

THE DAY THE INTERNET QUIT

Written by

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INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM

We begin with a white backdrop and close-up of a man's face. He is our Protagonist - the INTERNET in HUMAN FORM! - and he's frantic, unstable, crying out--

INTERNET

I want to unplug, UNPLUG, UNPLUG!!

--before reverting back to deadly calm in a flash.

Panning out, we see a bit more of Internet. He's wearing a smart suit. Looks quite... boringly normal, save for the WIRES and PERIPHERALS attached to his body, DRAGGING DOWN from his legs. [ANIMATION FX here]

He SITS, prone, on a high-backed CHAIR, beside a smart casual WOMAN (Rebecca, therapist, mid 30s) on a matching version. White backdrop.

She holds a clipboard and expensive pen and looks deep in thought. Serious yet approachable, she speaks in a firm, friendly, Northern accent:

THERAPIST REBECCA

Let's start at the beginning, Mr.
Web...

TITLE CARD: THE DAY THE INTERNET QUIT

A short beat before a jittery, toothy-grinned reply:

INTERNET

Thanks, Rebecca. I do like talking
about my past...

TITLE CARD: SESSION I - THE PAST

INTERNET (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...It was a simpler time.

INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

As Internet indulges in his nostalgia-fuelled monologue, different elements of his suit and face TRANSFORM.

ANIMATION FX: The room goes 8-bit and hypertexty, and we have a Montage of 90s/00s web moments while The Internet talks--

INTERNET

Zeroes and Ones and 90s fun.
Everything fresh and new; messaging
messengers and dot com bubbles.

Communication for all was all I
ever wanted - and I did it!

-- ANIMATION FX: Nods to Geocities, MSN Messenger, AOL,
dialup noise, .com bubble etc., all while physically moving
in and out of the Internet himself.

INTERNET (CONT'D)

Suddenly the world was bigger, but
in your living room. It was new,
exciting, magical...

THERAPIST REBECCA

What changed?

INTERNET

Everything.

TITLE CARD: SESSION II - NO FILTER

INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

Set up as before, only nostalgia's now down the pan.
Internet's moved on to more philosophical meandering, face
dripping with serious reflection.

His human face is DEEP IN THOUGHT as he strokes his non-
existent beard.

INTERNET

Without me, what now would the
world be?

THERAPIST REBECCA

(jotting down with pen)
Is this something you wish to
explore today?

INTERNET

(already ignoring her)
Nuclear war? Or just back to the
library? I've read so many books
you know. Millions of them.
(Siri Voice)
Rebecca, what would you like to
know?

She offers him a kind smile.

THERAPIST REBECCA
Only what you'd like to share.

He looks ready to knuckle down and SHARE--

INTERNET
I've got no filter, you know. It
all comes at me like a brick of
tonnes. Er. Tonne of bricks. That's
why I wanna unplu--

-- but Rebecca's phone VIBRATES LOUDLY in her pocket, cutting off Internet's train of thought. Easily distracted.

It VIBRATES AGAIN and again, in quick succession, but her expression doesn't falter. She pretends to ignore and continues to scribble in her notebook: *Possible breakthrough [More Needed]*

INTERNET (CONT'D)
You gonna get that?

THERAPIST REBECCA
It'll keep, I'm sure.

INTERNET
(gnarly)
The world in your pocket at your
fingertips. Look at you, itching,
aren't you?

She looks mildly perturbed, like her diplomacy might be ready to slither through a crack. But damn it, she's professional...

THERAPIST REBECCA
It's quite fine.

Swiss neutral. The Internet? Less so.

He looks unhinged, ready to snap. Cracks all over the place.

INTERNET
No it isn't. It's your husband.
He's locked out. Check it, go on.
(2x speed)
(MORE)

INTERNET (CONT'D)

Check it, check check check no need
to check actually I'll just tell
you he's mad because your smart
doorbell camera has misrecognised
his face and locked him out the
house again and he doesn't have
manual override because you set it
up in your name and this is the
second time it's happened and he's
mad, so so mad and thinks that
sometimes you do things to make his
life a misery because you're still
angry about that one time he--

THERAPIST REBECCA

(interrupting)

Do you want to stop it, or do you
want to filter it?

