



THE FAMILY PHOTO

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

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LOGLINE: A family tries to take one perfect photo for a wedding invitation, but the son refuses to smile and the father keeps correcting everyone's posture. The mother patiently repositions them as old grievances slip out in tiny, funny bursts. The twist is that the photo is not for a wedding at all—it is for the father's job interview, because he has been unemployed for months and did not want them to worry.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Mahesh (47)

LOCATION: A home terrace in late afternoon, with laundry, potted plants, and golden sunlight turning softer as the scene progresses.

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FADE IN:

EXT. HOME TERRACE - LATE AFTERNOON

Golden sunlight. A modest terrace with LAUNDRY lines, POTTED PLANTS, and a TRIPOD set near the parapet. The light is soft, warm, almost forgiving.

MAHESH (47), formal shirt, awkward smile, stands near the tripod holding a CAMERA REMOTE.

NEELAM (44), in a sari, adjusts the frame with practiced patience.

SAHIL (19), hoodie and sneakers, leans against a wall, bored.

NEELAM

Sahil, seedha khada ho.

SAHIL

Main seedha hi hoon, Mom.

MAHESH

Nahi. Seedha ka matlab yeh nahi ki tumhari soul bhi tedhi ho.

Sahil rolls his eyes.

SAHIL

Wah. Photo ke liye philosophy bhi?

Neelam moves Sahil a little to the left.

NEELAM

Bas do inch. Aur haan, phone pocket mein.

SAHIL

Kyun? Wedding card pe Instagram vibe nahi chahiye?

Mahesh straightens his collar.

MAHESH

Bakwaas kam. Smile kar.

SAHIL

Kyun? Fake smile se acha hai no smile.

MAHESH

Arre wah. College ne attitude bhi de diya.

SAHIL

Aapko bhi toh formal shirt de di.

Neelam suppresses a smile.

NEELAM

Dono bas ek minute chup.

Mahesh checks the phone in his hand, hiding the screen.

MAHESH

Ready? Yeh photo important hai.

SAHIL

Wedding invitation ke liye itna drama?

Mahesh freezes for a fraction.

MAHESH

Haan. Invitation ke liye.

Neelam notices the hesitation.

NEELAM

Mahesh, tripod thoda seedha karo.

Mahesh nudges it. The tripod wobbles.

SAHIL

Papa, aapko camera se zyada tension se pyaar hai.

MAHESH

Aur tumhe pyaar se zyada sarcasm se.

SAHIL

At least I'm consistent.

Neelam steps between them, gently repositioning both.

NEELAM

Sahil, shoulder down. Mahesh, chin thoda up.

MAHESH

Main theek hoon.

NEELAM

Haan, bilkul. Jhooth bolne mein bhi tumhara posture perfect hai.

Sahil snorts despite himself.

Mahesh tries to ignore it.

MAHESH

Bas ek photo. Phir khatam.

SAHIL

Itni urgency wedding ke liye?

Mahesh presses the remote too early.

CLICK.

The frame is slightly blurred.

SAHIL

Wah. Oscar-worthy.

MAHESH

Tum chup raho.

Neelam picks up a folded paper near the tripod bag and opens it.

It's a JOB INTERVIEW EMAIL printout.

She reads the line silently: "Please attach a professional family photograph if possible."

A beat.

Sahil sees it.

SAHIL

Yeh...

Mahesh looks away.

NEELAM

Mahesh?

Silence.

MAHESH

Bas... ek photo chahiye thi.

SAHIL

Job interview?

Mahesh doesn't answer immediately.

Neelam folds the paper carefully.

MAHESH

Pichle kuch mahine se... kaam nahi hai.

Sahil's face changes.

MAHESH (CONT'D)

Tum dono ko tension nahi deni thi. Aur mujhe... mujhe nahi chahiye tha ki tum mujhe aise dekho jaise main ghar ka kaam ka nahi raha.

Neelam's expression softens. No drama. Just understanding.

NEELAM

Isliye wedding invitation bola?

MAHESH

Haan. Itna embarrassing sach bolne se acha... thoda jhooth.

Sahil looks at his father, suddenly unsure what to do with all the softness.

SAHIL

Aapko laga main judge karunga?

MAHESH

Tum? Nahi. Tum toh pehle hi judge kar chuke ho.

SAHIL

Papa...

A beat.

Sahil steps forward, takes the remote from Mahesh.

SAHIL (CONT'D)

Theek hai. Ab smile karunga. But aap "left" bolna band karo.

MAHESH

Kyun?

SAHIL

Kyunki aap traffic police jaise lagte ho.

Neelam laughs softly.

NEELAM

Chalo. Ek honest photo.

She repositions them.

Mahesh is still awkward, but lighter now.

NEELAM (CONT'D)

Mahesh, relax.

MAHESH

Main relax hi hoon.

SAHIL

Haan. Jaise exam result ke din log hote hain.

Mahesh finally smiles for real.

MAHESH

Ready?

Sahil nods.

Neelam gives a tiny approving look.

NEELAM

Ab.

Sahil presses the remote.

CLICK.

They hold the pose. Golden light on their faces.

A beat of quiet.

SAHIL

Job mil jaayegi, Papa.

Mahesh looks at him.

SAHIL (CONT'D)

But next time photo ke liye jhoot mat bolna.

Mahesh nods, embarrassed and relieved.

MAHESH

Theek hai.

NEELAM

Aur next time tension ho, pehle mujhe bata dena.

MAHESH

Haan.

NEELAM

Main photo mein bhi tumhari tension pakad leti hoon.

Sahil smiles.

SAHIL

Mom, aap family ki real camera ho.

Neelam places the remote into Sahil's hand.

NEELAM

Phir ab se photographer tum.

Sahil looks at the remote, then at both of them.

SAHIL

Theek hai. But only one condition.

MAHESH

Kya?

SAHIL

Papa, no more left-left.

Mahesh laughs.

MAHESH

Deal.

Neelam adjusts them one last time.

NEELAM

Bas. Aise hi raho.

The sunlight softens.

CLICK.

FADE OUT.