

DUPLICATE

A Sci-Fi/High-Concept 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Sci-Fi/High-Concept	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Tara (38)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Kaali raat ka ek compact cloning lab. Cool blue LED strips stainless steel par thandi roshni phenk rahi hain. Glass observation wall ke peeche sirf andhera hai, aur room mein ek constant, low machine hum chal raha hai. Metal table par gloves, tablet, specimen vial, biometric scanner aur ek folded lab coat rakha hai. Tara, 38, meticulous lab technician, white coat aur glasses mein, tablet par data scroll kar rahi hai. Uski movements precise hain, jaise har breath bhi measured ho.

Tabhi biometric scanner ki halki beep hoti hai. Tara palat kar dekhti hai. Lab ke corner pod se ek doosri aurat uthi hai—same face, same coat, same age. Bas posture thoda alag, hair thoda bikhra hua, aur cheek ke paas ek subtle scar. Woh apni kalai rub karti hai aur seedha Tara ko dekhti hai, jaise usne yahin se uth kar sirf ek break liya ho.

“Main ready hoon,” woh kehti hai. “Aaj mujhe bahar jaana hai.”

Tara ka expression freeze ho jaata hai. “Tum protocol ke hisaab se abhi active nahi ho sakti thi.”

Dusri aurat muskuraati hai, thodi khurak wali. “Protocol? Tum mujhe protocol se daraogi? Tara, mujhe sab yaad hai. Lab ke sab codes, coffee machine ka jam hona, aur woh night shift jahan tumne mirror ke saamne khud se bola tha—‘I can do this alone.’”

Tara ka grip tablet par tight ho jaata hai. “Yeh memory package standard hai. Tum backup ho. Bas.”

“Backup?” woh hansi mein bolti hai. “Main backup nahi hoon. Main original hoon.”

Ab room mein sirf machine hum nahi, dono ki saanson ka tension bhi bhar gaya hai. Tara scanner uthati hai.

“Biometric match ka matlab identity nahi hota. Tumhara wake-up glitch hua hai. Tumhe shutdown karna padega.”

Dusri Tara—ya Tia, jaise woh khud ko naam de rahi ho—table ke edge par haath rakhti hai. “Shutdown? Tum karogi? Kyun, kyunki tumne zyada neatly baal comb kiye hain?”

Tara ki aankhon mein pehli baar gussa chamakta hai. “Maine is lab ko teen saal se maintain kiya hai. Main hi is project ki lead hoon.”

“Lead?” Tia aage jhukti hai. “Phir tumhe yaad hona chahiye ki original scientist ka naam Dr. Mehra tha. Aur usne tum dono ko banaya tha.”

Tara ka chehra jhatke se safed pad jaata hai. Woh tablet par purane logs kholti hai, fingers thodi shaky. Screen par ek file flash hoti hai: DUPLICATE SERIES / ITERATION 14 / MEMORY STABILIZATION. Neeche ek purana audit note: ORIGINAL SUBJECT DECEASED.

Tara ka gala dry ho jaata hai. “Nahi... yeh file corrupted hai.”

Tia bhi tablet ke paas aa kar screen dekh leti hai. Uski hanshi dheere dheere gaayab ho jaati hai. “Deceased? Original? Kis original ki baat ho rahi hai?”

Tara scroll karti hai. Ek aur note: ITERATION 12 terminated. Iteration 13 failed. Iteration 14 operational. Aur sabse neeche, ek line jo dono ko seedha hit karti hai: MEMORY SOURCE: SUBJECT TARA.

Dono ek dusre ko dekhte hain. Ab pehli baar unki aankhon mein sirf competition nahi, fear hai. Tia whisper karti hai, “Subject Tara... matlab?”

Tara ka haath dheere se specimen vial ki taraf badhta hai. Vial ke label par ek faded handwriting: TARA / BASELINE. Woh ek breath leti hai, jaise sach ko andar utarne de rahi ho. “Matlab hum... copy ke copy hain.”

Tia ka chehra tight ho jaata hai. “Nahi. Main original hoon.”

Tara ka jaw set ho jaata hai, lekin awaaz soft ho jaati hai. “Original mar chuki hai. Years ago. Usne apni consciousness archive karwai thi. Project ko chalane ke liye. Hum dono usi archive se nikle hain.”

Silence. Sirf machine hum. Tia ki fingers scar par jaati hain, jaise woh scar bhi kisi aur ki yaad ho. “Toh phir... jo bahar gaya tha? Jo meetings attend karta tha? Jo logon ko project explain karta tha?”

Tara tablet par ek final log open karti hai. Video clip auto-play hoti hai: Dr. Mehra, thaki hui, hospital bed par. “If either of you wakes up,” woh bolti hai, “don’t fight over who is real. Fight over who gets to choose.”

Clip end hoti hai. Tia aur Tara ek dusre ko dekhte hain—ab dushman nahi, do survivors. Biometric scanner beep karti hai. Door unlock ka signal aata hai. Sirf ek exit authorization.

Tia dheere se hanshi. “Toh choice simple hai. Ek bahar jayegi, ek yahin rahegi.”

Tara scanner ko dekhti hai, phir Tia ko. “Ya... dono nahi.”

Woh mirrored panel ki taraf jaati hai aur uske piche hidden manual override switch dhoondh leti hai. Tia samajh jaati hai. “Agar tumne shutdown kiya, toh lab alert ho jayega.”

“Pata hai.” Tara switch pakadti hai. “Par agar hum dono copies hain, toh kisi ki permission ki zarurat nahi.”

Tia ek second hesitate karti hai, phir specimen vial uthati hai aur usko scanner ke niche rakh deti hai. “Phir chalo. Agar real original nahi thi, toh main bhi kisi ki property nahi.”

Tara switch press karti hai. Lights flicker. Alarms nahi bajte—sirf soft systems reset ka tone. Glass wall ke bahar darkness aur gehri ho jaati hai. Door unlock hota hai.

Dono ek dusre ko dekh kar pehli baar sach mein muskurati hain. Same face, different breath. Tara apni glasses theek karti hai. Tia scar ko touch karke bolti hai, “Toh naam kya rakhenge?”

Tara door ki taraf badhti hai. “Jo bahar jaayegi, woh Tara.”

Tia follow karti hai. “Aur jo yahin se sab erase karegi?”

Tara ruk kar usse dekhti hai. “Woh Tia.”

Aur dono, ek hi original ki do copies, lab se bahar nikal jaati hain—identity ko biology se zyada khatarnaak sabit karte hue.