

THE FIFTH FLOOR

A Mystery/Crime 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Mystery/Crime	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Inspector Nair (46)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ke lagbhag do baje hain. Purane commercial building ki lobby mein fluorescent lights halki si jhilmila rahi hain, aur polished tiles par emergency light ka laal reflection kisi dhadkan jaisa blink kar raha hai. Side mein elevator ka metal door band hai, uske upar "OUT OF SERVICE" ka board latka hua hai. Isi lift ke saamne Inspector Nair khada hai—wrinkled formal shirt, heavy mustache, ek file arm ke neeche dabaye hue. Uske saamne Jatin, 24 saal ka lift mechanic, grease-stained overalls mein, toolbox pakde, haath kaanp rahe hain.

Nair ka tone thanda hai, par aankhon mein pressure. Woh Jatin se seedha poochta hai ki lift aaj raat kisne khola tha. Jatin pehle ghabraata hai, phir bolta hai ki woh sirf servicing ke liye aaya tha. Lift stuck thi, usne panel check kiya, service key lagayi, bas. Nair file kholta hai—andar ek purana case note, same building ka, same floor plan, same blind spots. Woh batata hai ki abhi thodi der pehle fifth floor se ek body mili hai, aur ajeeb baat yeh hai ki lift supposedly kabhi open hi nahi hui. Jatin ka chehra aur safed pad jaata hai. Woh insist karta hai ki usne kuch nahi kiya.

Nair dheere-dheere usse corner karta hai. Woh flashlight se elevator key panel, floor indicators, aur door ke neeche ke gap ko inspect karta hai. Har detail uske liye ek clue hai. Jatin ke trembling hands, toolbox ke andar rakkha service key, aur grease ke nishaan—sab Nair ko us old unsolved case ki yaad dilate hain jisme ek body "maintenance fault" ke naam par chhupa di gayi thi. Nair ko lagta hai kisi ne building ke blind spots ka faayda uthaya hai—security camera ka dead angle, service shaft ka access, aur lobby ke reflection mein chhupne ki jagah. Jatin baar-baar kehta hai, "Sir, main mechanic hoon, murderer nahi." Lekin uski voice mein sach aur darr dono mix hain.

Phir twist aata hai. Nair service key ko uthakar panel mein lagata hai, aur lift ka door ek halki si mechanical hiss ke saath khul jaata hai. Jatin shocked ho jaata hai—lift to actually kabhi jam thi hi nahi. Nair ko samajh aa jaata hai: dead body lift mein nahi, lift ke back access aur false panel ke beech temporarily hide ki gayi thi. Koi aisa jo building ko andar se jaanta ho, jo lift ko "stalled" dikha sakta ho, aur jo police ke aane se pehle body ko fifth floor tak quietly shift kar sakta ho. Jatin ka role sirf itna tha ki usne routine servicing ke dauran, bina jaaney, us hidden compartment ko seal kar diya tha. Woh culprit nahi, unwitting pawn tha.

Nair file ka ek purana page Jatin ke saamne kholta hai: same handwriting, same maintenance schedule, same signature—building ke old supervisor ka. Jatin ke chehre par realization aati hai ki jis aadmi ko woh “sir” bolta tha, wahi is building ke blind spots ka master tha. Woh body ko “lift fault” bana kar upar rakhta raha, aur jab police aayi, lift ko dead dikhaya gaya. Nair ka final line cold hai: “Lift kharab nahi thi, Jatin. System kharab tha. Aur kisi ne us system ko tumse zyada achchhe se samjha tha.”

End mein Jatin ka darr guilt mein badal jaata hai—guilt is baat ka nahi ki usne murder kiya, balki is baat ka ki usne kabhi notice nahi kiya ki building ke andar kitni aasaani se sach ko chhupaya ja sakta hai. Nair usse arrest nahi karta; woh usse witness banata hai, kyunki ab case ka asli raasta body se nahi, building ke hidden architecture se guzarta hai. Elevator door khula rehta hai, andhere shaft ke andar se thandi hawa bahar aati hai. Emergency light blink karti rehti hai. Aur lobby mein pehli baar dono ko samajh aata hai: kabhi-kabhi qatl insaan nahi, design karta hai.