



THE SPARE KEY

A Emotional Drama 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

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LOGLINE: A mother returns home to find her daughter has changed the locks without telling her, forcing the two women into a painful hallway conversation. As they argue about privacy, trust, and growing up, the real issue emerges: both are terrified of being abandoned first. The twist is emotional rather than shocking—the spare key the mother has carried for years opens not the door, but a memory box of every apology she never gave.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) | Character 1: Aarti (47)

LOCATION: A small apartment hallway just outside a front door at night, lit by warm bulb light and occasional passing car headlights through a window.

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FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ek narrow hallway. Warm bulb ki peeli roshni. Window se kabhi-kabhi car headlights sweep karti hain.

AARTI (47), simple home clothes mein, key ring ghumaati hui, front door ke saamne khadi hai. Ek duffel bag uske kandhe se lataak raha hai.

Woh key lagati hai.

Click.

Nahi khulta.

Woh fir try karti hai.

AARTI

(under her breath)

Kya bakwaas hai...

Woh door handle jhatakti hai. Phir se key.

Nahi.

Door ke andar se lock ki halki si movement.

SIMRAN (19) door kholti hai, aadha gap. College sweatshirt, sneakers, arms crossed.

SIMRAN

Aap aa gayi.

AARTI

Lock badal diya?

SIMRAN

Haan.

AARTI

Mujhe bataya kyun nahi?

SIMRAN

Mujhe permission leni thi kya?

AARTI

Ye mera ghar hai.

SIMRAN

Aur ye mera room bhi hai.

AARTI

Main teri maa hoon.

SIMRAN

Aur main bacchi nahi hoon.

Beat.

AARTI

Toh bina bole lock badal diya?

SIMRAN

Aap bina bole andar aa jaati thi.

AARTI

Main knock karti thi.

SIMRAN

Kab?

AARTI has no answer.

AARTI

Mujhe laga kuch hua hai.

SIMRAN

Mujhe laga kabhi kuch ho jayega.

AARTI stares.

AARTI

Kya matlab?

SIMRAN

Matlab jab aap gussa hoti ho, aap ghar ko court bana deti ho.

AARTI

Wow. College mein ab poetry bhi aa gayi.

SIMRAN

Sarcasm bhi aap se hi seekha hai.

AARTI

Main yahan mazaak karne nahi aayi.

SIMRAN

Main bhi.

Silence. Headlights sweep over them.

AARTI

Tu mujhe door kar rahi hai.

SIMRAN

Main bas saans lena chahti hoon.

AARTI

Mere saath?

SIMRAN

Aapke bina nahi.

That lands. Aarti looks away.

AARTI

Main ne sab kuch akele kiya.

SIMRAN

Aur mujhe bhi akele feel karwaya.

AARTI

Main kaam kar rahi thi.

SIMRAN

Main bhi aapko miss kar rahi thi.

AARTI

Toh bol deti.

SIMRAN

Aap sun leti?

Beat.

AARTI

Main teri maa hoon.

SIMRAN

Maa thi. Kabhi kabhi.

AARTI is hit hard.

AARTI

Main soft hone ka time nahi tha mere paas.

SIMRAN

Mujhe maa chahiye thi, manager nahi.

Aarti's jaw tightens.

AARTI

Tu samajhti kya hai? Akeli maa banna easy hota hai?

SIMRAN

Maine kab kaha easy tha?

AARTI

Toh phir itni doori kyun?

SIMRAN

Kyuki mujhe darr lagta tha.

AARTI

Kis baat ka?

SIMRAN

Ki aap pehle chhod dogi.

Aarti freezes.

AARTI

...Kya?

SIMRAN

Jab bhi aap thak jaati thi na, lagta tha bas ek din aur, phir aap chale jaogi. Isliye pehle main hi door ho gayi.

Aarti's eyes moisten, but she fights it.

AARTI

Maine kabhi nahi chhoda.

SIMRAN

Nahi. Bas poori tarah aayi bhi nahi.

A beat. Aarti's key ring slips. A SMALL SPARE KEY falls to the floor.

SIMRAN notices.

SIMRAN

Yeh ab bhi aapke paas hai?

AARTI picks it up quickly.

AARTI

Pata nahi kyun rakhi hui thi.

SIMRAN

Pata hai kyun.

Aarti doesn't answer.

SIMRAN looks to a small MEMORY BOX near the hallway cabinet.

SIMRAN

Woh khol ke dekho.

AARTI

Kya?

SIMRAN

Bas khol ke dekho.

Aarti steps to the box. The spare key fits. CLICK.

She opens it.

Inside: old photographs, a folded school report card, a small tin box.

Aarti picks up a photograph—Simran as a child, cake on her face. Another photo: Aarti and Simran at a fair.

A folded note slips out.

Aarti opens it.

INSERT NOTE - HANDWRITTEN

"Maa, mujhe maaf kar dena. Main har baar sahi tareeke se pyar nahi dikha paayi."

Back to scene.

Aarti stares, stunned.

SIMRAN

Maine yeh tab likha tha jab aap hospital mein thi aur
main bol nahi paayi thi.

AARTI

(softly)

Main bhi bol nahi paayi.

SIMRAN

Kya?

AARTI

Ki mujhe bhi darr lagta tha.

SIMRAN

Kis baat ka?

AARTI

Ki tu mujhe chhod ke chali jayegi.

Silence.

SIMRAN's eyes fill.

SIMRAN

Toh aapne lock kyun nahi change kiya?

AARTI looks at the spare key, then at Simran.

AARTI

Kyuki mujhe laga... kabhi na kabhi tu darwaza khol
degi.

Beat. Simran exhales a laugh through tears.

SIMRAN

Aapko drama karna bahut pasand hai.

AARTI

Aur tujhe lock badalna.

SIMRAN smiles despite herself.

Aarti steps closer. Not touching yet.

AARTI

Main knock karungi.

SIMRAN

Aur main open karungi.

A tiny nod between them.

The hallway feels less cold.

FADE OUT.

THE END