

This is the script for a short film making competition conducted during International Film Festival of India in 2006. The film won many accolades and was showcased as the representative film for the contest on the satellite news channel, "Times Now", a Times Group endeavour.

SHORT FILM MAKING COMPETITION: 25 FRAMES

TOPIC: YOU AND ME

FILM TITLE: THE SLIPPING SAND

Subject: The relationships in a married situation undergo constant change with time and evolve either for the better or for worse depending upon the people involved.

Concept: Human relationships are most intricate. They do not remain same as time passes. Marriage is an institution followed universally by the Indian society irrespective of the cultural and religious differences. This institution is so much a part of our social significance that it is assumed that people would want to get married, and more importantly, remain married. Separation or divorce is still not a very socially acceptable occurrence. Therefore, many people remain in a married relationship, yet impart more and more importance to other distractions, which may be work related or pleasure related, or both. The partners learn to block each other out on simple and small things that basically weave the fabric of their time together.

This film shows how relationships can be enriched by simply being more attentive. How life can be lived more fruitfully and with lesser regrets if time can be better utilized between people who matter most to us. We are generally considerate towards other people, but tend to neglect the ones we are closest to. Life is mostly a collection of tiny moments. Big events hardly ever happen in one's life. Losing these tiny moments of togetherness is comparable to precious time slipping out of one's fingers like sand.

The basic concept of this film is to highlight that many tourists visit Goa for various reasons. Natural resources apart, the place is important because the human sensitivity in its people is still very evidently seen. This human sensitivity may be something unusual for people from other parts of the country because their native places do not show such abundance of it. This creates a strange human bond between them and Goa in the deepest and most indescribable sense of the word.

Concept of 'you and me' is visible at all levels of interaction between all the characters. Theme of 'You and Me' is existent in the emotional sense between the visitors from other parts of the country and Goa. This state serves as a place they love and cherish, and also as an exclusive location they choose for celebrating special occasions of their life. The idea of 'You and Me' is also seen in the interface occurring between the past and present generation; in the role of a teacher and a student.

Basic Premise: Portrayal of how small moments are lost in oblivion because of our neglect and insensitivity. Love does not need to be professed in detailed and mushy ways. Just a sensitive glance or a kind word is enough to let your partner know your presence. So many people constantly choose to lose out on these moments because they are always absorbed with other things.

Language: Conversational English and Hindi.

Duration of film: Approximately 5 to 6 minutes.

Location: Vasco Railway Station waiting room. Location can be created in any other place by simply creating similar ambience.

Time zone: Any contemporary time zone. Presently depicted time is during unexpected heavy rains in September and October 2006. The appeal of this storyline is universal and surpasses geographical and cultural boundaries.

Storyline: On a rainy afternoon five passengers are stranded in a waiting room of Vasco railway station. They all have to reach Mumbai in a hurry. There is a very young couple from Chandigarh who were visiting Goa for their honeymoon. There is a couple hailing from Mumbai, in their late thirties and early forties, on a business cum pleasure trip to Goa. There is an old man from Goa who is winding up all his work and going permanently to London because his wife is terminally ill and is admitted in a hospital there. He does not want to return ever to Goa because the place is full of her memories, and he cannot bear to live here alone. He has come this time only to collect some sand from a beach where they had built their first house and lived together. Now his program is delayed because of the unexpected change in weather.

He is leaving his beloved native place as his beloved wife is in a painful process of leaving him forever. The story is about how this old Goan man gives life's most valuable lesson in his typical good humored Goan style, to the two younger couples, as they are waiting for their trains.

Screenplay:

Shot 1: Camera focused in a close-up of a beautiful young girl, leaning her head sleepily on a man's shoulder. Slowly the camera moves to expand the view to a mid shot of a very young Punjabi couple sitting on a bench. The girl's arms are full of traditional Punjabi *chudas*, indicative of her newly married status.

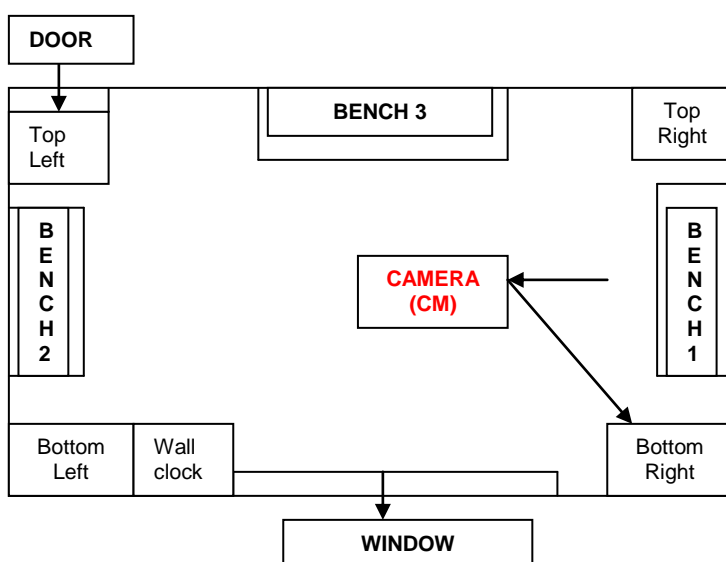
Indicative Dialogues. Actual dialogues to be performed in Hindi:

Girl: (Bored) "Raj! When will our train come? We've been waiting for six hours. Do something."

