in the larger implications in the world of science and technology.

Chapter 4: Discussion and Analysis

4.1 *White Bear*

White Bear is an episode featured in the second season of *Black Mirror*. The episode follows the protagonist, Victoria, as she struggles to escape from seemingly ruthless killers in a just as seemingly dystopian and post-apocalyptic world. A recurring motif throughout the episode is that of onlookers and voyeurs, depicted through the portrayal of dozens of bystanders brandishing mobile phones, obsessively recording Victoria's every movement all while staying unsympathetic towards her overt display of hysteric panic.

The episode is able to effectively instill feelings of uncanniness in viewers particularly through the sudden and unexpected turn of events nearing the end of the episode, where it is revealed that the onlookers who have been following Victoria are actually watching a performance of a sort, and everybody in the episode, save Victoria, is merely acting out a skit. The twist is unveiled to the viewers through a scene in which a large audience, many of whom are holding out their mobile phones, is shown to be clapping and applauding the "show" that they have just watched in a setting that resembles a theatre house.

Fig. 1. Voyeurs are depicted to be cursing and jeering at Victoria.

The presentation of the spectators jeering and cursing at Victoria is reminiscent of the reprehensible acts of online vigilantism and doxxing that is ever-present amongst contemporary society. In the context of *White Bear*, Victoria is revealed to have been an accomplice to the heinous kidnapping and murder of a young girl, and was thus subjected to

the condemnation and castigation of the voyeurs. Here, the depiction of the voyeurs' relentless punishment of Victoria highlights their insatiable lust for retribution, and thus mirrors the similar qualities and attributes of doxxers and online vigilantes in contemporary society. The spectacle of such a theatre is an accurate reflection of the prominent social and technological ills present in current society, and as such induces feelings of uncanniness in viewers. Furthermore, nearing the end of the episode, it is shown that Victoria's memory is erased and wiped clean after every day of her torture within the park, leaving her to be trapped in a vicious cycle wherein she has to relive her torture daily, without even the knowledge that she has already been through it countless times. This brings up the question of whether or not the punishment of Victoria is ethically justifiable, considering the fact that she has lost her memory, and can arguably be considered a different person than before. This thus highlights the fact that the voyeurs and park facilitators, despite knowing that Victoria has lost her memory, are still willing to publicly torture her, and can thus be seen to be doing so merely for their personal entertainment, thereby foregrounding the never-ending punishment Victoria is subjected to, due to both the unquenchable thirst for revenge and supposed justice of the voyeurs and park facilitators as well as their perverted lust for entertainment. *White Bear's* depiction of the voyeurs' behaviours uncannily mirrors the behaviours and attitudes of current-day doxxers and online-vigilantes, and brings to the fore the issue of doxxers going overboard and excessive with their punishments through the depiction of the intemperate punishment exacted onto Victoria by the society in *White Bear*. The habits of doxxers and online vigilantes, such as to excessively dig out personal information of their victims and publish it online, can be compared and paralleled against the voyeurs' wicked and excessive punishment of Victoria for their own entertainment. Due to the similar and uncanny nature of the undesirable behaviours of the voyeurs in *White Bear* in

comparison to the behaviours of doxxers and online vigilantes in the lives of the viewers, the egregious and excessive actions and behaviours of the voyeurs can therefore be seen as the Double of the viewers. This Double is akin to the doppelganger of the viewers, characteristic-wise, linking the viewers together with the negative traits, such as the incessant need for revenge, shown by the voyeurs in *White Bear*. *White Bear* takes what internet commenters such as online vigilantes and doxxers frequently call for, excessive punishment, and portrays the reality of it through the repeated torture of Victoria. As a result, viewers, in their personal reflection of what they have just witnessed in the episode, will likely compare themselves with the voyeurs and question if they had ever done similar things online; such as calling for the excessive and unethical punishment of criminals or wrongdoers. By painting the reality of such a scenario onto a screen for the viewers to personally witness, they will thus be more aware of the larger possible outcomes of their own actions and behaviours.

4.2 *Nosedive*

Nosedive is an episode featured in the third season of *Black Mirror*. The episode's plot revolves around the protagonist, Lacie, and her journey to improve her social credit score in a dystopian society. The episode utilises sharp satire, mainly through the depiction of the overtly superficial relationships amongst characters, as a social critique of similar happenings in contemporary society.

