

THE DRESS REHEARSAL

A Emotional Drama 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Emotional Drama	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Rekha (55)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Rekha ke haath mein purane ghunghroo the, aur uske chehre par wohi purana stage wala sukoon, jaise umar ne sirf jism ko thoda dheema kiya ho, rooh ko nahi. Community hall khaali tha—ek taraf stage lights warm ho rahi thi, floor par dhool ki patli layer thi, aur beech mein ek akela mirror khada tha, jo dono aurton ko bina kisi judgement ke dekh raha tha. Nisha, apni office wear mein, garment bag aur wedding invitation ko ek haath mein sambhaale andar aayi. Uske chehre par thakan thi, par us thakan ke upar ek forced smile chipki hui thi—wedding ke din wali smile, jo asal mein panic ko cover karne ke kaam aati hai.

Rekha ne bina mudhe hi bol diya, “Aayi? Ab finally rehearsal kar lete hain.” Nisha ne ek gehri saans li. “Maa, kal shaadi hai. Rehearsal ka time aaj hi mila tha kya?” Rekha ne ghunghroo zameen par rakh diye. “Aaj hi mila tha, kyunki kal se tu kisi aur ki zindagi mein busy ho jayegi.” Nisha ka smile thoda aur tight ho gaya. “Main busy nahi ho jaungi, maa. Bas... occupied.” Rekha ne ek eyebrow uthayi. “Corporate language mein dukh bhi productive lagta hai?”

Shuru mein baat halki thi, thodi nok-jhonk wali. Nisha garment bag kholkar lehenga nikaalne lagi, Rekha sari ka pallu set karte hue uske posture ko dekh rahi thi—jaise ek dancer apne student ko nahi, apni hi beti ko dekh rahi ho jo hamesha se seedhi khadi hone ki koshish mein thak gayi ho. Rekha ne music speaker on kiya, ek classical instrumental tune hall mein fail gayi. “Bas teen steps. Entry, turn, aur final bow. Guests ke saamne embarrassment nahi chahiye.” Nisha hansii, par woh hansii zyada der tik nahi paayi. “Maa, main shaadi kar rahi hoon ya stage performance de rahi hoon?” Rekha ne bina dekhe jawab diya, “Aaj kal dono mein zyada farq nahi hota.”

Jab music chala, Rekha ne apne ghunghroo pehne aur ek perfect mudra mein ek step liya—age, pain, sab kuch us movement mein ghul gaya. Nisha ne try kiya, par uska focus baar-baar phone ki taraf, invitation ki list ki taraf, aur kal ke schedule ki taraf bhaag raha tha. Rekha har baar rok deti. “Nisha, pair zameen pe rakho. Tu floor ko nahi, apne aap ko trust kar.” Nisha irritate ho gayi. “Mujhe trust karna aata hai, maa. Bas time nahi hai.” Rekha ne sharply dekha. “Time sabko kam hota hai. Farq sirf itna hai—koi usmein jeeta hai, koi usmein bhaagta hai.”

Phir tension phat padi. Nisha ne music off kar diya. Hall mein achanak aur zyada khamoshi ho gayi. “Aapko lagta hai main shaadi se bhaag rahi hoon?” usne poocha, awaaz mein pehli baar sachchai thi. “Main bas itna chahti hoon ki

kal sab theek ho. No drama, no mistakes, no scene.” Rekha ne dhire se anklets utare aur mutthi mein band kar liye. “Scene toh tumne pehle hi bana diya, beta. Tumne dance chhod diya, tabla chhod diya, aur ab keh rahi ho—sab practical tha.” Nisha ki aankhen nam ho gayin. “Practical hi toh zindagi hai, maa. Aapke jaise sapne dekhke ghar nahi chalta.” Rekha ne uski taraf dekha, aur pehli baar uske chehre par gussa nahi, thakaan thi. “Aur sapne chhodke?”

Woh sawaal hall mein atak gaya. Nisha chup ho gayi. Mirror mein usne apna reflection dekha—ek aisi aurat jo har cheez manage kar sakti thi, bas khud ko nahi. Rekha dheere se uske paas aayi, garment bag ke zipper ko halka sa band kiya, jaise kisi zakhm ko cover kar rahi ho. “Main teri wedding dance guests ke liye nahi chahti thi,” Rekha ne soft voice mein kaha. “Main chahti thi ki ek baar tu mere saath woh step kare jo tu bachpan mein mere pallu pakad ke karti thi. Bas ek baar. Taaki main tujhe aakhri baar apne saath dekh sakun, bina kisi deadline ke.”

Nisha ka forced smile finally toot gaya. Usne invitation ko chest se laga liya, jaise ab samajh aaya ho ki ek mother ne wedding ko function nahi, farewell samjha tha. “Maa...” usne bas itna kaha, aur uski awaaz mein saari corporate polish pighal gayi. Rekha ne ek haath badhaya. “Aaja. One last rehearsal. Guests ke liye nahi.” Nisha ne dheere se haath pakda. Music phir chala. Is baar steps perfect nahi the, par sachche the. Ek retired dancer aur ek exhausted daughter ne khaali hall ke beech ek aisa dance kiya jo kisi stage par nahi, sirf yaadon aur maafi ke beech exist karta tha. Aur jab final turn aaya, Rekha ne Nisha ko mirror ke saamne roka—na for correction, but for a quiet, private look. Dono ek dusre ko dekh rahi thi, jaise pehli baar samajh rahi hon ki kal se zindagi badlegi, par aaj ka yeh ek minute unka tha.