Raj: (Naughtily) "Dear! You have better ideas?"

She looks up at him curiously. He looks at her and gives her a smile and a wink. She gives him a look of mock anger. He grins, pats her on the head tells her to sleep.

Camera moves sideways to the far end corner of the room. Now it is focused on the entrance of the waiting room they are sitting in. Cut.



Shot 2: Entrance of the room. Camera focused on the board reading "A.C. II and III Tier, Waiting room, Vasco-Da-Gama." Background sound of heavy rains lashing. Cut.

Shot 3: Shot opens with camera resuming position as earlier in the bottom right corner of the room.

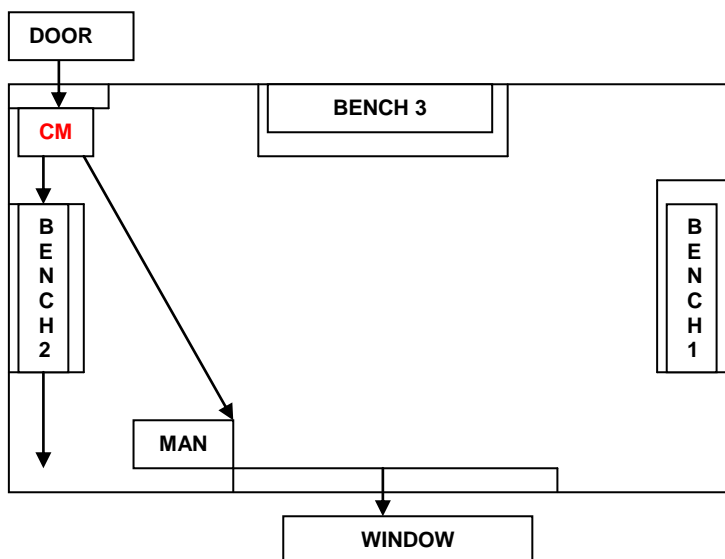
Description: Just then, a man enters followed by a woman. The man is elegantly dressed and has a suitcase in his right hand. He is talking angrily on the mobile held in his left hand. The woman is having a purse on her left shoulder and is dragging a stroller suitcase with her right hand. Both are dressed smartly. The man is in his early forties. The woman is in her late thirties. Both are good looking. Woman is beautiful, graceful and well preserved for her age. The man walks fast and reaches up to the end of the room and stands under the wall clock. The woman stops near bench no. 2 and sits down.

Indicative Dialogues:

Man on the mobile: “What do you mean, you cannot do it? I have to reach Mumbai. Arrange for one seat in the aircraft. What do you mean all flights are cancelled? Do it whichever way. I don’t care. I have an important meeting tomorrow. I have to be in Mumbai. Arrange for one seat dammit. Do it!” Switches off mobile. Curses. Cut.

Shot 4: Camera faces the woman in a mid shot. She looks up at the back of the man and has an annoyed expression on her face. Cut.

Shot 5: Camera placed at top left corner, covers as shown below, from the man standing under the wall clock to the woman sitting on bench no. 2.



Indicative Dialogues:

Woman: (Angrily) “We need two seats, not one. Or have you forgotten that I am here too.”

Man: (Agitatedly) “Nonsense! It’s is urgent for me to go. You can come later.”

Woman: (Accusingly) “You’ll leave me stranded in this weather. We’re supposed to be on a holiday here.”

Man turns angrily towards the woman.

Man: (Raising his voice) “Goddammit! Stop nagging me.”

He starts fidgeting with his phone again. Turns his back on the woman. Cut.

Shot 6: Close up of the woman's left profile slowly zooming out to a mid shot. She is seen glaring at the man's back. Then she opens a book.

Shot 7: Mid shot of the woman from camera at top right position. She shakes her head and resumes reading her book. Cut.

Shot 8: Long shot of the room from bench no. 3. Woman looks up to see Raj sitting opposite her across the room. He is looking at her. Cut.

Shot 9: Insert close up of the woman. Her face is expressionless. Cut.

Shot 10: Insert close up of Raj. He is suddenly conscious of his wife sleeping on his shoulder. Cut.