In the dystopian society presented in *Nosedive,* "every tiny interaction is ranked by the people involved on an app that syncs with augmented-reality contact lenses"(Gilbert,2016). This essentially means that every little detail, such as the tone of speech, the outer appearance, the minor actions, of a person is closely scrutinized by the people around them, and can potentially amount to either a positive or negative rating of an individual. In this society, one's standard of living and societal position is largely influenced by their social credit score; a high credit score enables one to live a lavish and luxurious life, and opens up many new opportunities, such as diverse career pathways for an individual. Conversely, a low credit score limits the number of choices one has when it comes to their standard of living, and even prevents them from entering several public spaces. As a result, keeping up one's credit score, through means of preserving a likable and reputable personal image, is of utmost importance to the characters in *Nosedive,* including Lacie. Although the social credit system depicted in *Nosedive* is heavily influenced by advanced technology, as seen through how characters are able to view the ratings and social media posts of others with the help of a technological retinal implant, the idea of such a system being set up in the real world is actually not as far-fetched and improbable as it seems. In fact, in contemporary society, systems that uncannily mirror and parallel the credit system in *Nosedive* are already in existence. Take for example, the social credit system in China. As a matter of fact, China's social credit system is based on near-identical virtues and beliefs. The Chinese social credit system, meant to "build a high-trust society where individuals and organizations follow the law"(Koty,2019), shares an uncanny semblance with the credit system in *Nosedive,* in that they both "(assign) social credit scores to each entity based on their behavior, which are translated into a variety of rewards and punishments"(Koty,2019). *Nosedive* showcases the detrimental repercussions brought about by such a system through the depiction of the superficial lifestyles and

relationships, which is accentuated through the consistent pastel colour scheme and palette observed throughout the episode. The scenes within *Nosedive* are coloured with light-toned and soft-hued colours, such as light pinks, purples and blues. Such pale, soft and muted tones exude an ambience of exaggerated rosiness, giving the scenes a dream-like tone. This is due to the fact that these colours are rather detached from the realistic, more saturated hues of colour that viewers are familiar with in real life. The colour scheme as a result seems to insinuate the fact that the conversations and relationships within the society in *Nosedive* are extremely superficial, and only viewed as ways to better one's social position. The coupling of such a colour scheme with the exaggerated friendliness and affability amongst the characters highlight the superficiality of the relationships between characters, and propagates the notion that the affable disposition of the characters are merely just a front, a facade that they put on in order to get in the good graces of others, and move up the social hierarchy of the credit system.

Fig. 2. Scene from Nosedive depicting the pastel colour scheme.

It is also worth noting that in the penultimate scene of the episode, wherein Lacie had been arrested and finally gave up pursuing a high credit score, the color scheme and tone has noticeably darkened, becoming more saturated and as a result, less dream-like than before. This scene's composition jarringly contradicts that of the previous scene. The black, white, and grey colours present in this scene glaringly contradicts the pastel colours from before. The significant change in colour scheme seems to signify a discrepancy in the attitudes of the people constrained by the social credit system, and the people who are not, such as Lacie. More significantly, the dialogue between the Lacie and the other men in the cell, consisting of insults and vulgarities, completely refutes the good-spirited conversations in the earlier parts of the episode.

Fig. 3. In the penultimate scene, the colour scheme notably changes from mostly pastel colours to now darker, harsher blacks and greys.

This seems to indicate the fact that all the pent-up anger within Lacie has finally been released, and she no longer feels the need to preserve an artificial personal image. This seems to signal a transcendence, a breaking-free of the restrictive social and ethical constraints brought about by the social credit system, and insinuates that a world wherein the system no longer matters minimises superficiality and artificiality, and allows for genuine relationships amongst people. The depiction of the negative repercussions brought about by a social credit system that is uncannily similar to systems existing in the real world shows how *Nosedive* is uncannily prescient in the foretelling of the aggravation of social issues.

