



THE THIRD KNOCK

A Horror/Supernatural 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Written by
Story Dil Se Team
(storydilse.in)

LOGLINE: A woman insists someone is knocking on the door every night at exactly 3:13 a.m., but her roommate never hears it. The knocks grow more personal, mimicking family voices and old arguments, until the apartment itself seems to be answering back. The twist: the roommate is not human, and she has moved in to replace the person who was supposed to answer the door years ago.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) | Character 1: Preeti (33)

LOCATION: A narrow apartment bedroom at night with a single bedside lamp, shadows from blinds, a locked door, and three identical knocks echoing from somewhere outside.

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INT. NARROW APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

A single bedside LAMP throws weak light across a cramped bedroom. BLINDS cast bars of shadow. The BEDROOM DOOR is LOCKED. A SUITCASE sits half-unpacked near the wall.

PREETI (33), sleep-deprived, in pajamas and a cardigan, clutches a MUG with both hands. Her eyes are wide, bloodshot.

LAILA (33), neat nightwear, calm and polite, stands by the suitcase.

A beat.

Three IDENTICAL KNOCKS echo from somewhere outside the bedroom door.

PREETI

(whispers)

Again.

LAILA

I didn't hear anything.

PREETI

Tum kabhi nahi sunti.

LAILA

Because there's nothing to hear.

PREETI stares at the door.

PREETI

3:13 pe hi kyun hota hai?

LAILA

Sleep deprivation mein brain patterns banata hai.

PREETI

Mera brain mujhe har raat dara nahi raha, Laila.

LAILA

Then what is?

PREETI

Woh.

Another THREE KNOCKS.

PREETI flinches.

PREETI

Sunna?

LAILA

No.

PREETI

Maa ki awaaz bhi nahi suni?

LAILA

Preeti...

PREETI

Kal behen ki thi. Aaj... aaj papa ki.

LAILA stays very still.

PREETI

(voice cracking)

"Jo bhi bahar hai, use andar mat aane dena."

LAILA

That's not what he said.

PREETI turns.

PREETI

Kya?

LAILA

(softly)

You remembered the wrong line.

The phone in Preeti's hand VIBRATES.

ON SCREEN: MISSED CALL - HOME

PREETI

Maine... delete kiya tha.

LAILA

Did you?

The lamp FLICKERS.

PREETI steps to the door, mug trembling.

PREETI

Kaun hai bahar?

No answer.

She presses her ear to the door.

A knock.

But this time, it sounds like it comes from INSIDE the door.

PREETI recoils.

PREETI

Nahi...

LAILA

Preeti, calm down.

PREETI

Tumhe sach mein kuch nahi sunai deta?

LAILA

I said no.

PREETI notices something: a small KEYCHAIN hanging from Laila's suitcase zipper. Old, faded.

It matches one Preeti had as a child.

PREETI

Yeh...

LAILA gently touches the suitcase.

LAILA

You should sit.

PREETI

Meri keychain tumhare paas kaise?

LAILA doesn't answer.

The bedroom door SHUDDERS.

A thin SHADOW appears under the door, moving like a long finger.

The lamp FLICKERS harder.

LAILA

(under her breath)

Aaj nahi.

PREETI

Kya matlab aaj nahi?

LAILA looks at her, finally losing the calm smile.

LAILA

Tumhein yaad nahi?

PREETI

Kis cheez ka?

LAILA

Har raat tum door kholne jaati thi.

PREETI

Main?

LAILA

Haan.

PREETI

Jhooth.

LAILA

Ro rahi hoti thi.

PREETI's breathing quickens.

LAILA

Kehti thi... kisi ko andar aane do.

Three KNOCKS. Louder.

PREETI

Nahi.

LAILA

Aur main tumhein rokhti thi.

PREETI

Tum kaun ho?

LAILA slowly reaches into the suitcase and opens it.

Inside: no clothes. A folded SHEET with old brown stains. A HOSPITAL WRISTBAND.

PREETI sees her own name on it.

PREETI

(whispers)

No.

LAILA

You were supposed to answer it.

PREETI

Main... main yahan kyun hoon?

LAILA

Because you didn't.

The shadow beneath the door thickens.

A faint, impossible VOICE from outside, sounding like PREETI'S MOTHER:

MOTHER (V.O.)

Preeti... keys kahan rakhi hain?

PREETI drops the mug. It SHATTERS.

PREETI

Maa?

LAILA

Don't.

PREETI

Kaun hai tu?

LAILA smiles, but it is wrong now. Too still. Too patient.

LAILA

Main woh hoon jo tumhari jagah rehne aayi hoon.

The bedroom door BENDS inward.

Three final KNOCKS.

This time, the door CREAKS OPEN by a fraction.

A blackness breathes through the crack.

PREETI stumbles back, keys slipping from her hand.

LAILA watches the door with recognition, almost relief.

PREETI

(terrified)

Nahi... tum human nahi ho.

LAILA

No.

The shadow slides farther in.

LAILA steps aside, making room.

LAILA

Finally.

CUT TO BLACK.

THREE KNOCKS.

END.