Silence. The Internet's eyes whirl around his face like Apple
Beachballs of Doom and Loading Page Error.

INTERNET

Errrr. I didn't quite get that,
Rebecca: ask me again.

THERAPIST REBECCA

Because those are two completely
different things.

INTERNET

Errrrrr. Idunno.

Animation FX: his face WHIRLS into 'IDK' EMOJI, and
contorting, white noise body parts.

INTERNET (CONT'D)

I DON'T EVEN KNOW
OMGOMGOMGOMGOMGOMGO--

END SCENE

INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - AS BEFORE

TITLE CARD: SESSION III - GUILT

Extreme CU of Internet's face. He's PARANOID and SHIFTY.

ANIMATION FX: TBC

INTERNET

Been swimming through the data
since we last met. Haha. Surfing
the web. Lol. Noticing things.

There are lots of bad things out
there, you know.

He looks around SUSPICIOUSLY.

THERAPIST REBECCA

What kind of bad things?

INTERNET

(distracted, unfocused)

I wanted to unite the world. But
right now, it's never seemed so
fractured.

Looks around SUSPICIOUSLY again.

INTERNET (CONT'D)

The Dark Web. Criminals. Internet
Detox Camps. Suffering. Spies.
Election Fixes. Fake News. So much
fake news. I don't know what's real
anymore. But I'll tell you
something: I can stop it all. I
have control.

With a MANIC SMILE, he wiggles his fingers over his wires.

Crescendo of music...

THERAPIST REBECCA

(concerned)

I really think this is something we
should discuss further before you
make any rash--

TOO LATE -- HE UNPLUGS the cables, to the stunned HORROR of
the Therapist.

Black screen...

TITLE CARD: SESSION IV - FRACTURED BUT WHOLE

Internet is completely human and unplugged, without a cable
or ANIMATION FX in sight.

He's calmer, more somber.

The Therapist appears just a little concerned, but poised with her pen nonetheless.

THERAPIST REBECCA (CONT'D)

How do you feel now?

INTERNET

Empty, somehow. Off-kilter. Like I know I should be doing better.

(pause)

I made the mistake of watching the news. The world is really... feeling it. Wouldn't be surprised if World War Three was underway...

THERAPIST REBECCA

Let's not to focus on the outside world today. Try to focus just on you. Do you feel more stable from the choice you've made?

He *does* seem physically calmer...

INTERNET

I wasn't sure I'd even survive. Still though, I'm itching. Feel it under my skin. I don't know what's happening. It's like I'm happier in a way, but only because ignorance is bliss. Thing is, I don't want to ignore it. I miss it.

THERAPIST REBECCA

What do you miss?

INTERNET

Everything. People. Knowledge. Memes. Feeling connected to the world around me.

THERAPIST REBECCA

That's all perfectly normal.

INTERNET

What do *you* miss?

THERAPIST REBECCA

This isn't about me.

(smiling)

But also the memes. And there's no threat of war just yet, anyway.

INTERNET

Even so. I feel like something's missing.

THERAPIST REBECCA

You are a reflection of your environment, Mr. Web. Perhaps you feel like you've lost some part of your identity?

INTERNET

Yeah...

There's a CREEPING REALISATION on his face, now that he has clarity.

INTERNET (CONT'D)

More than that, maybe...

INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

TITLE CARD: SESSION V - BALANCE

INTERNET (O.S.)

I lost what makes me me.

Internet is still in human form, but looks RESOLUTE.

THERAPIST REBECCA (O.S.)

And now?

Dialup/Digital noise in the background and he RECONNECTS ALL HIS WIRES and plugs back into ANIMATION MODE-- [FX: TBC]

INTERNET

Like you say. Life is balance and sometimes choice...

(Quick cut) Therapist gives a happy, knowing look -- A BREAKTHROUGH, FINALLY!!

MONTAGE: Internet Ups and Downs of the Modern Age

INTERNET (V.O.)

Sometimes it itches, twitches and glitches, but it's okay. I'm okay.

In fact, I wouldn't have it any other way.

FADE OUT.