



THE THREE KEYS

A Mystery/Crime 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Written by
Story Dil Se Team
(storydilse.in)

LOGLINE: Detective Anjali is called to investigate three identical keys found in a building where a tenant has gone missing, but Farah and Mrs. Verma each claim a different reason for being there. As the detective compares stories, she realizes the missing tenant may have been gathering evidence against both women. The twist reveals the keys open not the storage room, but three separate lives hidden under one apartment number.

CAST / CHARACTERS: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) | Character 1: Detective Anjali (37)

LOCATION: A dim apartment corridor outside a storage room, lit by a single flickering bulb and the weak daylight from a stairwell window. The corridor is narrow enough to feel like a pressure chamber, with one locked door at the center of the mystery.

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INT. APARTMENT CORRIDOR - EVENING

Dim, narrow corridor. A single flickering BULB overhead. Weak daylight leaks in from a stairwell window. Center frame: a LOCKED STORAGE ROOM DOOR.

DETECTIVE ANJALI (37), plain shirt, practical and sharp, stands with a FLASHLIGHT and an EVIDENCE POUCH.

FARAH (33), casual clothes, nervous, avoids eye contact, hands trembling.

MRS. VERMA (63), in a sari, calm exterior, suspiciously tidy handbag, unreadable face.

On a small ledge: a TENANT REGISTER and THREE IDENTICAL KEYS.

ANJALI

(dryly)

Teen keys. Ek missing tenant. Aur teen alag kahaniyan. Convenient.

FARAH

Main bas... charger lene aayi thi.

ANJALI

Charger ke liye itna darr?

Farah looks away. Her fingers shake harder.

MRS. VERMA

Detective ji, main building secretary hoon. Register check karne aayi thi.

ANJALI

Aur handbag itna tight kyun pakad rahi hain, Mrs. Verma?

Mrs. Verma gives a small, unreadable smile.

MRS. VERMA

Aadatan.

Anjali flashes the light on the keys.

ANJALI

Teenon same. Lekin storage room ka lock recent hai. Interesting.

She kneels, inspects the LOCK CYLINDER with the flashlight.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Cylindar replace hua hai. In keys ka yahan koi kaam nahi.

Farah swallows.

FARAH

Maine kuch nahi kiya.

ANJALI

Maine abhi kuch poocha bhi nahi.

A beat. The bulb BUZZES.

Anjali opens the tenant register. She flips pages, stops.

Close on the register: one apartment number. Beneath it, three different INITIALS.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Yeh kya hai?

MRS. VERMA

Building records.

ANJALI

Nahin. Yeh ek flat ke andar teen logon ka chhupa hua hisaab hai.

Farah's breath catches.

FARAH

Aapko kaise pata?

ANJALI

Kyunki jis tenant ki missing report hui hai, woh evidence jama kar raha tha. Aur tum dono uske radar mein the.

Mrs. Verma finally shifts her handbag.

MRS. VERMA

Radar mein sab hote hain, Detective.

ANJALI

Haan. Lekin sab itne saaf nahi hote.

Anjali points to the register.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Farah, tumhara naam yahan chhupa hua hai. Illegal sublet. Mrs. Verma, aapka naam nahi hai. Phir bhi keys aapke paas kyun?

Farah turns sharply to Mrs. Verma.

FARAH

Aapne bola tha sab manage ho jayega!

MRS. VERMA

Maine bola tha, shor mat karo.

FARAH

Jhooth!

ANJALI

Enough.

Anjali carefully lifts one key, then another, then the third.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Teen keys. Teen lives. Ek legal tenant. Ek illegal occupant. Aur ek... hidden resident.

Farah freezes.

FARAH

Hidden resident?

Mrs. Verma closes her eyes for a moment.

MRS. VERMA

Woh room ke liye nahi hain.

ANJALI

Then for what?

Mrs. Verma opens her handbag. Inside: a DIARY, three small ENVELOPES, and a PHOTOGRAPH.

She places them on the ledge.

MRS. VERMA

Is building ne ek apartment number ke neeche teen zindagiyan daba di thi. Tenant ne sab likh liya.

Anjali picks up the diary.

ANJALI

Aur missing tenant?

MRS. VERMA

Woh evidence nahi, escape route chhod gaya tha.

Farah looks at the photograph. Her face drains.

FARAH

Yeh... main hoon.

ANJALI

Tum dono nahi. Teenon.

She opens the diary. Inside are three separate names linked to one flat number.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Yeh keys storage room ki nahi. Yeh un teen logon ki thi jo ek hi apartment number ke andar alag-alag jhooth jee rahe the.

A beat. The corridor feels tighter.

FARAH

Toh missing tenant... humare khilaaf tha?

ANJALI

Nahi. Woh tum sabke against system ka proof tha.

Mrs. Verma's calm cracks, just slightly.

MRS. VERMA

System hi toh sab kuch sambhalta hai.

ANJALI

Nahi, Mrs. Verma. System sirf lock karta hai. Sach kholna padta hai.

Anjali drops the three keys into the evidence pouch.

ANJALI (CONT'D)

Storage room ka lock bas distraction tha. Asli mystery ek apartment number tha.

The BULB flickers violently.

Farah, Mrs. Verma, and Anjali stand in silence.

FARAH

Ab?

ANJALI

Ab... teenon apni-apni kahani likho. Kyunki missing tenant ne jo chhoda hai, woh sirf clue nahi. Verdict bhi hai.

Anjali snaps the evidence pouch shut.

CUT TO BLACK.