



THE ROOFTOP PROMISE

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

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LOGLINE: Shanta has gathered her daughter and granddaughter on the roof to settle a family matter before the monsoon arrives. Meera thinks it is about money, Asha thinks it is about school, but Shanta is really trying to stop the family from repeating the same lonely choices. The ending reveals that the rooftop was chosen to hand over a key to a rented room where all three can start over together.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Shanta (65)

LOCATION: A narrow apartment rooftop at blue hour, with string lights, distant city noise, and laundry fluttering on a line. The space is intimate and open, with one water tank, a low parapet, and a folding stool.

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INT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - BLUE HOUR

Narrow rooftop. String lights glow softly. Laundry flutters on a line. Distant city noise hums below. One water tank. A low parapet. A folding stool near center.

SHANTA (65), in a simple sari, sits calmly on the folding stool. Her eyes miss nothing.

MEERA (40), office clothes, tired smile, enters carrying a grocery bag.

ASHA (15), in school uniform with a backpack, follows, trying to look unimpressed.

MEERA

Maa, aapne itni urgency mein bulaya... sab theek hai na?

ASHA

Kya hua? School se call aaya kya?

Shanta looks at both of them. Says nothing. Just pats the stool beside her.

SHANTA

Pehle baitho.

Meera exchanges a look with Asha. Both sit on the floor, not the stool.

MEERA

Ab bolo. Agar paision ki baat hai, toh main manage kar lungi.

ASHA

Aur agar mera koi complaint hai, toh main pehle hi bol deti hoon— Maths test theek gaya tha.

Shanta finally smiles. A tiny one.

SHANTA

Wah. Dono ek hi waqt pe guilty bhi, defensive bhi.

MEERA

Maa...

Shanta reaches for an OLD PHOTO ALBUM near the stool.

SHANTA

Yeh dekho.

She opens it. Old photos of the same rooftop. Younger women. Laundry. Festivals. Life.

Asha leans in first.

ASHA

Yeh aap ho? Itni... serious?

SHANTA

Tab bhi thi. Bas photo mein pakdi gayi thi.

Meera softens despite herself.

MEERA

Yeh photo kab ki hai?

SHANTA

Jab main bahu thi. Tab mujhe laga tha ghar sambhalna
hi sab kuch hai.

She turns a page.

SHANTA (CONT'D)

Phir tumhari umar mein maine socha, bas kaam aur
bachchi sambhal lo, zindagi chal jayegi.

MEERA

Aur chal gayi na.

SHANTA

Haan. Par akeli.

Silence.

Asha looks away, suddenly uneasy.

ASHA

Main toh kuch galat nahi kar rahi, na?

SHANTA

Nahi beta. Tum toh bas usi line pe chal rahi ho jahan
hum sab chalti aayi hain.

Meera sits up.

MEERA

Matlab?

SHANTA

Matlab... auratein sab sambhalti rehti hain. Ghar,
kaam, bacche, izzat. Aur khud ko last mein rakhti
hain.

Meera bristles.

MEERA

Toh main kya karun? Job chhod doon? Asha ki fees kaun
bharega?

SHANTA

Maine kab bola job chhod. Tum bas suno.

Shanta stands with effort, takes a step to the laundry line, and reaches
behind a hanging sari.

She pulls out a SMALL ENVELOPE.

Asha's eyes widen.

ASHA

Woh kya hai?

Shanta opens the envelope.

Inside: a ROOFTOP KEY.

Meera frowns.

MEERA

Maa... yeh chabi kiski hai?

Shanta holds it up.

SHANTA

Ek rented room ki.

Beat.

MEERA

Kya?

SHANTA

Gali ke kone pe. Do khidkiyan, ek chhota kitchen, aur monsoon mein leak nahi hoti.

Asha blinks.

ASHA

Hum wahan... jaa rahe hain?

SHANTA

Hum wahan rehne ja rahe hain.

Meera stands, stunned.

MEERA

Maa, aapne...?

SHANTA

Haan. Apni savings se deposit diya. Aur jo thoda bahut tha... woh bhi.

MEERA

Aapne mujhe bataya kyun nahi?

SHANTA

Kyunki tum pehle hi soch leti, "Maa paise maang rahi hai."

Meera has no answer.

SHANTA (CONT'D)

Main paise nahi maang rahi thi, Meera. Main tum dono ko ek saath rakhna chahti thi.

Asha steps forward, voice small now.

ASHA

Dadi... toh school ka kya?

SHANTA

School wahi rahega. Tumhari uniform wahi rahegi. Bas ghar ka darr nahi rahega.

Meera's eyes fill. She looks at the key.

MEERA

Aapne sab kuch akeli kar diya...

SHANTA

Isliye toh ab akeli nahi karungi.

A long beat. Meera breaks first and hugs Shanta.

Asha joins in, awkward at first, then fully.

The three hold each other on the rooftop.

The laundry flutters like a quiet blessing.

ASHA

Toh kal packing?

SHANTA

Kal nahi. Abhi se.

Meera laughs through tears.

MEERA

Maa, aap bhi na...

SHANTA

Kya?

MEERA

Full drama.

Shanta smiles, finally free.

SHANTA

Drama nahi. Promise.

They stand together by the parapet, looking out at the city.

The key rests in Asha's hand.

FADE OUT.