

Two slash and burn secretary

By **JOHNNY DWYER, MARTIN MBUGUA and MICHELE McPHEE**
DAILY NEWS WRITERS

A secretary at a Brooklyn legal services office was brutally slashed and burned with a caustic liquid yesterday in a vicious, unexplained attack, police said.

Agata Karsnicka, 22, had propped open the door to her office on Driggs Ave. in Greenpoint to take the sunshine about 10:20 a.m. when two men burst in and attacked her without uttering a word.

One man grabbed her long, curly brown hair, yanked her head back and slashed her from the corner of her right eye to her upper lip. The other attacker squirted her with an acidlike substance that he squeezed out of a bottle, police said.

"She went into the back and started screaming," said a co-worker at Nassau Consulting who asked not to be named. "I could not understand why something like that happened. If they had asked for money, I would have given them money."

"They are animals, not people."

Karsnicka was gushing blood as the thugs fled the office. She was taken to Bellevue Hospital, where she needed 30 stitches to close the gaping wound in her face.

The office was splattered with the liquid, which had burned holes into a newspaper and paperwork strewn across her desk.

The terrified victim was still in shock yesterday when reached at her Queens home.

"I didn't do anything. Now I'm going to be scarred for life," she said.

"I'm in terrible pain. I feel like I'm in terrible danger. I don't know who these guys are. They didn't say a word. They just walked in and hurt me and walked out. I was too shocked to even know what happened."

"How could people do something like this?" she asked.

Recent immigrant

Iwona Kurek, 41, a legal assistant for the firm, said the victim immigrated to New York from Poland a year ago and had worked for Nassau Consulting for only two weeks. The company helps Polish immigrants navigate the immigration process, and with other legal matters.

"I'm still in shock," Kurek said. "This is a personal attack."

Investigators were puzzled at why Karsnicka was targeted.

"It appears to be a totally random attack," one high-ranking police official said.

Karsnicka's company shares office space with Michael Musa-Obregon, the lawyer who is representing a Manhattan deejay accused of pushing his stripper girlfriend out a window last month.

Last night, Musa-Obregon said he had not gotten any threats regarding the deejay, Edgar Ortega.

With Luis Perez

HORROR AT 100 MPH

CELL CALL



JOHN FISCHETTI

MANGLED WRECK Highway patrol officer surveys what's left of Toyota Camry after four people were killed in crash yesterday morning.

Accident victims worked, laughed & died together

By **JOHNNY DWYER**
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DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

Long before they died together in a fiery Queens crash yesterday, Alexis Guzman and Mayra Del Rosario laughed and worked side by side.

The two women — both single mothers of young children — spent four years together in the inventory department of 21st Century Optical, a lens factory in Long Island City, Queens.

Every afternoon, Guzman's cell phone would ring when her son, Luis, got home from kindergarten.

"Mommy, how you doing?" the 5-year-old would ask.

Guzman, who attended beauty school, had her bags packed for a long-awaited trip to see her mother in the Dominican Republic.

"All she cared about was going to school, working and taking care of her son," said Marilyn Rodriguez, 33, her best friend.

Del Rosario, who started working at the factory around the same time as Guzman five years ago, left the job a year ago. But she still stopped by to regale her

former co-workers with her jokes.

"There is a pall over the entire place," said Anthony Fulco, a factory manager. "It's an atmosphere of mourning."

"This hurts," said co-worker Michelle Gore, 35.

The grief spread from the factory floor to the homes of the other victims of the high-speed accident on the Jackie Robinson Parkway.

Victim Diony Richiez, 20, was an aspiring screenwriter who dropped out of high school and just started a job as a gas station attendant.

Harding's a mental case: att'y

The feds said yesterday they need more time to study claims by indicted ex-city official Russell Harding that he literally went nuts with the city's cash.

Prosecutors said Harding's defense team plans to argue that his theft of city money to finance lavish vacations and other luxuries was due to mental illness.

Harding, 39, who headed the Housing Development Corp. during the Giuliani administration, is also charged with possession of child pornography.

His lawyers say he's been diagnosed as a manic-depressive who also suffers from a nonverbal mental disorder.

It's the second ailment that has left prosecutors scratching their heads. They asked a judge to delay Harding's trial so they could have more time to figure out what that means.

"We understand it to be a somewhat novel sort of malady," said Assistant Manhattan U.S. Attorney Deborah Landis.

Manhattan Federal Court Judge Lewis Kaplan agreed to move the trial to Sept. 29 from July 7. **Robert Gearty**