4.3 *Fifteen Million Merits*

Fifteen Million Merits is an episode featured in the first season of *Black Mirror*. The episode is set in a dystopian world wherein "most of society must cycle on exercise bikes in order to earn currency called `merits'"(Wikipedia,2020). The episode's protagonist, Bing, inherits a fortune of merits after the passing of his brother, and thus decides to put his merits to good use by helping his love interest, Abi, in participating in a talent game show, "Hot Shot". Bing believes that by doing so, he could help Abi become famous, and thus better her living conditions. Unfortunately, rather than becoming an artiste, Abi is offered a place in one of the judges' pornographic channel, and eventually decides to take the offer despite Bing's protests. Incensed by Abi's eventual outcome, Bing chooses to earn enough merits to enter

the talent show personally in order to expose its sham and immoral practices. The episode cleverly critiques several current societal issues, such as our addiction to technology, as well as our materialistic desire for luxury and fame, through the depiction of Bing's performance at the talent show and its eventual repercussions, as well as the portrayal of the way technology is incorporated into the lives of the people in the episode.

Perhaps the most pivotal moment, a scene of paramount importance is the sequence whereby Bing performs in front of not only the judges but also the large virtual audience. During his passion-filled speech, Bing mentions, "And the faker the fodder is the more you love it because fake fodder's the only thing that works anymore, fake fodder is all that we can stomach." At this point of his speech, viewers are compelled to root for Bing, as what viewers are witnessing is a man who is tired of a society that lacks authenticity. Viewers, given Bing's context, that of Bing having witnessed Abi get sold into the pornographic industry despite auditioning to be a singer, are compelled to support Bing's desire for a massive overhaul of the system and the culture within *Fifteen Million Merits*. However, after Bing's passionate speech, rather than feeling angered by Bing's accusations, the judges instead see his tirade as one of the best performances to have ever graced the stage, and as such, offer him his own regular show on a television channel. A great deal of irony is depicted when Bing is shown to eventually accept this offer, selling himself out to the very system he had so fervently condemned and criticised. Bing's out-of-character decision reveals the fact that the ideologies and moral beliefs so strongly upheld by him previously are so easily thrown to the wind the moment he could opt for a better life within the system he had so intensely hated before. Bing ultimately ends up with his own show, wherein he rants to a camera while holding the same shard of glass, and is also shown to have been moved to

larger living quarters. After viewing the depiction of such dark irony, depicted in the form of Bing's betrayal of his own moral and ethical beliefs in exchange for better, more luxurious, living conditions, viewers end up with a striking question: would they have done the same thing if they were in his shoes? To rebel against the system or to end up being sucked into the very system you had desperately tried to upend; such ideas are uncanny to the nature of every human being, as it is innate in the nature of humans to want to better their living conditions. Bing's decision to sell out his beliefs in exchange for comfort thus acts as the Double of viewers; it is a decision that appears selfish and undesirable to viewers, yet it is also one that viewers themselves will feel compelled to make if put in a similar situation. As a result, *Fifteen Million Merits* criticises the human's inherent materialistic desire for a better life and comfort through the dark irony depicted in Bing's decision to accept the judges' offer.

Furthermore, the societal ill of addiction to technology is addressed through the portrayal of the perpetual presence of technology within the compound in which Bing resides. Bing's designated room is depicted to have been installed with walls of television screens. When inside the room, should Bing's view of the screens be obstructed, a high-pitched tone will be played repeatedly until he resumes watching the screen. The implementation of such a system is a way in which *Fifteen Million Merits* criticises our society's excessive obsession with technology. Whilst Bing is not shown to be addicted to the screens himself, the very depiction of such a system, one that coerces the people to keep their eyes on the screen, is an exaggerated and satirical critique of our society, as it insinuates the fact that people in contemporary society behave as though they have a similar system in their minds; a system that causes them to be glued onto the screens of their mobile devices perpetually. Seeing Bing's constant need to remain fixated on the screens will resonate with viewers and lead

them to think of their own mobile device usage, and compare their usage to Bing's. As a result, should viewers, previously, willingly adopt a similar, excessive, habit of mobile device usage, by seeing something that uncannily mirrors their own habits displayed on their screens through the depiction of the system installed in Bing's room, viewers will hopefully be inclined to make a change to their detrimental habits.

