

# THE ELEVATOR PROMISE

**A Slice of Life/Romance 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish**

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| <b>Genre:</b> Slice of Life/Romance                                               | <b>Format:</b> 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) | <b>Runtime:</b> 5 - 8 Minutes    |
| <b>Cast:</b> FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)   Character 1: Ishita (28) | <b>Language:</b> Hinglish                        | <b>Credit:</b> Story Dil Se Team |

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Mumbai ki ek shaam, jab building ki lift halki si jhunjhunahat ke saath beech mein atak jaati hai, Ishita aur Maya ek dusre ke saamne khade reh jaate hain—literally aur emotionally bhi. Ishita, soft kurta aur sneakers mein, apni rolled blueprint ko itna tightly pakde hue hai jaise woh uske liye shield ho. Uski nazrein floor par hain, aur har baar jab lift ka mirror uska reflection dikhata hai, woh aur bhi chhoti lagti hai. Maya, denim jacket aur scarf mein, camera shoulder par latkaye hue, ek aisi confidence ke saath khadi hai jaise stuck hona bhi uske schedule ka part ho. Emergency light amber glow kar rahi hai, tiny fan bas hawa ka natak kar raha hai, aur bahar se city ka faint noise aa raha hai—horns, distant honks, zindagi chal rahi hai, bas in dono ki ruk gayi hai.

Pehle kuch seconds awkward hote hain. Maya halka sa smile karti hai, emergency button dabati hai, phone network check karti hai. Ishita bas “signal nahi aa raha?” jaisa kuch murmuraati hai. Maya hansii rok ke bolti hai, “Lift bhi shayad introvert hai.” Ishita pehli baar uski taraf dekhti hai. Yeh chhota sa line dono ke beech ki deewar thodi si crack kar deta hai. Phir baat blueprint, camera, building, aur Mumbai ki traffic tak pahunchti hai. Maya notice karti hai ki Ishita architect hai; Ishita notice karti hai ki Maya photographer hai. Dono ek dusre ki cheezon ko dekhte hue, bina directly personal hue, apni life ki edges ko touch karte hain.

Maya Ishita ke blueprint roll ko dekhkar puchti hai, “Kis cheez ka plan hai?” Ishita pehle toh professional answer deti hai, phir dheere se admit karti hai ki woh ek housing project pe kaam kar rahi hai—ek aisi building jo “home” jaisi feel kare. Maya uske tone mein wohi hesitation pakad leti hai jo insaan kabhi kabhi apni khud ki life ke baare mein bolte waqt use karta hai. Ishita camera ke lens se bachti hui kehti hai, “Aap photos kyun lete ho?” Maya smile karke bolti hai, “Kyuki jo cheezein log bol nahi paate, woh images bol deti hain.” Yeh line Ishita ke andar kahin lag jaati hai.

Lift ke andar waqt dheere-dheere stretch hone lagta hai. Emergency light aur mirror unke faces ko aur honest bana dete hain. Maya apni water bottle Ishita ko offer karti hai. Ishita pehle mana karti hai, phir le leti hai. Chhoti si kindness, lekin iske baad unki conversation ka tone soft ho jaata hai. Maya casually lipstick nikaal ke lagaati hai, aur Ishita usse dekh kar bina sochhe bol deti hai, “Aapko itni confidence kaise aati hai?” Maya ka smile thoda sa fade hota hai. “Confidence nahi hai,” woh kehti hai. “Bas aadat hai acting ki.”

Yahin se sach nikalna shuru hota hai. Ishita batati hai ki uske ghar wale uski shaadi fix kar chuke hain. Do hafton mein woh city chhodkar dusre shehar jaane wali hai. Arranged marriage. Respectable ladka. Safe future. Sab kuch “theek” hai, bas uske dil ke hisaab se nahi. Woh bolte bolte aankhein neeche kar leti hai. Maya bina interrupt kiye sunti rehti hai. Phir Ishita, jaise khud se naraaz ho, bolti hai, “Mujhe nahi pata main mana kyun nahi kar pa rahi.”

Maya pehli baar serious hoti hai. Camera ko shoulder se utarkar apne haath mein le leti hai, jaise usse bhi thoda support chahiye. Phir woh confess karti hai ki woh Ishita ko pehle din se jaanti hai—building ke lobby mein, cafe ke bahar, ya yahan lift mein nahi—par ek dusre ko dekh kar hamesha ruk jaati thi. “Main years se wait kar rahi thi,” Maya dheere se kehti hai, “ki kabhi tumse seedha bol paun.” Ishita uski taraf dekhti hai, confused aur startled. Maya saans leti hai aur bol deti hai, “I like you, Ishita. Bahut time se.”

Silence. Sirf fan ki awaaz, city ka faint hum, aur lift ke andar ka amber glow. Ishita ka chehra pehle shock, phir confusion, phir ek aisi relief mein badalta hai jo usne kabhi expect nahi ki thi. Woh kuch bolti nahi. Maya turant backtrack karne lagti hai, “Sorry, maybe yeh galat time—” Lekin Ishita, pehli baar bina darr ke, uski baat kaat deti hai: “Galat time hi toh meri life ka default mode hai.” Dono hansni mein phoot padti hain—pehli real hansni.

Us hansni ke baad Ishita seedha khadi hoti hai. Woh blueprint ko unfold nahi karti; bas usse chest ke against rakhti hai, jaise apni banayi hui duniya ko finally protect nahi, claim kar rahi ho. Woh Maya ko dekhti hai aur kehti hai ki woh shaadi se pehle ek baar apni marzi se jeena chahti hai. Maya simple, steady tone mein puchti hai, “Toh meet me. On purpose. No family, no pressure, no excuses.” Ishita ki aankhon mein pehli baar clarity aati hai. “On purpose,” woh repeat karti hai.

Jaise hi woh dono ek dusre ko dekhkar ek chhota sa, mutual nod share karti hain, lift ka panel achanak jhatka khata hai. Emergency light flicker karta hai. Metal doors slow hiss ke saath khulne lagte hain. Repair khud ho gaya. Bahar corridor ki normal white light andar girti hai, jaise life ne unke liye ek chhota sa raasta khol diya ho. Dono exit karne se pehle ruk jaati hain. Maya phone nikaalti hai. Ishita apna phone pakadti hai. Dono numbers exchange karte hain—hands thode shaky, smiles very real.

Maya ek last line bolti hai, half-tease, half-promise: “Elevator ko toh repair ho jana tha. Humein abhi baaki hai.” Ishita pehli baar seedha, open smile deti hai. “Phir milte hain,” woh kehti hai. Maya jawab deti hai, “On purpose.” Aur is baar, dono ko pata hai ki yeh sirf line nahi, nayi shuruaat hai.