

THE ANNIVERSARY ALARM

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: Tushar (34)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ke kareeb 10 baje hain. Baarish ki halki si tap-tap khidki ke sheeshe par chamak rahi hai, aur apartment ke chhote se kitchen-living area mein warm lamp light sab kuch soft aur intimate bana rahi hai. Tushar, jo usually zyada bolta nahi, soft T-shirt aur pajama pants mein ek chhota sa wrapped box chhupa kar andar aata hai. Uske chehre par nervousness hai, jaise koi school ka bachcha exam dene ja raha ho. Aaj unki anniversary hai, aur usne socha tha ki is baar kuch simple, personal, aur yaad rehne wala karega. Uske box mein ek custom-made keychain hai—un dono ki pehli trip ki ek tiny photo ke saath.

Lekin kitchen se Pallavi ki awaaz aati hai. Woh event planner hai, isliye surprises uski aadat mein hain, par aaj woh bhi unusually tense hai. Woh comfortable home clothes mein, hair clipped back, ek phone aur cake knife lekar khadi hai. Counter par ek chhota birthday cake rakha hai, uspe candles bhi ready hain. Tushar ko dekhte hi woh jhat se phone neeche kar deti hai, jaise usne koi secret pakda ho. Tushar notice karta hai ki cake par likha hai, "Happy Birthday." Uska dil do pal ke liye ruk jata hai. Woh sochta hai—yaar, anniversary bhool gayi? Aur birthday? Aaj to kisi ka birthday nahi hai. Uske chehre par disappointment aata hai, par woh kuch bolta nahi.

Pallavi bhi Tushar ke haath mein wrapped box dekh leti hai aur uska mood aur confuse ho jata hai. Usne socha tha Tushar shayad anniversary ko casually treat karega, kyunki pichle kuch hafton se woh office aur deadlines mein busy tha. Uska phone baar-baar buzz kar raha hai, aur woh usse chupane ki koshish karti hai. Tushar ko lagta hai woh kisi aur ke messages dekh rahi hai—shayad koi friend, shayad work, shayad kuch aur. Dono ke beech ek awkward silence settle ho jati hai, jo unke chhote apartment se bhi zyada heavy lagti hai.

Pallavi pehle bolti hai, "Tum aa gaye?" Tushar bas ek nod karta hai. Phir Pallavi, thoda defensive hoke, cake knife ko counter par rakhte hue kehti hai, "Mujhe laga tum late aaoge." Tushar ke andar kuch toot sa jata hai. "Haan... kaam tha." Uski nazar cake par tik jaati hai. "Yeh birthday cake kis ka hai?" Pallavi blink karti hai. "Birthday?" Woh phone uthati hai, calendar kholti hai, aur achanak uske chehre par realization aata hai—cake par jo writing hai, woh actually "Happy Anniversary" likhne ke liye usne pehle mock-up banaya tha, par final bakery order mein "Birthday" print ho gaya. Woh ek second ke liye embarrassed hoti hai, phir aur zyada ghabra jaati hai kyunki Tushar ka face dekh kar lag raha hai ki usne kuch aur hi samajh liya.

Tushar bhi finally wrapped box aage karta hai aur bolta hai, “Main bhi... tumhare liye kuch laya tha.” Pallavi box dekhti hai, phir uski aankhon mein halka sa guilt aata hai. “Oh.” Bas itna hi. Tushar ko lagta hai uska surprise late ya irrelevant ho gaya. Woh box kholne se pehle hi bol deta hai, “Koi baat nahi. Main bas... socha tha aaj thoda special hoga.” Pallavi ka throat tight ho jata hai. “Tushar, suno—”

Tabhi ek aur misunderstanding hoti hai. Pallavi ka phone screen par ek reminder flash hota hai: “7:30 - Anniversary video call with clients.” Tushar uss text ko “video call” aur “clients” ke beech mein sirf “call” dekh leta hai aur assume karta hai ki woh kisi aur se baat kar rahi thi. Pallavi notice karti hai ki Tushar ke shoulders drop ho gaye hain. Woh jaldi se phone uthakar bolti hai, “Nahi, yeh work hai. Main event plan kar rahi thi—our anniversary ka. Surprise. Tumhare liye.” Tushar ka expression blank se shocked mein badal jata hai.

Phir Pallavi cake knife side mein rakhkar cake ke neeche se ek paper napkin nikaalti hai, jisme usne “Happy Anniversary” likh kar practice ki thi. “Main bakery ko exact bolo rahi thi, but unhone galat print kar diya. Aur phir mujhe laga tumne bhi kuch plan kiya hoga, so I panicked.” Tushar hansi aur relief ke beech phans jata hai. “Main bhi panicked tha. Mujhe laga tumne anniversary bhool gayi.”

Pallavi uske wrapped box ko finally kholti hai. Andar chhota sa keychain nikalta hai—simple, handmade feel wala, par us par unki first trip ki tiny photo embedded hai. Pallavi ki aankhen bheeg jaati hain. Tushar, thoda sharminda, kehta hai, “Mujhe pata hai fancy nahi hai. But... hum dono ka sabse achha photo tha.” Pallavi softly hasti hai aur keychain ko chest ke paas rakh leti hai. “Yeh fancy se zyada dangerous hai. Main emotional ho rahi hoon.”

Ab Pallavi cake ke paas candles jalaati hai. Dono ek dusre ko dekhte hain—ab koi misunderstanding nahi, bas woh relief jo sirf tab aata hai jab koi tumhe bina perfect hue bhi samajh le. Tushar dheere se kehta hai, “Hum itne saal se har anniversary pe kuch na kuch gadbad kar dete hain.” Pallavi smile karti hai. “Haan. Par phir bhi celebrate kar lete hain.” Tushar nod karta hai. “Shayad wahi secret hai.”

Pallavi candle ke glow mein uska face dekhti hai aur bolti hai, “Secret nahi. Choice.” Tushar uski baat ko samajh jaata hai. Dono cake ke saamne khade hain, rain window par softly baj rahi hai, aur apartment mein ek warm, lived-in silence hai—jisme pyaar loudly nahi, par clearly present hai. They don’t need a perfect plan. They just need each other, again and again, even after awkward days, wrong cakes, and almost-broken moments. And this time, as the candle flickers between them, they both know: the anniversary wasn’t forgotten. It was simply waiting to be found.