Shot 11: Long shot of the room from bench no. 3. The woman looks down and starts reading her book again. Cut.

Shot 12: Insert shot of wall clock showing time as 2.30 pm. Fade out.

Shot 13: Camera positioned at bench no. 3. Zoomed on clock, which is now showing 4.00 pm. Zooms out in a long shot. Raj is seen dozing off. His wife is sleeping soundly on the bench keeping her head on his lap. The woman sitting opposite has closed her book and is looking intently at those two. The man is not there. Cut.

Shot 14: Camera is placed on the right bottom corner facing the door.

The man enters and is angrily talking on the mobile again. He reaches up to the window and stands facing it. He does not look at his wife. The wife also does not give him a glance. Cut.

Shot 15: Mid shot of Raj. He wakes up with a start. Cut.

Shot 16: Mid shot of the woman. She quickly starts turning the pages of her book.

Shot 17: Insert close up of Raj looking at the woman. He looks embarrassed.

Shot 18: Insert close up of woman looking at Raj. She has a faint smile on her beautiful lips. She averts her gaze.

During shot 18 and 19 voice of the man is audible in the background.

Man: (Angrily) "You can't even arrange for a taxi? The roads are not pliable? I don't understand what am I paying you guys for? You good for nothing clowns! Okay! Okay! Keep me posted." Switches off mobile. Swears. Cut.

Shot 19: Camera placed at right bottom corner facing the door. Or taken from a slight tilt down angle, while the camera is placed at the window end of the room, whichever is better.

Description: Now slowly a very old man enters the waiting room and heads towards bench 3. He is in his late sixties or seventies. But he is very elegant looking. He has a bag in one hand and is dragging a stroller suitcase with the other. He also has a walking stick in the hand dragging the suitcase. He is wearing a raincoat soaked in water. Water is dripping on the floor as he moves forward. With effort he is slowly making his way towards the bench. The woman sees him and gets up to help him. She takes his bag and helps him towards the bench. He removes his raincoat, sits at the bench, leans his stick, and smiles at her. She smiles and steps back to go to her seat.

Indicative Dialogues:

Old man to woman: “Thank you very much. Earlier I used to help out beautiful women. Now I depend on them to help me.” Smiles.

Woman: (Smiles) “It’s okay. You’re welcome.”

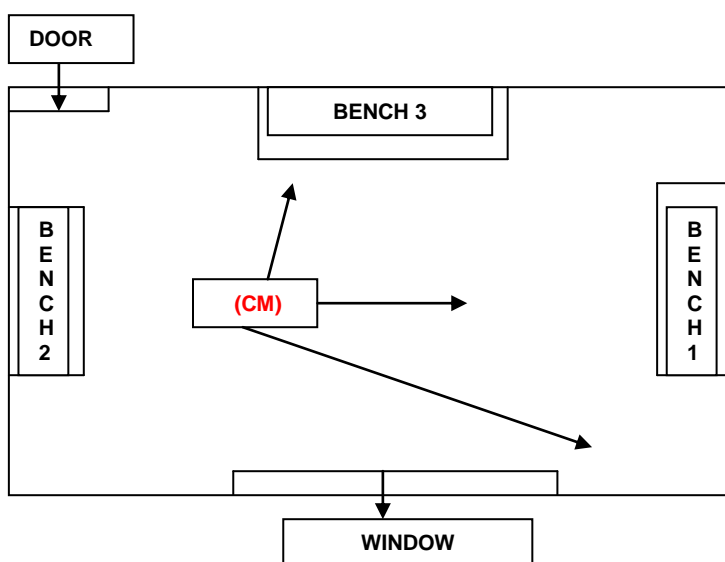
Man suddenly turns from the window and throws a question at nobody in particular.

Man: “Is it still raining? I can’t believe it. October is not a month to rain here.”

Woman: Turning away from the old man, (Sarcastically) “Sorry! God must have forgotten the month.”

Old man: (Laughingly) “It sure looks like that.” Cut.

Shot 20: Camera placed at the centre of the room as shown in the figure below. Pans from left to right.



Description: The old man looks at Raj and his sleeping wife. He is smiling at them. Raj is suddenly very conscious and he nudges his wife. She wakes up and upon seeing the old man sits up and straightens her clothes consciously. Cut.

Shot 21: Camera is placed now at the top left end of the room. Long shot of the room. Raj looks at the woman across the room.

Old man turns towards Raj and strikes a conversation.

Indicative dialogues:

Old man: “Newly married?”

Raj: “Yes Sir! Just fifteen days.”

Old man: “Oh! Great! God Bless you. I’ve been married for almost fifty years, (pauses and adds naughtily), to the same woman.”

The younger couple giggles. Cut.

Shot 22: Insert mid shot of woman. She is smiling this time and looking at the younger couple and listening to the conversation. In the background dialogue of the old man is heard.

