



THE CONFESSION BOOTH

A Mystery/Crime 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

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LOGLINE: Detective Shalini questions Maya about a missing woman last seen entering the church, while Sister Agnes insists the church only shelters secrets, not crimes. As the story unfolds, the detective realizes the confession booth has been used to pass messages between the missing woman and someone outside. The climax reveals the missing woman is alive—and hiding in plain sight as the caretaker's long-lost daughter.

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

LOCATION: A small church confession room or prayer alcove, lit by a single candle and soft daylight through frosted glass. The enclosed wooden booth and adjacent pew create an intimate, tense interrogation space.

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FADE IN:

INT. ST. JUDE CHURCH - CONFESSION ALCOVE - DAY

Soft daylight frosted glass se filter hoke aa rahi hai. Ek AKELI CANDLE jal rahi hai. Wooden CONFESSION BOOTH ek side mein hai. Uske saamne ek chhoti PEW.

DETECTIVE SHALINI (40), plain clothes, notebook haath mein, tired but sharp, pew par baithi hai.

SISTER AGNES (62), simple habit mein, calm, old keys ka jhund pakde, uske saamne khadi hai.

MAYA (35), office wear, guarded, sleeve neeche kheenchte hue, booth ke paas khadi hai.

Silence. Candle flicker karti hai.

SHALINI

(notebook kholte hue)

Maya. Naina ko last time yahin dekha gaya tha. Seedha bolo. Woh kahan hai?

MAYA

Main already bola chuki hoon, ma'am. Woh bas... kuch der ke liye aayi thi.

SISTER AGNES

Church mein log aaraam ke liye aate hain. Crime ke liye nahi.

Shalini ek nazar Sister Agnes par, phir Maya ki bruised sleeve par.

SHALINI

Aaraam? Phir wrist pe ye kya hua?

Maya instinctively sleeve aur neeche kheenchti hai.

MAYA

Gir gayi thi.

SHALINI

Hm. Bohot expressive fall tha.

Sister Agnes ki lips mein almost-smile.

SISTER AGNES

Detective, aapka tone bhi confession jaisa hai.

Shalini booth ki taraf dekhte hue uthti hai.

SHALINI

Aur yeh booth? Ismein kya chhupa hai?

SISTER AGNES

Sirf paap.

SHALINI

Aur paap ke saath paper bhi?

Shalini booth ke wooden edge par fingers chalati hai. Ek chhota folded NOTE phansa hua milta hai. Woh nikaal leti hai.

CLOSE ON NOTE: "Aaj candle jalana. Main aungi."

Neeche symbol: do circles aur ek cross.

Maya ka face change ho jata hai.

SHALINI

Yeh symbol pehchanti ho?

MAYA

(too fast)

Nahi.

SISTER AGNES

Jhooth bolne ka bhi ek dhang hota hai, beta.

Shalini note notebook mein tuck karti hai.

SHALINI

Naina se tumhari kya relation hai?

MAYA

Dosti. Bas.

SHALINI

"Bas" ke saath aadmi usually bahut kuch chhupa leta hai.

Sister Agnes slowly keys ka jhund jhankati hai.

SISTER AGNES

Jo khoya hai, woh aksar dhoondhne wale ke saamne hota hai.

Shalini narrow eyes.

SHALINI

Matlab?

Sister Agnes booth ki taraf ek nazar daalti hai. Maya bhi.

MAYA

(whisper)

Please...

SHALINI

Please kya? Naina zinda hai?

A beat.

MAYA

Main usse bachane aayi thi.

SHALINI

Kis se?

Maya's jaw tight.

MAYA

Us aadmi se jo usko dhoondh raha tha.

SISTER AGNES

Aur jo humein bhi dhoondh raha tha.

Shalini steps closer to the booth. She notices a slim gap behind the confession screen.

SHALINI

Yeh boilerplate hiding place nahi hai.

SISTER AGNES

Church mein sab kuch visible nahi hota, madam.

Shalini gently shifts the CONFESSION SCREEN aside.

BEHIND IT: a small concealed PASSAGE/SPACE. A few folded notes. A prayer book.

Shalini picks up another NOTE.

CLOSE ON NOTE: "Maa, main yahin hoon. Dar mat."

Maya gasps.

MAYA

No...

Sister Agnes closes her eyes. One key slips from her fingers and CLINKS on the floor.

SHALINI

(softly)

Naina alive hai.

Sister Agnes opens her eyes. For the first time, she looks broken.

SISTER AGNES

Meri beti thi woh.

Silence.

SHALINI

Naina... aapki beti?

SISTER AGNES

Long-lost. Saalon pehle gayab ho gayi thi. Jab mili, woh apna naam bhi khul ke nahi bol sakti thi.

MAYA

Maine usse kaha tha church mein safe rahegi. Main messages bahar pahunchati thi.

Shalini looks at Maya's bruised wrist.

SHALINI

Aur ye bruise?

MAYA

Us aadmi ne note chheenne ke liye pakda tha. Main bach gayi. Note bach gaya.

A beat. Candle flickers.

SISTER AGNES

Church shelter deta hai, Detective. Secrets ko bhi... aur un logon ko bhi jo zinda rehna chahte hain.

Shalini closes her notebook.

SHALINI

Aaj se ye booth confession ke liye nahi. Protection ke liye use hoga.

She looks at the hidden passage.

SHALINI (CONT'D)

Aur jo bhi bahar hai... us tak main pahunch jaungi.

From behind the screen, a faint WOMAN'S BREATH is heard.

Maya and Sister Agnes freeze.

Shalini turns, listening.

SHALINI (CONT'D)

Naina?

A tiny, trembling pause.

NAINA (O.S.)

...Maa?

Sister Agnes breaks. Tears well, but she smiles.

Shalini steps back, giving them space.

CANDLE FLAME steadies.

FADE OUT.

THE END.