

THE WAIT LIST

A Slice of Life/Romance 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Slice of Life/Romance	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Farhan (29)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Farhan har Tuesday aur Thursday usi clinic ke waiting room mein baithta hai, jaise koi aadat ho jo khud usse bhi samajh na aaye. Office se seedha aaya hota hai—formal shirt, ID card ka ghost, earphones neck par latke hue, aur lunch box abhi tak khula bhi nahi. Woh appointment slip ko baar-baar fold karta, phir unfold karta, aur har baar reception ki taraf dekh leta, jaise uska naam bulane wala ho ya zindagi ka koi aur faisla.

Prakash usse pehli baar tab dikhta hai jab woh magazine ke ulte-pulte pages ko bilkul calmly seedha kar raha hota hai. Linen shirt, reading glasses, chehre par thakan nahi, bas ek aisi shaanti jo Farhan ko aur bhi restless kar deti hai. Prakash bhi har hafta aata hai. Kabhi blood pressure ke naam par, kabhi “follow-up” ke naam par. Dono ek hi clinic, ek hi waiting room, aur ek hi plastic chair ke system mein phase hue lagte hain. Shuru mein bas polite nods hote hain. Phir ek din Farhan water dispenser se cup bharte waqt slip se gir jaata hai, aur Prakash bina haste usse uthata hai. Bas wahi se baat shuru hoti hai.

Pehle clinic ki baatein. Doctor late hai, AC kabhi chalti hai kabhi nahi, aur appointment ka matlab sirf intezaar hota hai. Phir halki si personal baatein. Farhan apni job ke baare mein bolta hai—din bhar unknown callers, script follow karna, aur boss ka yeh kehna ki “smile through the voice.” Prakash batata hai ki uski bookstore pe ab log kam aate hain; sab books online order kar lete hain, jaise kisi ki kahani ko haath se chhuna ab zaroori nahi raha. Farhan uski baat sunke has deta hai, aur Prakash uske lunch box ko dekh ke puchta hai, “Aaj bhi same rajma?” Farhan pehli baar bina jhijhak ke kehta hai, “Haan. Maa ka pressure hai ki khaana time pe khaya karo. Aur shaadi ka bhi.” Prakash ka chehra ek pal ke liye rukta hai, phir woh bas muskura deta hai.

Din guzarte rehte hain. Waiting room unki chhoti si duniya ban jaati hai. Blinds ki stripes floor par ek jaise girti hain, jaise waqt ko kisi ne line mein khada kar diya ho. Farhan apni family pressure ki baat karta hai—“Sabko lagta hai 29 ka ho gaya, ab settle ho ja. Par settle ka matlab kya hai?” Prakash bina preach kiye sunta hai. Phir ek din woh apne divorce ka zikr karta hai, bina drama ke. “Log kehte hain breakup ke baad aadmi strong ho jaata hai. Main bas quiet ho gaya.” Farhan usse dekhta reh jaata hai. Usse pehli baar lagta hai ki Prakash ki calmness ke neeche bhi koi aadmi hai jo sambhalne ki koshish kar raha hai.

Dheere-dheere unki baatein appointment slips se zyada personal ho jaati hain. Farhan admit karta hai ki uske phone mein contacts bohot hain, par call karne layak koi nahi. Prakash kehta hai ki uski bookstore mein roz log aate hain, par ghar jaake awaz bahut kam hoti hai. Dono ke beech ek aisa silence aata hai jo awkward nahi hota—woh silence jo sirf tab hota hai jab do log ek dusre ko samajhne lagte hain.

Climax tab aata hai jab nurse ya reception se koi naam nahi bulaya jaata. Clinic mein bas un dono ka wait aur gehra ho jaata hai. Farhan finally, almost embarrassed, bolta hai ki woh actually kisi blood test ke liye nahi aata. Woh bas yahan isliye aata hai kyunki uske ghar aur office ke beech kahin bhi rukne ki jagah nahi hai. Prakash halki si hansi ke saath confess karta hai ki uska bhi koi medical issue nahi. Uske prescriptions envelope mein doctor ka naam nahi, ek therapist ka card hai—aur woh bhi abhi tak use call nahi kar paaya. Dono ek dusre ko dekhte hain, phir pehli baar sach bol dete hain: woh dono sick nahi hain. Woh bas thak gaye hain. Aur akela bhi.

Twist yeh hai ki clinic ka waiting room unke liye sirf waiting room nahi tha—woh ek safe place tha jahan woh bina explanation ke ek dusre ke paas baith sakte the. Farhan ke haath mein lunch box hai, Prakash ke paas prescription envelope. Farhan dheere se puchta hai, “Aaj ka wait khatam kar dein?” Prakash usse dekhta hai, phir apni reading glasses utarkar bolta hai, “Agar tum chaho, toh.”

Aakhri shot mein clinic ki striped light ke beech dono plastic chairs se uthte hain. Koi grand confession nahi, bas ek chhota sa, real sa decision. Farhan apna phone nikaal kar kehta hai, “Main... coffee ke liye pooch raha hoon.” Prakash muskura kar jawab deta hai, “Main samajh gaya.” Aur dono pehli baar waiting room se bahar nikalte hain—appointment ke liye nahi, ek second chance ke liye.