



ASHES IN THE CUPBOARD

A Emotional Drama 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Written by
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LOGLINE: Vijay asks Nilesh to help move a brass box from the cupboard, but the son suspects another lecture about duty and tradition. Instead, the father reveals years of silence, regret, and the one memory he never had the courage to share. The twist: the ashes are not of the mother, but of the unborn child Nilesh never knew his parents lost.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) | Character 1: Vijay (61)

LOCATION: A quiet family kitchen at dusk, with the cupboard doors open, soft window light fading into blue, and dust motes visible in the still air.

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INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - DUSK

Khula CUPOBOARD. Shaam ki soft blue window light. Dhool ke kan hawa mein tair rahe hain. Kitchen quiet hai.

VIJAY (61), plain kurta, silver hair, worn shawl, brass box ko carefully pakde khada hai.

Doorway par NILESH (36), office clothes, briefcase haath mein, tired aur defensive.

VIJAY

Aa gaya tu.

NILESH

(briefcase ko adjust karke)

Haan. Office se seedha aaya hoon. Agar ye “baith, baat karni hai” wala scene hai toh main pehle hi bol deta hoon—mood nahi hai.

Vijay faint smile deta hai. Box ko dekh■■■ rehta hai.

VIJAY

Lecture nahi hai. Bas ek kaam hai.

NILESH

Kaam? Aaj shaam ko? Aapko har baar “kaam” hi yaad aata hai jab mujhe office se nikalne ka guilt dena ho.

Vijay cupboard ki key table par rakhta hai.

VIJAY

Key le. Upar wale shelf se box neeche rakh de.

NILESH

(suspicious)

Kaunsa box?

Vijay brass box uthata hai, dono haathon se.

VIJAY

Ye.

Nilesh ka expression hard hota hai. Woh aage badhta hai, box ko dekhta hai.

NILESH

Isme kya hai?

VIJAY

Pehle chai bana.

NILESH

Papa—

VIJAY

Chai.

Beat. Nilesch huff karta hai, briefcase counter par rakh deta hai.

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chai ki kettle stove par. Cupboard ab bhi open.

Nilesch tea cups nikalta hai. Vijay box ko table par rakh deta hai.

NILESH

Itne saal baad aaj hi yaad aaya? Ya phir aaj bhi koi
nayi duty lecture?

VIJAY

Aaj lecture nahi. Aaj sach.

Nilesch turns, half-laugh.

NILESH

Wah. Bahut rare cheez hai.

Vijay uski aankhon mein dekhta hai.

VIJAY

Main bohot der se bolna chahta tha. Par bol nahi
paaya.

NILESH

Aapne kabhi kuch bola hi nahi.

VIJAY

Haan. Isi liye aaj bol raha hoon.

Tea boils. Silence.

NILESH

Box mein maa ki ashes hain?

Vijay ki nazar box par tikti hai.

VIJAY

Nahi.

Nilesch freezes.

NILESH

Toh?

Vijay brass box ka lid kholta hai.

Andar ek SAFED CLOTH BUNDLE aur purani HOSPITAL SLIP.

VIJAY

Tumhare bhai ya behen ki.

Nilesch blank.

NILESH

Kya?

VIJAY

Tumse pehle. Tumhari maa pregnant thi. Complication hua. Bachcha... nahi bacha.

Nilesh stares, unable to process.

NILESH

Aap... aapne mujhe kabhi bataya kyun nahi?

VIJAY

Kyunki main khud nahi jhel paaya. Main toot gaya tha, Nilesh. Aur phir main darr gaya.

NILESH

Kis baat se?

VIJAY

Is baat se ki kahin tu apne aap ko kam na samajhne lage. Kahin tu ye na soche ki tu bas replacement hai.

Nilesh ka gussa dheere-dheere girta hai.

NILESH

(softly)

Isliye aap itne saal chup rahe?

VIJAY

Haan. Aur chup rehke maine sabse bada nuksan kiya. Tujhse door ho gaya.

Beat. Nilesh brass box ko dekhta hai. Phir apne briefcase ko side mein rakh deta hai.

NILESH

Main aapko hamesha...

(stops)

Chhodo.

VIJAY

Bol.

NILESH

Main samajhta tha aap bas hard ho. Par aap... thak gaye the.

Vijay's eyes wet, but controlled.

VIJAY

Haan. Bahut pehle se.

Nilesh picks up two tea cups. Pours tea.

NILESH

(after a beat)

Box cupboard mein band nahi rahega.

He places the brass box on an open shelf, visible.

NILESH (CONT'D)

Hide karne se cheezein gayab nahi hoti.

Vijay nods, overwhelmed.

VIJAY

Tu aaj ruka. Itna kaafi hai.

Nilesh hands him a cup.

NILESH

Kal... phir baat karenge.

Vijay takes the cup. A long, quiet look between them.

The open cupboard remains. The blue light deepens into evening.

FADE OUT.