

THE NAME ON THE DOOR

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: Inspector Farhan (46)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ka waqt hai. Ek purane apartment block ki corridor mein sirf ek bulb jal raha hai, aur stairs ke paas wali chhoti si window se thandi roshni aa rahi hai. Corridor ke end par ek door hai jiske upar nayi nameplate chamak rahi hai: "Minal S. Mehta." Door ke neeche baseboard ke paas andhera jama hua hai, jaise koi baat chhupi ho.

Inspector Farhan, 46, raincoat mein bheega hua sa, ek folder aur penlight le kar door ke saamne khada hai. Uska chehra sakht hai, lekin thaka hua bhi—jaise woh is tarah ki raaton se puraane hisaab chuka chuka ho. Door khulta hai aur Minal, 29, simple kurta aur slippers mein, ek key aur folded eviction notice pakde nazar aati hai. Woh defensive nahi, bas thodi alert hai. Farhan seedha sawaal karta hai: yahan jo aadmi rehta tha, woh kahan hai? Minal ka jawab seedha aur ajeeb hota hai—"Yahan kabhi koi aadmi rehta hi nahi tha. Ye apartment mera hai. Hamesha se."

Farhan ko lagta hai woh jhooth bol rahi hai. Folder mein ek complaint, ek death report, aur ek purani tenant history hai. Uske mutabik is flat mein ek dead man mila tha—Ashok Verma, ya kuch aisa hi naam. Farhan penlight se nameplate ko dekhta hai. Naya naam. Fresh paint. Minal ke haath mein eviction notice. Farhan us notice ko dekh kar samajhta hai ki yeh sirf rent ka jhagda nahi hai. Minal batati hai ki society wale usse nikaalna chahte the, kyunki "records" mein flat kisi aur ke naam par tha. Lekin uske paas key hai, aur woh key uske Nana ne usse di thi. Woh is flat mein bachpan se aati rahi hai. Farhan uski baat ko test karta hai—kuch purane marks, nail holes, ek door frame ke andar chhupa hua old nameplate ka shadow. Sab kuch ek hi kahani bol raha hai: kisi ne naam badla hai, identity badli hai.

Jab Farhan penlight se threshold aur door ke side panel ko inspect karta hai, use ek subtle cheez milti hai—scrape marks, jaise koi purani nameplate ko zabardasti utara gaya ho. Minal ka gussa ab dard mein badal jata hai. Woh batati hai ki kal raat usne corridor mein kuch awaaz suni thi—ghaseetne ki, phir ek dum silence. Subah usne dekha ki nameplate badli hui thi. Usne socha koi prank hai, par phir eviction notice aur police ka aana... sab kuch ek saath ho gaya. Farhan ko ahsaas hota hai ki dead man shayad is flat ka resident nahi, balki woh aadmi tha jo yeh identity chura kar yahan reh raha tha.

Twist tab aata hai jab Farhan folder mein rakhe dead man ke photo ko Minal ke saamne karta hai. Minal us chehre ko dekh kar pehle confuse hoti hai, phir uski aankhon mein recognition aur horror ek saath aa jata hai. Woh dheere se bolti hai ki yeh uska chhota bhai Ravi tha—jo family se lad kar ghar chhod gaya tha, aur saalon baad kisi aur naam se wapas aaya tha. Farhan samajh jata hai: Ravi ne is apartment ki registry, nameplate, aur maybe even society records manipulate kiye, taaki apni purani pehchaan se bach sake. Lekin kisi ne usse yahin maar diya. Minal insist karti hai ki usne use nahi maara. Farhan bhi us par shak kam karta hai.

Final reveal aur zyada disturbing hai: crime scene apartment ke andar nahi, identity ke andar tha. Dead man ne apne aap ko erase karne ki koshish ki thi—par kisi aur ne uski nayi identity ko usi door par khatam kar diya. Farhan notice karta hai ki Minal ke eviction notice par jo date hai, woh kal ki hai; aur uske neeche ek purana stamp partially visible hai—same housing office ka, same officer ka. Matlab koi official level par bhi is identity erasure mein shaamil tha. Farhan ab samajhta hai ki yeh murder sirf ek body ka nahi, ek naam ka bhi hai.

Minal finally toot jaati hai aur poochti hai, “Toh mera naam kya hai, Inspector? Minal? Ya koi aur?” Farhan uski taraf dekhta hai, phir nameplate ko. Woh pehli baar soft ho kar kehta hai, “Jo bhi ho, ye naam kisi ne tumse chheena nahi. Tumhara tha. Tumhara hai.” Uske baad woh folder band karta hai, penlight ki roshni door ke frame par roke rakhta hai, aur corridor ke andhere mein ek naya sach ubhar aata hai—kabhi kabhi murder ka sabse bada hissa laash nahi, uski pehchaan hoti hai. Last beat mein Farhan Minal se key maangta hai. Woh hesitation ke baad key deti hai. Farhan door kholta hai, aur camera ke liye bas ek pal ke liye andar ka khaali, silent flat dikhta hai—jaise kisi ne zindagi ko wipe clean kar diya ho.