



PRACTICE SMILE

A Emotional Drama 1-Character Solo Monologue in Hinglish

Written by
Story Dil Se Team
(storydilse.in)

LOGLINE: A retired news anchor practices his farewell speech in front of the mirror, determined to sound composed for the final sign-off of his career. As he rehearses, he admits the story he never told on air: the one that cost him a marriage, a son, and nearly himself.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor) | Character: Former TV News Anchor Facing Retirement (Male, 60-68)

LOCATION: A dressing room or home vanity lit by vanity bulbs and a small television monitor showing an empty broadcast desk. The mirror reflects a man preparing to leave a life built on being seen.

USAGE LICENSE: 100% Free for Every Filmmaker & Creator. Shoot it, direct it, share it anywhere?no licensing fees, no paperwork, no barriers. Whether you're making your first student film, a festival entry, or an independent project, all scripts on Story Dil Se are completely free to adapt.

All we ask: Give credit where it's due with an on-screen mention in your credits:
'Story & Screenplay by Story Dil Se (storydilse.in)'.

INT. DRESSING ROOM / HOME VANITY - NIGHT

Vanity bulbs warm light phenk rahi hain. Ek polished MIRROR. Ek chhota TELEVISION MONITOR, jismein EMPTY BROADCAST DESK dikh raha hai. Makeup kit, cue cards, tie, aur TV remote vanity table par rakhe hain.

SIRF EK AADMI, 60s, tailored blazer, silver hair perfectly combed, face polished but tired. Woh mirror ke saamne khada hai. Professional posture. Andar se halka sa kaanpta hua.

Woh apni tie seedhi karta hai. Deep breath.

ANCHOR

(practice mode, composed)

Good evening... and thank you for being with us.

Woh mirror mein khud ko dekhta hai. Ek practiced smile deta hai.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(softly)

Haan. Yeh theek tha.

Woh cue cards uthata hai. Unhe palat-ta hai. Piche kuch handwritten lines.

CLOSE ON CUE CARD:

"I served the truth."

Neeche chhote letters mein:

"But I lied at home."

Woh card ko dekhkar ek second ke liye freeze ho jaata hai.

ANCHOR

(to himself)

Chalo... shuru se.

Woh TV REMOTE uthata hai. Monitor OFF karta hai. Phir ON.

EMPTY BROADCAST DESK wapas dikhai deta hai.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(dry laugh)

Bas. Yeh hi meri seat thi.

Woh apni saans control karta hai, jaise live telecast ho.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(formal)

Tonight is my final sign-off.

Rukta hai. Mirror mein apni aankhon ke neeche ki thakaan dekhta hai.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(lower, honest)

Par sach bolun? Final sign-off ka darr mujhe newsroom se nahi... ghar se lag raha hai.

Woh tie ko dheela karta hai.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(confessional)

Main roz sach dikhata raha. Riots. Elections. Floods. Death. Hope. Har headline ke saath main steady tha. Har breaking news pe main calm tha. Aur har raat... main ek jhooth ghar le jaata tha.

Woh mirror ke paas jhukta hai.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Meri wife ne ek din poocha tha... "Tum kab ghar ke ho? Kabhi news ke bina?"

He gives a tiny, broken smile.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Maine kaha tha, "Bas do minute." Woh do minute... pachaas saal ban gaye.

Beat.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(voice tightening)

Aur mera beta... Mera beta meri awaaz se bada hua. Par meri maujoodgi se nahi.

He looks down. Picks up the makeup brush. Puts it back.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(realizing)

Main face set karta raha. Life set nahi kar paaya.

He opens the makeup kit. Sees the powder. Closes it.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(to mirror)

Aaj first time lag raha hai... mujhe camera ke liye nahi, khud ke liye dikhna hai.

He picks up a blank cue card. Writes slowly with a pen.

INSERT - CUE CARD

"Sorry, beta."

He stares at it. His eyes moisten, but he holds it.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(whisper)

Sorry, beta.

The practiced smile breaks. A real, fragile smile emerges.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(clear, final)

Mera last broadcast yeh nahi hoga ki kaun jeeta, kaun haara. Yeh hoga... ki ek aadmi ne finally maan liya... usne apni zindagi ka sabse important headline kabhi read hi nahi ki.

Beat.

He straightens his blazer.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(steady, no polish)

Aaj main retire nahi ho raha. Aaj main chup rehne se retire ho raha hoon.

He breathes in. The smile is no longer fake. It is tired, human, and true.

He buttons his blazer. Adjusts his tie one last time.

He looks at the empty desk on the monitor.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(soft salute)

Good night.

He turns from the mirror and takes one slow step away from the vanity light.

The empty broadcast desk remains glowing on the monitor.

FADE OUT.