

BBC TASTER SHORTS – THE BREAK

SWIPE SLOW

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SHOOTING SCRIPT

**1. INT. BAR - PRESENT DAY - EVENING**

*The story is delivered to camera as if a fourth new member of the group.*

CU a finger swiping rapidly, making fast snap decisions on profiles on a digital dating app (on a mobile phone) similar to Tinder.

ANOTHER finger doing same, then another. The fingers belong to:

MOUTH and FEI MIN sitting at a table in a funky bar absorbed in their phones. They stop and notice DWAYNE still obsessively swiping his. He finally notices and looks up guiltily at them in turn.

DWAYNE

(To Fei Min)

What?!

(To Mouth)

What?!

(To Camera)

What?!

Mouth's a statistician, studied it at school, drones on and on about ratios and variables although his tactic's more caveman than not;

ON Mouth, extremely cocky nodding proudly.

Accept everything, cull from the lot!

(Re: Fei Min)

Fei Min's way is simpler than that. This society's exoticized her race.

ON Fei Min nodding frankly.

All she's gotta do is post shots and wait and guys always swipe right her way.

ON Fei Min's PROFILE, a FINGER repeatedly tapping 'Like'.

But me, different, deeper than that. Can't talk about.

He gets up to leave the table.

Okay, sit back, relax...

Mouth and Fei Min shake their heads.

DWAYNE (CONT'D)

(To Camera)

Night club, six years ago...

**2. INT. NIGHTCLUB - FLASHBACK - NIGHT**

PHOTOS/ LIVE ACTION MOMENTS on Fei Min and Mouth dancing.  
Strobes/ speeded up stills.

DWAYNE (V.O.)

Can't remember what the live band  
played but the vibes were right  
enough for us to dance slow, caught  
in the drift of the crowd, we grind  
slow, till the Dj comes, drops the  
wrong song, whole crowd turns and  
Erica-

ANGLE ON Erica through the crowd.

**3. INT. BAR - PRESENT DAY - EVENING**

Dwayne walking away from table

DWAYNE

- like everyone is making for door.  
Our eyes lock, knock against each  
other.

INSERT: PHOTO - FLASHBACK- REVERSE ON DWAYNE, looking at her.

We don't say a word, don't even  
bother, just stand stranded in the  
stream for the door.

**4. INT. BAR - TOILET - PRESENT DAY - EVENING**

Dwayne enters toilet.

DWAYNE

(To Camera)

Before the night's curtains are  
drawn she passes me her number.

As Dwayne talks...

INSERT: Dwayne's phone, Erica's name, number being typed in.

I promise to call and we're gone,  
to the night, the corners of the  
city, its thick shadows that hold  
us still.

INSERT: Dwayne's phone as Erica's name fades to BLACK.

He stands at the cubicle, waiting to go in, talks to us.

Next week, Saturday, the sunset is  
meek, slouched on the horizon,  
rubbing her cheek, her skin is on  
fire, her eyes are lit and we're  
chatting politics and pure  
bullshit.

INSERT: Pictures of Erica talking.

ON Dwayne, now in the cubicle, standing urinating as he talks to us.

DWAYNE(CONT'D)

"So pathetic the world wants peace  
cause conflict is humanity's true  
battery. Our best inventions came  
from war. The ripple effect is a  
dwindling trust in God so it's us  
to sort our world and yeah we still  
parry, thrust and throw bombs, but  
if art measures how far we've come,  
look how met! Remember that song?  
Conflict in the baseline? Torture  
in the horns? But when the Dj  
flipped, we all turned! When the  
beat dropped, we became one."

INSERT: Pictures of Dwayne talking.

ON Dwayne as he steps out of the cubicle, zipping up.

And she leaned in till our lips  
touched.

(MORE)

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DWAYNE (CONT'D)

Something like wings grew,  
fluttering the space between, arms  
wrapped, buried in that hug, in the  
chaos of our world, magnet of the  
moon, its falling down alleys, I  
felt our hearts beat so rapidly, I  
thought if we stopped, both of us  
would die. And when we drew apart  
the moon had gone.

INSERT: Pictures of the City. They fade to BLACK.

ON Dwayne, now at the toilet mirror. He looks at himself.

and it felt like nothing mattered  
the darkness or beyond.

He goes to use a tap, it doesn't walk. He tries another one.  
A MAN also stands washing his hands.

DWAYNE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

It's the next week. Uni's starting  
soon, Erica's like "Come visit me?"  
I try to play it cool, and Man's  
expecting some round-the-corner-  
school, but girl's like...  
Cambridge.

The MAN stops, surprised reaction. Overhearing he can't  
believe it either.

