

THE WITNESS ROOM

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: ACP Vikram (44)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Police interrogation room ki pale deewaron ke beech, ACP Vikram ek file folder ko metal table par zor se patak deta hai. Uske saamne Rhea baithi hai—restaurant hostess, simple uniform, dono haath mein statement form aur ek trembling water glass. Overhead tube light ki safed roshni un dono ke chehron par aise gir rahi hai jaise koi sach chup nahi sakta. Vikram ka maanna hai ki Rhea ne restaurant parking lot mein murder dekha hai. Rhea ka jawab bas ek hi hai: "Maine kuch nahi dekha, sir." Lekin uski awaaz mein darr se zyada koi aur cheez chhupi hai—jaise woh sach bolna chahti ho, par kisi aur ke liye nahi.

Vikram tape recorder on karta hai. "Phir bhi tumne parking lot ka exact layout kaise bataya? Left side broken light, silver sedan, wet patch near drain, aur victim ke haath mein red thread—ye sab tumhe kaise pata?" Rhea ka haath glass par aur zyada kaanpne lagta hai. Woh kehti hai ki restaurant mein roz yahi sab dikhta hai. Lekin Vikram jaanta hai ki yeh excuse nahi hai. Woh file kholta hai aur ek purani photo slide karta hai—same parking lot, same angle, same kind of body. "Teen saal pehle bhi ek aadmi yahiin maara gaya tha," Vikram bolta hai. "Us case mein ek witness tha jo gayab ho gaya. Aur aaj tum mujhe wahi witness lag rahi ho."

Rhea pehli baar seedha uski aankhon mein dekhti hai. Uski aankhon mein guilt hai, par fear usse bada hai. Woh dheere se bolti hai, "Main witness nahi hoon." Vikram aage jhukta hai. "Toh kaun ho?" Rhea jawab nahi deti. Bas statement form ke corner ko ungliyon se masalti rehti hai. Vikram uske paas file ka ek aur page push karta hai—arrest record. Photo mein ek aadmi ka chehra partially visible hai. "Yeh same pattern hai," Vikram kehta hai. "Same weapon, same parking lot, same clean-up. Aur tum us aadmi ko cover kar rahi ho." Rhea ki saans atak jaati hai. Woh glass ko table par rakhti hai, aur pehli baar uski awaaz toot jaati hai: "Aap usse galat samajh rahe ho."

Interrogation intensify hoti hai. Vikram ka tone hard hota hai, par uski aankhon mein ek purani pehchaan jagne lagti hai. Rhea bolti hai ki jis aadmi ko Vikram ne years ago arrest kiya tha, woh murder karne wala nahi tha—woh sirf us din wahan tha, aur us par sab kuch daal diya gaya tha. "Aapne us waqt bhi sach nahi suna tha," Rhea kehti hai. "Aaj bhi nahi sunenge." Vikram ka jaw tight ho jata hai. Woh yaad karta hai—purana case, public pressure, media outrage, ek quick arrest jo career-saving bhi tha aur haunting bhi. Usne tab bhi proof ke naam par sirf convenience pakdi thi. Rhea aage badhti hai: "Woh aadmi jail se nikalne ke baad bhi har raat us parking lot ke paas se guzarta tha. Kyunki

usko lagta tha kisi din koi sach bol dega.”

Climax tab aata hai jab Vikram tape recorder off kar deta hai. Room mein sirf tube light ki humming aur unki saanson ki awaaz reh jaati hai. Woh dheere se poochta hai, “Woh aadmi kaun hai?” Rhea ki aankhon mein aansu aa jaate hain. “Mera bhai.” Silence. Yeh line room ko tod deti hai. Rhea batati hai ki uska bhai us murder ke waqt parking lot mein tha, lekin killer nahi—witness. Usne case file mein ek cheez dekhi thi jo kisi aur ne nahi dekhi: murder victim ke haath mein restaurant ke uniform ka button tha, jo uske bhai ke coat se nahi, balki kisi staff member ke apron se match karta tha. Rhea ne yeh sab isliye chhupaya kyunki agar woh sach bolti, toh purana case reopen hota, aur uska bhai phir se target ban jata—ya phir un logon ke haath lag jata jo asli killer ko bachaye hue the.

Vikram file folder ko dheere se band karta hai. Uska steel gaze pehli baar thoda toot-ta hai. Woh samajh jaata hai ki Rhea witness nahi, shield thi. Aur jis aadmi ko usne years ago arrest kiya tha, woh shayad guilty nahi tha—sirf convenient tha. Rhea uthkar statement form uske saamne rakh deti hai. “Agar aap sach mein ACP ho,” woh kehti hai, “toh is baar file nahi, evidence dekho.” Vikram us form ko nahi uthata. Woh one-way mirror ki taraf dekhta hai, phir Rhea ki taraf. “Aaj se,” woh dheere se bolta hai, “koi bhi witness room se jhooth ke saath nahi niklega.” Tube light flicker karti hai. Cut to black.