



THREE MEN AND A FILE

A Mystery/Crime 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Written by
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LOGLINE: An inspector, a retired clerk, and a journalist all want the same missing file, each believing it contains proof of a decades-old cover-up. As they search the shelves and challenge each other's motives, they uncover that the file was never lost—it was split among them by design. The twist reveals the truth is not in the document, but in the memory each man has been protecting from the others.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Inspector Devraj (40)

LOCATION: A dusty government office archive room with tall shelves, one metal desk, and sunlight cutting through blinds in hard stripes. The room feels stale, quiet, and full of forgotten secrets.

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FADE IN:

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE ROOM - DAY

Dhool bhari, stale hawa. Tall shelves. Ek metal desk. Blinds se hard sunlight ki stripes floor aur chevron ko cut karti hain.

INSPECTOR DEVRAJ (40), pressed shirt, clipped moustache, sharp eyes, desk ke paas khada hai.

IMTIAZ (52), retired clerk, thin frame, reading glasses, trembling hands, ek shelf ke saamne.

ADIL (34), ambitious journalist, casual blazer, recorder pocket mein, room ko scan kar raha hai.

Silence.

ADIL

(■■■■■ muskaan)
Archive room hai ya kabristaan?

DEVRAJ

Sawaal kam, kaam zyada.

ADIL

Kaam toh hum teeno ka ek hi hai, Inspector.

DEVRAJ

Mera kaam law hai.

ADIL

Aur mera? Truth.

IMTIAZ

(dheere)
Truth kabhi kabhi file mein nahi hota.
Devraj aur Adil dono Imtiaz ki taraf dekhte hain.

DEVRAJ

Aapko kaise pata?

IMTIAZ

Kyuki file main hi sambhalta tha.
Adil ka recorder pocket mein ■■■■■ ■■ hilta hai.

ADIL

Toh phir missing kaise hui?

IMTIAZ

Missing nahi hui.

Beat.

DEVRAJ

Kya matlab?

IMTIAZ

Matlab... usse chhupaya gaya tha.

Devraj desk par archive ledger uthata hai. Pages palat-ta hai.

INSERT - ARCHIVE LEDGER

Ek entry. Half-bleached issue number. Corner par stamp ka faint mark.

DEVRAJ

(ledger dekhkar)

Yeh entry yahin hai. File number cut kyun hai?

ADIL

Because someone wanted it invisible.

DEVRAJ

Ya kisi ne galti se damage kiya.

ADIL

Inspector, aap har galti ko accident bol dete ho?

DEVRAJ

Aur tum har cheez ko expose.

IMTIAZ

(nervous chuckle)

Dono hi bachche ho.

ADIL

Bachcha? Main twenty-eight ka nahi hoon.

DEVRAJ

(dry)

Toh phir immature kaun hai?

Adil suppresses a smile.

ADIL

File ka naam bolo, uncle.

IMTIAZ

(hurt)

Mujhe uncle mat bolo.

DEVRAJ

File.

Imtiaz shelf ki taraf jaata hai. Reading glasses adjust karta hai. Fingers tremble. Woh ek row ke neeche dekhta hai.

IMTIAZ

Yahan nahi.

ADIL

Toh kahaan?

IMTIAZ

Jahan chhupane wale ko yaad ho.

Devraj sharp eyes se room scan karta hai. Desk lamp ko on karta hai.

The lamp throws a tighter pool of light.

DEVRAJ

Stamp pad.

Adil turns. Desk ke neeche se ek purana STAMP PAD nikalta hai.

ADIL

Wah. Clue mil gaya.

DEVRAJ

Mazaak band.

ADIL

Main mazaak nahi, momentum produce kar raha hoon.

DEVRAJ

Tumhara momentum kisi ko jail bhi bhej sakta hai.

ADIL

Aapka silence kisi ko zinda dafan bhi kar sakta hai.

Beat. Imtiaz flinches.

IMTIAZ

Bas.

Silence.

Devraj stamp pad ko file ledger ke paas rakhkar sochta hai. Then he notices faint stamp marks on the margin.

DEVRAJ

Yeh stamp yahan, yeh mark shelf par...

He looks under desk.

DEVRAJ (CONT'D)

Aur yahan.

ADIL

Pattern?

DEVRAJ

Trail.

IMTIAZ

(low)

Teen hisson mein.

ADIL

Kya?

IMTIAZ

File.

