

BBC TASTER SHORTS - THE BREAK

SYSTEM CYCLE

Written by

Charlene James

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1. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A dubstep remix of Chopin's Nocturne plays. The dubstep element should heighten the parts of tension.

We zoom in from the bonnet of a car, up to the windscreen, where we see XAVIER sat, eyes closed, in the driver's seat with his hands on the steering wheel.

2. INT. CAR - NIGHT

The music now plays from the car radio, giving a tinnier sound. He is calm and focused, as if he just needs this moment to get himself together. Flashing blue lights can be seen from behind him, almost engulfing him.

XAVIER

Should be used to it by now

His eyes open.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Them blue lights sneaking and
creeping up on me

He looks into the rear view mirror.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Should be used to it, but still
makes me uneasy. Get that odd
butterfly flutter by in my pit -
reminding me of him

His hands grip the steering wheel and then release.

We see his lips in the reflection of the rear view mirror, as if we were sat in the back seat with him.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Dirty pigs

We open to see his whole face.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

That's what they called the boys in
blue back in the day. Had it in for
my postcode. A street of tired
mothers, sick of their sons passing
in and out of the station. So it
began - a battle between them and
us

He adjusts the wing mirror from inside the car. He watches the blue lights in the mirror as he talks.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

But there was no war brewing in my house. Dad played by the rules, followed the law.

(Imitating his father)

'Don't go looking for trouble, and trouble won't find you.' 'Don't be bringing no shame to my door.'

He smiles, remembering.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

And if truth be told, I was more frightened of what the old man would do to me, than what any policeman ever could ... so I stayed well clear

He snaps out of the fond memory and his mood darkens.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Never had any problem with them ... 'til that day

He shifts and becomes almost childlike, fidgeting in his seat.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Must have been about 10 ... sat in the back of dad's car. Wasn't long 'til we see the flash of blue lights ... we know the procedure ... nothing new. The old man pulls over. Paper work and pleasantries at the ready.

Something catches his eye out of the passenger's side window.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

'Afternoon officers.' 'I hope everything is okay.' And usually, after that, we're back on our way. Not that day. Dad goes in for a little joke. 'I've been stopped 3 times this week already, officer ... the police must really like my car.'

Out of the rear passenger window we see 2 FIGURES.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

And just like that, everything changed

A flash of silver metal - handcuffs perhaps. SFX of a scuffle breaking out.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
(Looks at back seat)
Just a kid, sat powerless

The TWO POLICE MEN start to move to the back of the car. It's quick and clumsy. Xavier watches them. The same sense of panic as when he was ten.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Dad's pleading, 'I don't want my son seeing this.' But the officer drags me out of the car and tells me to watch and learn

There is a crackle from a police radio. XAVIER snaps his head round and we see his eyes in the rear view mirror.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
There's this blast from his radio ... they get back into their car and drive off - like it was nothing. But it was everything. Leaving my dad standing there in front of his son, not able to look me in the eye

He sits a little taller.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
That day, I joined the boys from around my way ... joined the battle between them and us. I had to. Cos what else could I do?

His eyes dart to a bag on the passenger side floor.

The police car door slams.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
What else could I do?

The police car door slams again.

He looks in the right wing mirror. A pair of black police officer's boots. He looks in the left wing mirror, another set of black police officer's boots.

3. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

We are outside the front of the car watching XAVIER sat waiting. TWO POLICE OFFICERS stand by their car, receiving instructions from their radio. We zoom into the windscreen to XAVIER. He doesn't even have to look, he can feel their presence.

4. INT. CAR - NIGHT

XAVIER

Countless times, stopped by them
... treated like I don't matter

He looks into the rear-view mirror. A mantra he has to tell himself.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I matter

There is a sense of urgency in his delivery, as if this mantra has spurred him on.

He looks behind him out the back window, and we see the OFFICERS finish on the radio and approach

XAVIER (CONT'D (CONT'D)

A boy, becoming a man. Then a man, blessed with the birth of a boy. So when it's me being pulled over at the side of the road ... what's my boy going to be forced to see?

XAVIER reaches over, opens his bag.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

So I had a decision to make ... I could be that het up young man, giving them that aggression they want

He roots around the contents, trying to find something

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Or ... I could change it, break the system - smash it to bits. I could be the one in my community that puts a stop to it, stands up to it - no more

OFFICER 1's hand knocks on the car window. OFFICER 2 signals for him to wind down the window.

He does. The electric window slowly begins to wind down, and the music lowers as he talks

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Look at them ... these bubble-gum bobbies

There is a crackle from a police radio. XAVIER quickly reaches into his bag and takes a small black item, seconds before OFFICER 2 reaches to his vest. XAVIER gets there first. He takes out the black object. It is a police radio. OFFICER 2 backs down, as XAVIER responds to the radio.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Go ahead

A FEMALE OFFICER speaks on the radio.

FEMALE OFFICER(O/S)

Suspect seen entering the estate,
is a black male, 6'2", wearing a
black coat and black shirt

XAVIER

Received. Over

He addresses the 2 OFFICERS.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

He's fitting my description

The OFFICERS smile nervously. Was this a joke? They take time to look him over.. OFFICER 1 spots something

OFFICER 1

She said a black top Serg ... yours
is blue

He looks at them incredulous, then he breaks out into a smile, (smoothing out his top).

XAVIER

Just a little joke. Something I get
from my dad

The OFFICERS look at each other. They don't get him.

Xavier presses the button and the window winds back up, shutting them out. The music is at its previous volume

Through the window, we see the flash of silver metal from the handcuffs on the OFFICERS, as they wait for XAVIER. We close in on XAVIER'S face. He looks at the camera.

He expels a short, sad laugh, shaking his head.

Ready to leave the car, he turns the key in the ignition and the engine stops. So does the music.

The police radio crackles.