



THE BENCH IN THE PARK

A Slice of Life/Family 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

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LOGLINE: A grandfather, father, and son meet on a park bench under the pretense of a routine outing, but the real subject is the son's plan to move overseas. The older man tries to hide hurt behind jokes, while the boy listens to both adults with more honesty than they can manage. The climax arrives when the grandson reveals he has already made a family map on his school project, showing that he has been quietly holding the three generations together all along.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Hari (68)

LOCATION: A public park bench in late afternoon, lit by soft golden sunlight filtering through trees. The background is minimal: a walking path, a distant swing set, and the occasional passerby out of focus.

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FADE IN:

EXT. PUBLIC PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Soft golden sunlight filters through trees. A simple BENCH sits beside a walking path. In the distance, a swing set. A few PASSERSBY blur by in the background.

HARI (68), retired bus conductor, worn sweater, cap, patient eyes, sits at one end of the bench with a folded NEWSPAPER.

VISHAL (40), office worker, loosened tie, defensive but caring posture, stands near the bench with a water bottle and office bag.

OM (14), school uniform, restless energy, backpack at his feet, hovers between them.

A beat. The kind of silence that says too much.

HARI

(looking at the bench)

Is bench pe bhi reservation hota hai kya?

VISHAL

Papa, aap na... har cheez pe joke.

HARI

Joke nahi beta. Experience.

Hari pats the bench.

HARI (CONT'D)

Baitho. Standing meeting mein salary nahi milti.

Vishal sits, still tense. Om drops his backpack at his feet and sits between them, restless.

OM

Main beech mein kyun hoon?

HARI

Kyunki family mein beech ka hi kaam sabse tough hota hai.

Vishal gives a small, strained smile.

VISHAL

Papa, main ek baat karna chahta tha.

Hari unfolds the newspaper with deliberate calm.

HARI

Main bhi. Cricket score dekhna hai.

VISHAL

Serious baat hai.

HARI

Haan, cricket bhi serious hota hai.

Om looks from one to the other.

OM

Aap dono same line pe ho ya alag-alag train mein?

Vishal exhales, then sits fully.

VISHAL

I got an offer. Overseas. Two, maybe three years.

Hari doesn't react immediately. He folds the newspaper once.

HARI

Overseas?

VISHAL

Haan. Better growth hai. Better pay. Main family ko chhod nahi raha, bas...

HARI

Bas thoda door ja rahe ho.

VISHAL

Papa, it's not like I'm disappearing.

Hari smiles, too quickly.

HARI

Arre, kaun keh raha hai disappear. Foreign mein sab milta hai na? Bas ghar ka raasta thoda mehenga hota hai.

Vishal looks away, annoyed because it lands.

VISHAL

Main opportunity miss nahi kar sakta.

HARI

Main bhi conductor tha, beta. Bus chhoot jaaye toh agla stop dekhte hain. Zindagi mein kabhi-kabhi stop nahi, platform chhoot jaata hai.

A beat.

Om quietly reaches into his backpack.

OM

Maine ek cheez banayi hai.

He pulls out a SCHOOL PROJECT FOLDER and opens it on the bench.

Inside: a hand-drawn FAMILY MAP.

Hari leans in first. Vishal follows.

The map shows: PARK BENCH -> HOME -> SCHOOL -> OFFICE -> AIRPORT.

Three names are marked with arrows and tiny notes.

ON THE MAP:

- "Dada ke bina chai nahi"
- "Papa ke bina homework pending"
- "Om ke bina dono ka jhagda complete nahi"

Hari stares. Vishal blinks.

VISHAL

Ye... kya hai?

OM

Family map.

HARI

Family ka map?

OM

Haan. Teacher ne bola tha family draw karo. Main ne socha... family sirf ghar mein nahi hoti. Jahan jahan family ka dil hota hai, wahi map hota hai.

Vishal looks at the AIRPORT mark.

VISHAL

Tumhe pata tha?

OM

Papa, aap office se late aate ho, aur Dada newspaper se pehle hi sab samajh jaate hain. Main chhota hoon, andha nahi.

Hari lets out a tiny, helpless laugh.

HARI

Wah. School mein detective bhi padha rahe hain kya?

OM

Nahi. Bas ghar mein sab log chup ho jaate hain, toh main sun leta hoon.

Silence. Real silence.

Vishal's defensive posture softens.

VISHAL

Papa... mujhe laga aap hurt ho jaoge.

Hari looks at the map, then at Vishal.

HARI

Hurt toh hua. Par usse zyada darr laga... ki kahin tum itne door na ho jao ki tumhari awaaz hi door lagne lage.

Vishal swallows hard.

VISHAL

Main jaa raha hoon, chhod ke nahi. I promise.

Hari folds the newspaper slowly.

HARI

Promise toh bus conductor bhi karta tha, "Last stop, last stop." Phir bhi koi na koi chadh hi jaata tha.

A small beat, then Hari cracks a smile.

HARI (CONT'D)

Bas ek shart hai.

VISHAL

Kya?

HARI

Wahan jaake Indian time mat le jaana. Uska refund nahi milta.

Vishal laughs despite himself. Om grins.

OM

Aur Sunday video call.

VISHAL

Done.

OM

Aur Dada ke liye monthly postcard.

HARI

Postcard? Arre, main WhatsApp pe sticker bhej dunga.

Om laughs. Vishal shakes his head, smiling now for real.

Om turns the folder to the last page.

A final line, handwritten:

ON THE PAGE:

"Family is not a place. Family is a way back."

Hari reads it. His eyes soften.

Vishal reads it too. He is quiet.

HARI

Kisne likha?

OM

Maine. Kyunki agar aap log kahin bhi jao na, wapas aane ka raasta hona chahiye.

Vishal reaches out and places a hand on Om's shoulder.

VISHAL

Smart boy.

OM

Common sense, Papa.

Hari chuckles, then nudges Vishal lightly.

HARI

Suno, overseas jaake bhi ek kaam karna.

VISHAL

Kya?

HARI

Apne bete ko miss mat karna. Woh tumhe already miss kar raha hai.

Vishal looks at Om, then nods. Emotion in his eyes.

VISHAL

I know.

The three sit together on the bench, the map open between them, the golden light warming their faces.

A quiet family truce.

FADE OUT.