

THE LOCKED BALCONY

A Horror/Supernatural 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Horror/Supernatural	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Dhruv (35)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Dhruv raat ke andhere mein ek high-rise apartment ke narrow balcony par khada tha, haath mein tape measure aur flashlight, aur chehre par woh irritation jo sirf ek interior designer ko tab hoti hai jab client ke ghar mein “bas thoda sa change” bolke poora scene ulta-pulta ho jaaye. Maya ne usse balcony ki railing aur door frame measure karne bulaya tha, kyunki uske according “door thoda atak raha hai.” Dhruv ne lock check kiya, handle ghumaaya, aur ek chhoti si metallic click ke baad lock ne dum tod diya. Glass door band ho gaya. Khulna toh door ki baat thi, ab toh hil bhi nahi raha tha.

Maya, simple night dress aur cardigan mein, barefoot, balcony ke kone mein floor cushion par baith gayi. Uska chehra calm tha, jaise yeh sab uske liye naya nahi tha. Dhruv ne pehli baar usse dekha toh laga, kaafi strange woman hai—raat ke barah baje balcony pe itni shaanti? Par ab jab lock fail ho chuka tha, uski shaanti aur bhi unsettling lag rahi thi. Neeche city lights chamak rahi thi, hawa railing ke beech se thandi saans ki tarah ghus rahi thi, aur upar single bulb kabhi steady jalta, kabhi lightning ki safed chamak mein peela sa lagta.

Dhruv ne phone nikala, no signal. Usne door pe knock kiya, pehle politely, phir zor se. “Maya, koi andar hai? Main maintenance se hoon, yeh lock khul nahi raha.” Maya ne bina uthe kaha, “Main jaanti hoon.” Dhruv ne uski taraf dekha. “Toh phir panic kyu nahi kar rahi?” Maya ne halki si muskaan ke saath kaha, “Kyunki raat mein panic karne se cheezein aur yaad aati hain.” Dhruv ko laga yeh koi weird joke hai, par uske tone mein joke jaisa kuch bhi nahi tha.

Woh dono balcony mein atak gaye the, aur waqt dheere-dheere aur bhari hota gaya. Dhruv ne flashlight se door frame, hinge aur lock plate inspect ki. Har baar uske beam ke saath glass door ke andar apartment ka reflection aata—living room, dark corridor, ek side table, aur unke apne distorted silhouettes. Kuch der baad Dhruv ne notice kiya ki andar ke corridor mein ek extra shadow aa-jaa rahi hai. Pehle usne socha reflection ka glitch hai. Phir shadow ne ek step liya. Dhruv ka gala sookh gaya.

“Woh... andar koi aur hai?” usne dheere se poocha.

Maya ne pehli baar uski taraf poori tarah dekha. “Haan,” usne kaha. “Isliye toh sunrise se pehle andar nahi jaana.”

Dhruv hansa nahi. “Maya, lock kharab hai. Hum yahin thand mein mareinge kya?”

“Marna itna easy nahi hota,” Maya boli, aur uski aankhon mein ek ajeeb sa dard chamka. “Kuch cheezein pehle ghar mein aane ka wait karti hain.”

Lightning chamki. Us pal glass door ke andar ek aur image ubhri—kisi aurat ki silhouette, Maya jaisi hi, par thodi blur, jaise purane paani mein reflection. Dhruv ne turant flashlight us taraf maari. Kuch nahi. Sirf empty room. Phir ek halki si tapping hui. Teen baar. Glass ke andar se.

Dhruv piche hata. “Maya, kisne knock kiya?”

Maya ne aankhen band ki. “Woh nahi knock karti. Woh yaad dilati hai.”

Dhruv ka dimag ab tak practical solutions dhoondh raha tha—screwdriver, phone, kisi tarah lock todna. Usne tape measure ki metal body se latch ko pry karne ki koshish ki. “Sunو, agar tumhe andar kisi se problem hai, toh mujhe pehle batao. Main help kar sakta hoon.”

Maya ne ek lambi saans li. “Help? Tum jaise log hamesha help karne aate ho. Measure lete ho, deewar samajhte ho, aur sochte ho ki sab fit ho jayega.”

“Main logon ko fix nahi karta,” Dhruv ne gusse mein kaha. “Main spaces design karta hoon.”

Maya ki hansی ek second ke liye bahut halki thi, phir gayab. “Yahi toh problem hai. Is ghar mein space ne hi sab kuch kha liya.”

Ek aur lightning. Is baar apartment ke andar hallway ke end par ek door khula dikha. Dhruv ko yaad aaya—jab woh aaya tha, living room se thandi hawa nahi aa rahi thi. Par ab balcony ki hawa ke saath andar se bhi ek aur hawa aa rahi thi, jaise kisi aur room ne saans li ho. Door ke paas floor par ek chhota sa wet footprint ubhra. Phir doosra. Woh footprint apartment ke andar se nahi, balki balcony ki taraf aa raha tha.

Dhruv ne Maya ki taraf mudkar dekha. “Tum kaun ho?”

Maya ne cardigan ko aur tight pakad liya. “Main yahin rehti hoon.”

“Yeh jawab nahi hai.”

“Pehele tha,” Maya ne dheere se kaha. “Jab main yaad rakhti thi.”

Uske baad jo silence aaya, woh thand se zyada dangerous tha. Dhruv ko achanak samajh aaya—Maya ka calm ■■■ nahi tha. Woh waiting thi. Sunrise ka wait nahi, kisi aur cheez ka. Kisi ke jagne ka. Kisi ke usse pehchaanne ka.

Andar se ek aawaz aayi, bahut halki, aurat ki hi, lekin empty: “Maya...”

Maya ki aankhon mein pehli baar darr aaya. Dhruv ko samajh aaya ki Maya balcony pe trapped nahi thi; woh balcony ko safe zone bana kar khadi thi. Kyunki apartment ke andar jo tha, woh usse dhoondh raha tha—ya shayad yaad kar raha tha. Dhruv ne flashlight se Maya ke face par light daali. Uski skin ke edges mein ek faint transparency thi, jaise woh fully yahan thi hi nahi.

“Tum...,” Dhruv ne saans roki. “Tum andar se nahi, yahin se—”

Maya ne usse dekha, aur uski awaaz ab almost ek whisper thi. “Main us raat balcony se neeche nahi giri thi, Dhruv.”

Lightning ne dono ko safed kar diya. Glass ke andar corridor mein jo shadow thi, woh ab bilkul clear thi—ek aadmi ka shape, jo darwaze ke bilkul paas aa chuka tha. Maya ne aankhen band kiin. “Sunrise tak bas mat kholna,” usne kaha.

“Woh mujhe pehchaan gaya toh tum bhi yaad ban jaoge.”

Dhruv ne lock ko dekha, phir Maya ko, phir andar ki darkness ko. Aur usne pehli baar samjha ki balcony ka lock kharab nahi hua tha. Woh khola hi isliye gaya tha, taaki koi bahar aa sake. Ya koi andar se bahar aa sake. Raat aur bhi gehri ho gayi, aur Dhruv ne apna flashlight floor cushion par gira diya, bilkul usi waqt jab andar ki glass door par ek final, slow knock hua—jaise koi purane ghar ko uska naam yaad dila raha ho.