PUSH IN TO Dwayne

DWAYNE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

And everything stopped. Tumble-weed  
silence, static and dust.  
Two weeks fly by, that Saturday  
comes and I'm dressed in a jacket,  
in brown corduroys

INSERT: PHOTOS of Dwayne uncomfortable in his clothes.

DWAYNE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

Tryna do my best to look like I fit  
in that world of history boys,  
grand halls and

INSERT: PHOTOS of images of what he lists.

Pimms, kings, prime ministers...  
all dem tings.

INSERT: PHOTOS of Dwayne on train, preparing himself.

On Dwayne as he leans against the sink talking to us.

(MORE)

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DWAYNE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

On the train, I'm practicing my posh accent cause I don't want to embarrass her in front of her friends and I've got these stock phrases, I'm muttering them as the train hits the station and she's beautiful, there, poised, picture-perfect, taking my hand. We walk:

INSERT: PHOTOS of Dwayne and Erica walking.

down side streets, up cobbled paths, past lawns, to her room. I'm grateful for its warmth till she says the famous last four words.  
"We need to talk"

INSERT: PHOTO of Erica in CU in her ROOM, CU looking in to camera.

INSERT: PHOTO of Dwayne's reaction to this.

We need to talk.

INSERT: Dwayne looks out of window of train.

ON Dwayne, looking in the mirror.

DWAYNE (CONT'D)

So I turn, watch the lawns for a while, fresh grass stretching like arms to the sky, which is grey as if the sun didn't bother and  
(Back to camera)  
she's like... "I'm deeply in like with you, but just started Uni. I've gotta grab the opportunity fully, so I don't think it's wise to start a long distance thing; To save a painful breakup, let's just be friends?"

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**5. INSERT- INT. ERICA'S ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY**

ANGLE ON Erica sat on her floor mattress next to large window.

**6 INT. BAR - TOILET - PRESENT DAY - EVENING**

DWAYNE

(Into mirror)

When I turn to... beg, she's sat on  
her bed in lotus position, eyes  
down staring at her palms and a  
single tear leaves her left cheek  
and falls, and just as it hits, the  
sun breaks cover, comes streaming  
through her window

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**7. INSERT- INT. ERICA'S ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY**

ON Erica as YELLOW sunlight comes through cloud to light up room-

**8. INT. BAR - PRESENT DAY - EVENING**

ON Dwayne with the phone in his hand as he sits back down at the table with Fei Min and Mouth.

DWAYNE

and the whole room is now bathed in light, a golden overflowing, life-affirming light-

Dwayne, Fei Min and Mouth looking directly in to the camera as they look at his phone. This GLOW of yellow light illuminates their faces.

like the world's telling me it's fine kinda light. "So, it's cool," I say, "You're right, you're right."

ON Dwayne, the light has gone.

But on the train, I'm getting heart palpitations

INSERT: PHOTOS of Dwayne in his sick bed, different angles of distress.

a numb thing is growing, spreading in my chest, mum's advice is drink water, rest. But come morning, man's still gripped by this ting, (grabs Mouth's shoulder, to him) I go to the doctor bruv!

Mouth, dismissive.

That's how deep it was! And the lady is poking me, prodding my life!

INSERT: PHOTOS of Dwayne on his sick bed, not feeling too hot.

"Nothing's wrong, you're perfectly fine." But I'm not. "Okay... anyone died? Nervous about something? don't be shy" Well, we just split, my girl and I. Doctor starts laughing, chest out, head back, says "That's what this is, it's a broken heart."

SIDE ANGLE ON Dwayne.

(MORE)

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DWAYNE (CONT'D)

I know, you're thinking you asked about the app, nice story but what am I on about? I'm not looking for Erica! That's not what I'm telling you. I think, if I'm honest... I'm tryna break up...?

Dwayne gets up, as does Fei Min and Mouth.

I'm too cynical for digital love, but those emotions, that sunny afternoon, gloom of that breakup, light of that room, that's the most emotionally connected I've felt to the world, to our lives, the living, to myself!

Fei Min and Mouth discuss where next. Mouth might have found someone on phone. Dwayne is oblivious to them.

Damn... all this time, I thought I wanted to hit it..

MONTAGE- CU OF DWAYNE at THE DIFFERENT PRESENT DAY LOCATIONS swiping through his phone.

But when I swipe, looking through pictures, I'm looking for a room with wide windows, where the sky is overcast enough to stop light, so when the gold sun cuts the gloom,

INSERT - BACK TO MOMENT OF THE GOLDEN LIGHT on their faces.

it's like I'm alive again, I'm renewed.

In the background. Fei Min and Mouth go to leave, they want him to come.

That's why I'm always on it if you must know. Takes time cause... I swipe slow.

He leaves frame to join them.