Indicative dialogues:

Old man: "They used to call me 'Sir' forty years back, when I was teaching here at a college."

Woman: "You are from Goa?" Cut.

Shot 23: Camera is placed at the right bottom corner and covering everyone in the room. Man is turned towards the window and is fidgeting with his mobile again.

Description: The old man turns towards the woman and starts talking to her.

Indicative dialogues:

Old man: (Casually) "Yes. But I left for London some time ago. This is my last visit to Goa."

Woman: (Casually) "Why? Goa is such a great place. You are lucky to be born here." Cut.

Shot 24: Insert mid shot of old man. He leans towards the woman slightly as if he is ready to tell her a secret.

Indicative dialogues:

Old man: (Suddenly in a serious voice) "Because my wife is dying in a hospital in London. This place is so full of her memories. I can't bear to be here alone." Cut.

Shot 25: Camera is placed at the right bottom corner and covering everyone in the room. A sudden silence falls over the room. Even the man turns towards his wife and glares at her, annoyed at her to have touched a raw nerve in a total stranger. Cut.

Shot 26: Mid shot of the woman looking perplexed at the old man and turning to her husband apologetically. Cut.

Shot 27:

Description: Camera placed at the top left corner of the room. The old man gets up from his bench and goes up to the woman. He turns towards her husband and says.

Indicative dialogue:

Old man: (Compassionately) "It's not her fault. I like to share my story."

He then extends his hand to the woman and says.

Indicative dialogues:

Old man: (Smilingly) "Hello! I am Andrew Braganza."

Woman: (Sincerely apologetically) "I am so sorry."

Old man: (Naughtily) "I expected a beautiful woman like you to have a better name."

Woman: (Smiles and shrugs) "Name is Anamitra."

Old man: "Okay! Ana! My friends call me Andy."

After shaking hands with the woman, the old man shakes hands with her husband and goes back to his bench. At the same time, the man moves to bench no. 2 and sits at the far end. He takes out his lap top and starts fidgeting with it. Cut.

Shot 28: Camera is placed at the window covering long shot of the room. Everyone is listening attentively. Man is listening too on to the conversation, but does not look at anybody except at his lap top screen.

Indicative dialogue:

Old man: (Thoughtfully. Looking straight ahead at the window) “I came here to collect something very important.”

Description: He slowly takes out a small wooden box from his coat pocket. He holds it hesitantly in his hands. He is uncertain about opening it as if the thing inside is troubling him a lot. There is total silence in the room. Some faint noise of the outside storm is still heard.

Indicative dialogue:

Old man: (As if talking to himself. Still looking ahead at the window) “Throughout our life together, I was busy in my work, while she only asked me to give her ten minutes of my time everyday.” (Pauses) “I was very busy. Never paid attention.” (Pauses) “Now I have all the time in the world for her, but she suffers with Alzheimer’s disease. Doesn’t recognize me. Not a bit.”

He slowly opens the small box. Cut.

Shot 29: Tight close up of the open box. It contains some sand. He takes a pinch in his fingers. It slips and starts falling in the box. In the background voice of old man is heard.

Indicative dialogue:

Old man: (Sorrowfully in a shaky voice) “I came some time back to get some sand from our first house at the beach. To remind myself that precious moments also slip away just like this...leaving nothing behind but emptiness...never to forget or forgive.” Camera fades out.

Shot 30: Camera opens with a zoomed in shot of sand falling in the box slipping through the fingers. Slowly zooms out to point of view shot from the right shoulder of the man.

He slowly turns towards his wife. She is still looking at the old man. The man keeps his hand on her shoulder. She turns with a start towards him. Camera zooms in on the close up of the woman. She has tears in her eyes. Cut.

Shot 31: Point of view shot from the left shoulder of the woman, focused on close up of the man. He smiles at her. In the background voice of the old man is heard.

Indicative dialogue:

Old man: (With earnestness in his voice) “You must be wondering, why I told you all this.” Cut.

Shot 32: Mid shot of the man and woman. Lap top is kept at the window side of the bench. Man has moved closer to his wife; put his left arm around her shoulders, holding her right hand with his right hand. The man and the woman slowly turn towards the old man and look straight at him.

Indicative dialogue:

Man: (Gratefully) “Because you still continue to teach. (Pauses). Sir.”

Camera slowly pans from (L-R) and slowly zooms on the box. The old man is still letting the sand slip from his fingers and fall into the box. Cut.

Shot 33: Mid shot of Raj and his wife looking lovingly at each other. Camera moving to a close up of the couple. Fades out.

Approximate time of screenplay as measured with a stop watch: 5 to 7 minutes.

Story and Script by: Neena Dayal.

Copyright: WordPep™