

THE MEMORY LEASE

A Sci-Fi/High-Concept 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Sci-Fi/High-Concept	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Ishan (33)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Ishan ko lagta hai ki uski shaadi bachane ka ek hi tareeka hai: ek memory delete kar dena. Woh subah se bina soye, apne minimalist black hoodie aur smart glasses mein, memory clinic ke waiting corner mein baitha hai jaise kisi startup pitch se pehle ho—sirf is baar investor nahi, uska apna guilt hai. Aditi, crisp white coat aur tablet ke saath, usse observe karti hai. Uski tone professional hai, par aankhon mein woh usual clinical distance nahi—jaise woh pehle se jaanti ho ki Ishan jo bol raha hai, woh poori kahani nahi hai. Ishan seedha bol deta hai: “Ek memory nikaal do. Bas ek.” Woh batata hai ki us memory ke baad se uski wife usse alag ho gayi hai, aur har baar jab woh us pal ko yaad karta hai, ghar mein aur zyada silence aa jaati hai.

Aditi process explain karti hai: memory erase nahi hoti, bas lease pe di jaati hai—temporary suppression, reversible, but expensive. Ishan ko price se problem nahi; usse bas peace chahiye. Woh apne smart glasses utarta hai, aankhon ke neeche gehre dark circles. Aditi tablet par memory file open karti hai: “Incident—Dock 14. 11:47 PM.” Ishan ka chehra instantly tight ho jaata hai. Woh keh deta hai ki us raat se related kuch bhi uske dimaag mein clearly nahi hai—sirf flashes, paani ki smell, ek female voice, aur ek harsh static. Aditi thoda rukti hai. Uske fingers tablet par freeze ho jaate hain. Woh file ko dobara check karti hai aur bina emotion ke poochti hai: “Tumhe is memory ka source pata hai?” Ishan sarcasm mein bolta hai, “Agar pata hota, toh yahan nahi aata.”

Session start hota hai. Neural headset Ishan ke temples par fit hota hai, soft blue light room mein aur bhi cold ho jaati hai. Aditi calibration karte hue usse questions poochti hai—basic anchors, names, dates, marriage anniversary. Ishan har answer mein thoda aur brittle hota jaata hai. Aur phir memory stream open hota hai. Holographic reflections mein Dock 14 ka fragment appear hota hai: rain, sirens, ek broken pod, aur ek woman ka silhouette. Ishan ko yaad aata hai ki us raat woh kisi ko bachane gaya tha. Uski wife? Nahi. Kuch aur. Aditi ka face us stream ko dekhkar pale padne lagta hai. Woh haste-haste bolne ki koshish karta hai, “Great. Trauma bhi cinematic hai.” Lekin phir ek detail flash hoti hai—white coat, tablet, same neural headset—Aditi khud us memory mein hai.

Ishan confused ho kar headset hataane ki koshish karta hai. Aditi usse rukne ko kehti hai, par ab uski voice mein pehli baar crack hai. Uske tablet par jo file open hai, usme sirf Ishan ka naam nahi, uska bhi naam linked hai. “Ye impossible hai,” woh whisper karti hai. Ishan usse dekhta hai: “Tum us raat wahan thi?” Aditi ka jawab seedha nahi aata. Woh admit karti hai ki kuch saal pehle ek emergency memory-trace project mein woh bhi involved thi. Dock 14

par ek experimental neural archive transfer hua tha—kisi accident ke baad. “Humne sirf memories store nahi ki thi,” woh kehti hai, “humne unhe survive karne ke liye split kiya tha.” Ishan ko dheere-dheere samajh aata hai ki jo memory woh erase karna chahta tha, woh uski marriage ka reason nahi, uski zindagi ka missing piece hai.

Twist tab aata hai jab Aditi finally file ke hidden layer ko unlock karti hai: us memory mein Ishan akela nahi tha. Usne kisi ko bachaya tha—Aditi ko. Aur us process mein, usne apne dimaag se us pal ka ek hissa lock kar diya tha, kyunki us pal ke saath ek aur truth attached tha: Ishan ki wife ko sab pata tha. Shaadi tootne ki wajah betrayal nahi, secrecy thi. Ishan ne memory erase karne ke liye clinic choose nahi kiya tha; woh wahi memory delete karne aaya tha jo uski wife ke saath ki hui last honest conversation ka proof thi. Aditi ke liye bhi shock yeh hai ki us memory ka erased fragment uske own missing past se connected hai—wohi project, wohi accident, aur shayad usi din se usne apni life ko clinical distance mein jiya.

Climax mein, Ishan headset utar kar seedha Aditi se kehta hai ki memory delete nahi karega. “Agar sach hi mar gaya, toh marriage bhi fake ho jaayegi.” Aditi pehli baar genuinely smile karti hai—thodi tired, thodi sad. Woh file close kar deti hai aur bolti hai, “Lease cancel karni hogi. Par warning hai—ye memory wapas aayi toh sabse pehle tum apne aap se miloge.” Ishan nods karta hai. Room ka faint pulse ab pehle jaisa sterile nahi lagta; usmein ek human warmth aa gayi hai. Final beat mein Aditi tablet par ek note save karti hai: “Dock 14 — restore pending.” Ishan door ki taraf jaata hai, rukta hai, aur puchta hai, “Tumhe bhi yaad aaya?” Aditi uski taraf dekhti hai: “Nahi. Abhi bhi poora nahi. Par enough hai.”