Devraj turns slowly.

DEVRAJ

Explain.

IMTIAZ

File kabhi ek jagah thi hi nahi. Cover page alag.
Index alag. Annexure alag.

ADIL

Why split it?

IMTIAZ

Taaki poora sach kisi ek ke paas na rahe.

Devraj's jaw tightens.

DEVRAJ

Kisne split ki?

Imtiaz doesn't answer. Adil notices something—Imtiaz ke reading glasses ke frame mein ek folded paper tucked hai.

ADIL

(pointing)

Aapke glasses...

Imtiaz freezes.

DEVRAJ

Nikaalo.

IMTIAZ

Nahi.

DEVRAJ

Imtiaz.

IMTIAZ

Main ne sambhal ke rakha tha.

Adil steps closer, recorder now in hand.

ADIL

Poore India ko sunana chahiye.

DEVRAJ

Recorder band.

ADIL

Pehle truth.

DEVRAJ

Ye room mera jurisdiction hai.

ADIL

Aur truth kisi ka jurisdiction nahi hota.

Imtiaz slowly removes the folded annexure from his glasses frame. Hands shaking.

IMTIAZ

Yeh lo.

Devraj takes it. Adil opens recorder.

CLICK. RECORDER ON.

Devraj reaches into his shirt pocket and pulls out a worn COVER PAGE, already stamped.

ADIL

Aapke paas bhi tha?

DEVRAJ

Haan.

ADIL

Kab se?

DEVRAJ

Jitne time se tum story dhoondh rahe ho.

Imtiaz reaches into the archive ledger and pulls out the INDEX PAGE, hidden in the back cover.

ADIL

(stunned)

Toh file thi hi...

IMTIAZ

Teenon ke paas.

They move to the desk.

Devraj lays the cover page.

Imtiaz lays the index page.

Adil, after a beat, places the recorder beside them.

ADIL

Main samjha nahi.

DEVRAJ

Samjho.

Imtiaz puts on his glasses, looks at the combined pages.

IMTIAZ

(almost whisper)

Yeh cover-up ka proof nahi... Yeh uska confession hai.

ADIL

Kis cheez ka?

Devraj reads. His face changes.

DEVRAJ

(quietly)

Encounter report... Fake thi.

Adil leans in.

ADIL

What?

DEVRAJ

Ek innocent clerk ko bachane ke liye entries
manipulate ki gayi thi.

Imtiaz closes his eyes.

IMTIAZ

Main tha woh clerk.

Beat.

ADIL

Aap?

IMTIAZ

Haan.

DEVRAJ

Mere father ne file split ki thi.

ADIL

Aapke father?

DEVRAJ

Woh officer the. Unhone mujhe bachpan mein bola tha—

(beat)

"Sach ko ek haath mein mat pakdo."

Adil looks from one man to the other.

ADIL

Aur main? Main yahan kya kar raha hoon?

Imtiaz taps the recorder.

IMTIAZ

Tumhare recorder mein jo purani awaaz hai... Woh
tumhari source nahi.

Adil is stunned.

DEVRAJ

Woh tumhari maa ki voice hai.

Adil goes still.

ADIL

Kya?

DEVRAJ

Woh bhi us case se judi thi.

Adil's bravado cracks.

ADIL

Nahi...

IMTIAZ

File mein ek statement tha.

He points to the pages.

IMTIAZ (CONT'D)

Teen logon ki yaadon ko alag-alag rakhne ka reason ye tha—

(beat)

koi ek sach ko apne hisaab se use na kar sake.

Silence. Only the recorder's faint red light.

ADIL

Toh asli truth file mein nahi tha?

DEVRAJ

Nahi.

IMTIAZ

Woh hum mein tha.

Devraj folds the pages carefully, then stops.

DEVRAJ

Aaj ke baad yeh file kisi case mein nahi jayegi.

ADIL

Toh?

DEVRAJ

Aaj ke baad yeh yaad mein jayegi.

Adil slowly turns off the recorder.

CLICK.

He looks at the three men, now less like rivals and more like witnesses.

ADIL

(soft)

Meri story headline nahi hogi.

DEVRAJ

Achha hai.

ADIL

Kyun?

DEVRAJ

Kyunki kabhi kabhi sach ko headline nahi,

(beat)

sehna padta hai.

Imtiaz exhales, a lifetime lighter.

The three men stand in the dusty light, the file between them.

FADE OUT.