

THE TEA STALL TRUCE

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: Ravi (33)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Monsoon ki shaam hai. Shehar ki ek tang gali ke kone par, tin chhat wale chhote se tea stall ke andar Ravi roz ki tarah apne faded shirt aur lungi mein khada hai, kettle se chai chadha raha hai. Bahar traffic ki peeli-orange roshni puddles mein toot rahi hai, aur baarish tin sheet par aise pad rahi hai jaise koi impatient tabla bajaa raha ho. Stall ke saamne se jab bhi auto guzarta, Ravi ki aankh usi aadmi ki tarah uthti jo sab kuch notice karta hai, par kuch bhi jaldi nahi kehta. Sana har dusre din yahan aati hai—practical kurta, sneakers, ek notebook aur recorder ke saath—aur hamesha ek hi line bolti hai: “Aaj chai mein kitni sachchai daaloge, Ravi?” Ravi bhi turant palat ke bol deta, “Jitni tumhari khabar mein hoti hai, madam.” Dono ke beech yeh roz ka khel tha—tez, chubhne wala, par ajeeb tareeke se familiar.

Aaj bhi wahi shuruat hoti hai. Sana recorder on karke baithti hai, lekin interview ke bahane se zyada uski aadat thi Ravi ko tang karne ki. Ravi chai glass mein daalte hue uska recorder dekh kar kehta hai ki “Itna sunne ki aadat hai tumhe, phir bhi meri baat samajh nahi aati.” Sana muskura ke jawab deti hai ki “Tumhari baat samajh aati hai, Ravi. Tum bas khud ko samajhne nahi dete.” Ravi hansa deta hai, par us hansa ke neeche kuch aur bhi hota hai—jaise woh har din uske aane ka intezaar karta ho, aur yeh baat khud se bhi kabool na karta ho. Sana bhi aise hi pretend karti hai jaise yeh tea stall sirf ek reporting stop ho, jabki uski notebook mein Ravi ke naam ke neeche kabhi kabhi chhote chhote notes likhe milte: “hamesha 7 baje,” “baarish mein bhi khada,” “left hand mein cup pakadta hai.”

Phir achanak bijli si chamakti hai, aur bahar ek zor ka jhonka aata hai. Ek auto ke brake lagne ki awaaz, phir kisi cheez ke girne ki, aur uske baad baarish aur tez. Stall ke saamne paani bharne lagta hai. Sana bahar nikalne ke liye apna umbrella uthati hai, lekin hawa usse ulta kar deti hai. Ravi bina kuch kahe darwaze ke saamne wooden plank kheench ke laga deta hai. “Aaj toh yahin rukna padega,” woh kehta hai, jaise yeh uske liye koi nayi baat hi na ho. Sana pehli baar uski aankhon mein seedha dekhti hai. “Tumhe kaise pata tha?” Ravi kandhe uchka deta hai. “Tumhari aadat hai, storm aata hai toh bhi deadline ke peeche bhaagna.” Sana thoda sakht ho jaati hai, phir dheere se bolti hai, “Aur tumhari aadat hai, har baat ko mazaak bana dena.”

Baarish ki awaz mein dono ki chup zyada saaf sunai dene lagti hai. Kettle se steam uthti rehti hai. Ravi naye glass mein chai dalta hai aur is baar bina taunt ke Sana ke saamne rakh deta hai. Sana recorder band kar deti hai.

“Interview nahi karna aaj?” Ravi poochta hai. Sana notebook ko ungliyon se pakad ke kehti hai, “Aaj news nahi, sach

chahiye.” Yeh line Ravi ko hila deti hai. Woh thoda sa side mein dekh kar bolta hai ki usne kabhi auto chalana sapna nahi tha. “Socha tha mechanic banunga. Apni dukaan hogi. Amma ko pehli baar bina kiraye ke ghar dikhata.” Phir ek pause. “Par sapne ko petrol chahiye, aur petrol ko paisa.” Sana chup rehti hai. Phir woh bhi pehli baar sach bolti hai: usne reporter banna isiye nahi chuna tha ki headlines chase karni hain, balki isiye ki ghar mein sab usse “adjust” karne ko kehte the. “Main bas ek aisi zindagi chahti thi jahan mujhe har baar permission na maangni pade,” woh kehti hai. Ravi uski baat sun kar halki si muskurahat deta hai. “Aur ab?” Sana uski taraf dekhti hai. “Ab lagta hai permission se zyada, kisi se seedha poochna chahiye.”

Woh dono ek doosre ko dekhte rehte hain, jaise pehli baar samajh rahe hon ki saalon ki nok-jhok ke neeche ek hi cheez chal rahi thi—darr. Darr ki kahin yeh aadat, yeh stall, yeh roz ki chai, bas routine hi na reh jaaye. Ravi apna gala saaf karta hai, phir ek chhota sa kagaz nikaalta hai jo usne chai ki patti ke dabbe ke neeche chhupa rakha tha. Us par ek phone number aur ek line likhi hoti hai: “Agar kabhi report se pehle zindagi karni ho, toh call karna.” Sana pehle hairaan hoti hai, phir hans padti hai—sach mein hans padti hai, bina taunt ke. “Yeh invitation tha?” Ravi sharminda sa ho jaata hai. “Haan. Bas thoda late.” Sana apna notebook band karke us kagaz ko sambhal leti hai. “Main bhi ek cheez laayi thi,” woh kehti hai aur apne recorder ke neeche se ek chhota envelope nikaalti hai. Usme ek metro ticket aur ek handwritten note hai: “Kal subah 8 baje. Agar chai ke baad bhi baat baaki ho, toh station pe milna.” Ravi ka chehra ek pal ke liye bilkul khali ho jaata hai, phir uski aankhon mein wohi watchful softness aa jaati hai. Baarish ab bhi pad rahi hai, lekin stall ke andar pehli baar thandak nahi, umeed lag rahi hoti hai.

Aakhri shot mein Ravi aur Sana tea glasses ke saath khade hain. Bahar monsoon ka shor hai, andar bare bulb ki roshni. Dono ek dusre ko dekhte hain, phir simultaneously bolte hain: “Toh?” Aur us ek shabd mein saari lambi intezaar, saari banter, aur saari shuruat chhup jaati hai.