



THE BIRTHDAY LIE

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

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LOGLINE: A father and uncle scramble to stage a surprise birthday party for a girl who claims she hates birthdays, each trying to outdo the other with fake warmth. The child quietly watches them argue, knowing they are both hiding the real reason the family stopped celebrating years ago. The climax reveals she only wanted one honest thing: for them to admit they still miss her mother.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Vivek (38)

LOCATION: A small living room at night with balloons half-inflated, a cake box on the table, and fairy lights strung unevenly across the wall.

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INT. SMALL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ek chhota sa living room. Wall par fairy lights tedhi-medhi latki hui hain. Table par BIRTHDAY CAKE BOX. Side mein HALF-INFLATED BALLOONS. Ek GIFT BAG kursi par. Room mein birthday ka adhoora sa mahaul.

VIVEK (38), office shirt sleeves rolled up, cake box ko dekh raha hai. ANIL (36), casual T-shirt mein, ek balloon phoolane ki koshish kar raha hai. SANJANA (12), school uniform mein, birthday card pakde sofa par baithi hai.

VIVEK

Theek hai. Simple party. Classy. Overacting nahi.

ANIL

Overacting? Bhai, tu fairy lights ko dekh. Ye lights bhi overacting kar rahi hain.

VIVEK

Bas balloon phoolao.

ANIL

Phool raha hoon. Zindagi ki tarah.

Balloon phatne jaisa sound. Anil jhat se usse door hata leta hai.

ANIL (CONT'D)

Dekha? Party ka mood bhi phat gaya.

VIVEK

Tumse bola tha dheere.

ANIL

Aur tumse bola tha cake box ko table ke beech mein rakho. Side mein rakh ke kya shaadi karwa rahe ho?

Sanjana un dono ko dekh rahi hai. Card ko fold-unfold karti hai.

VIVEK

Sanjana, tu khush toh hai na?

SANJANA

Main toh bol chuki hoon. Mujhe birthdays pasand nahi.

ANIL

Wah. Seedha heart attack dialogue.

SANJANA

Mujhe jhooth pasand nahi hai.

Silence. Vivek aur Anil ek doosre ko dekhte hain.

VIVEK

Jhooth? Kaunsa jhooth?

SANJANA

Ye wala.

(holds up card)

"Surprise."

ANIL

Arre, surprise toh hota hai.

SANJANA

Surprise nahi. Drama.

Vivek fake smile karta hai.

VIVEK

Hum bas... thoda normal birthday karna chahte the.

SANJANA

Normal?

(beat)

Papa, aap aur Chachu ek hi room mein itna pretend kar rahe ho ki mujhe lag raha hai audition chal raha hai.

Anil hansi rok nahi pata, phir chup ho jaata hai.

ANIL

Okay, point.

VIVEK

Sanjana...

SANJANA

Aap log birthdays se nahi, Maa ki yaad se bach rahe ho.

Silence. Fairy lights ki soft glow aur sharp ho jaati hai.

ANIL

(low, defensive)

Aisa kuch nahi hai.

SANJANA

Phir har saal cake late kyun hota hai? Har saal party ka reason kyun badal jaata hai? Har saal aap dono itne busy kyun ho jaate ho?

Vivek ka chehra utar jaata hai.

VIVEK

Hum bas...

SANJANA

Bas kya?

Vivek kuch bol nahi pata.

SANJANA (CONT'D)

Mujhe cake nahi chahiye tha. Mujhe bas itna chahiye tha ki aap dono sach bolo. Ki aap Maa ko miss karte ho.

Anil ki aankhen nam.

ANIL

(softly)

Haan.

Vivek ek lambi saans leta hai.

VIVEK

Haan.

(beat)

Bahut.

Sanjana un dono ko dekhti hai. Uske face par relief.

SANJANA

Toh bolo na. Har saal jhooth kyun?

VIVEK

Kyunki sach bolna mushkil tha.

ANIL

Aur kyunki hum dono bewakoof hain.

Sanjana pehli baar halka sa smile karti hai.

SANJANA

Ye honest tha.

Anil cake box kholta hai.

ANIL

Ab cake ka kya?

SANJANA

Cake theek hai.

(beat)

Bas is baar pretend mat karna ki sab normal hai.

Vivek nods. He straightens one fairy light strand.

Anil ties the balloon properly.

Sanjana table par birthday card rakh deti hai.

On the card: three stick figures, a cake, and a small heart.

Vivek ke haath cake box par rukte hain. Phir woh halka sa smile karta hai.

VIVEK

Toh... birthday manayein?

SANJANA

Haan.

(small smile)

Ab sach ke saath.

Teenon milkar room ko thoda sa theek karte hain. Fake warmth gayab. Real warmth aa jaati hai.

FADE OUT.