Chapter 4.4 *The Entire History Of You*

The Entire History Of You is an episode featured in the first season of *Black Mirror*. In the episode, characters are all in possession of a piece of technology known as the Grain. The Grain is a rice-sized chip implanted into the heads of people, and acts as a video recorder, perpetually recording the daily lives of individuals and allowing them to replay their memories. The episode's protagonist, Liam, is depicted to have suspected his wife, Ffion, of infidelity and unfaithfulness. Through the episode's portrayal of how the Grain causes fractures in the couple's trust and marriage, and how it essentially leads to the destruction of their relationship, *The Entire History Of You* sheds light on how having full control over our memory, and never being able to forget anything may not necessarily be a good thing.

Throughout the episode, it has been evident that the Grain's ability to let one re-access their memories has led to the build-up of distrust and tension between Liam and Ffion. The Grain has been utilised as a tool of validation, a tangible form of evidence that can prove an argument by both Liam and Ffion. When Liam confronts Ffion about her previous

relationship with a man named Jonas, he actively makes use of his memories to prove his point to her. Ffion had claimed when they first started dating, that her relationship with Jonas was a short-lived one, a one-week fling that meant nothing. However, when Liam confronts her about Jonas, she mentions that the relationship had in fact lasted for a month, claiming that she had watered down the length of their relationship previously as it was not something that was of great importance, and thus had not wanted to give Liam the wrong impression. Because of the Grain, Liam could access his past memories and prove to Ffion that she did, in fact, change her words. This confrontation not only angers Ffion, but also raises Liam's suspicions about her relationship with Jonas. Overall, the Grain's capabilities aggravate the situation, and cause it to blow out of proportion, thus distancing the couple and causing Liam to lose trust in Ffion. Several times after, Liam utilises the Grain to prove his suspicions, and ultimately finds out the ugly truth: Ffion had cheated on Liam with Jonas, and there is a high chance that Jonas might be the father of Ffion's child. The harrowing depiction of how the Grain allows Liam to discover the bitter truth, the truth that destroys the once loving marriage of Liam and Ffion, introduces an interesting paradox: If Liam had not pursued the truth with the help of the Grain, he would have been able to live a happy life with his family, albeit never finding out about Ffion's unfaithfulness. However, if Liam pursued the truth, which he did, he would have been able to unveil the bitter truth of Ffion's infidelity, at the cost of his family. This paradox spurs viewers to think of what they would have done in Liam's position. Would they, like Liam, have made use of their Grains and the plethora of memories to pursue the truth? The innate nature of humans to want to make full use of their extensive access to resources, in this case, one's memories, is clearly depicted in Liam's relentless pursuit of the truth. This very nature is uncannily mirrored in real life, where technology similar to the Grain is being produced, such as contact lenses that take pictures whenever an individual

blinks, as well as smart glasses that record videos. As such, by depicting Liam's susceptibility to use the Grain, as shown through his constant need to use it to validate himself, and how it leads to the eventual ruination of his marriage, the episode forewarns viewers of their possible detrimental interactions with technology.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Indeed, the infliction of feelings of uncanniness into the minds of viewers has been successfully carried out by each of the four aforementioned episodes from *Black Mirror* through their uncanny portrayals of human's detrimental relationship with technology.

Parallels can be drawn between the episodes *Nosedive* and *White Bear*. Both episodes create effects of uncanniness in a similar way: through the criticism of existing social and technological ills. *Nosedive* expounds on how a social credit system proliferates superficiality and minimises authenticity in relationships amongst humans, and *White Bear* provides a harrowing depiction of the consequences that online vigilantism and doxxing can bring about.

Similarities can also be identified between the episodes *Fifteen Million Merits* and *The Entire History of You.* Albeit the fact that these two episodes, just like the previous two, are capable of eliciting feelings of uncanniness in viewers, both *Fifteen Million Merits* and *The Entire History of You* focus more on the depiction of the mindsets and attitudes of the characters. Through the portrayals of the mindsets and actions of the main characters in both episodes, both episodes are able to probe viewers to evaluate if they themselves possess similar attitudes and natures, and assess if they themselves are, much like the on-screen characters, contributing to the undesirable repercussions of the misuse of technology. *Fifteen Million*

Merits, through its portrayal of the main character's selfish decision in the end, reveals to viewers the human desire for material comfort, and *The Entire History of You* prods viewers to ask themselves if they would, just like the main character, make use of their technological resources to discover the truth, albeit knowing that it could come at a very high cost.

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