

DEAD BATTERY

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: Officer Leena (39)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ka underpass, ek flickering streetlamp aur bheegi hui sadak—jaise poori duniya bas do auraton aur ek stalled scooter tak simat gayi ho. Officer Leena, reflective vest mein, stern face ke saath, apni notepad aur flashlight lekar scooter ke paas aati hai. Mansi, rain-soaked kurti, helmet thoda tedha, mud lage shoes aur cracked phone ke saath, visibly shaken khadi hai. Leena pehle routine samajhkar stop karti hai: papers, license, reason for stopping. Mansi ka jawab ulta seedha hai—“Phone dead ho gaya tha, madam. Main kisi ko call hi nahi kar paayi.” Leena ko yeh bahana lagta hai, kyunki raat ke iss waqt underpass mein stall hona aur panic hona aksar kisi chhupi hui ghalti ka signal hota hai.

Leena ka tone hard hai, par uski aankhon mein experience bol raha hai. Woh poochti hai ki Mansi itni ghabraayi kyun hai, aur scooter ke mud-streaks dekhkar hit-and-run ka angle soch leti hai. Mansi pehle defensive hoti hai, phir toot-ti hui baatein bolna shuru karti hai—“Main courier thi. Bas ek chhota sa kaam tha. Kisi ko ek memory card dena tha.” Leena ka suspicion aur badh jaata hai. Memory card? Raat ko? Underpass par? Mansi ke statements incomplete hain, jaise woh jaan-bujhkar kuch chhupa rahi ho. Woh kabhi kehti hai usne bas parcel uthaya tha, kabhi kehti hai uska kaam khatam hi nahi hua, aur kabhi bas itna: “Agar woh log mujhe dekh lete, toh main yahan nahi hoti.”

Leena flashlight se scooter, helmet aur Mansi ke haath inspect karti hai. Cracked phone dead pada hai. Mansi insist karti hai ki battery sach mein dead thi, warna woh help call kar leti. Leena ko yeh line rehearsed lagti hai. Woh notepad mein details likhte hue Mansi ko corner karti hai—“Kisne diya card? Kahan se liya? Aur kis se bach rahi ho?” Mansi ka jawab ek half-truth hota hai: “Ek aadmi tha... par uska chehra yaad nahi. Bas uske paas aapka hi jaisa reflective vest tha.” Leena thodi si ruk jaati hai. Yeh detail uske liye chhoti nahi hoti.

Dono ke beech tension badhti hai, lekin dialogue ke beech chhoti-chhoti cracks bhi aati hain—Mansi ki nervous humor, Leena ki dry sarcasm. Leena ko lagta hai Mansi police ko confuse kar rahi hai. Mansi ko lagta hai Leena bhi kisi ke saath mili hui hai. Underpass ke kone mein ek truck ka light flash hota hai; dono ek second ke liye freeze ho jaati hain. Mansi ka haath instinctively apne helmet ke andar chala jaata hai. Leena notice karti hai ki woh kuch chhupa rahi hai, aur helmet kholne ko kehti hai. Mansi mana karti hai, phir finally ek chhota memory card nikaal deti hai—mud mein lipt, bilkul ordinary sa. “Yahi hai,” woh bolti hai. “Iske liye log mere peeche the.”

Leena card ko uthati hai, par uski nazar Mansi par nahi, apne patrol bag par padti hai—jahan woh routine mein flashlight rakh chuki thi. Bag ka zipper thoda sa khula hua hai. Uske andar ek aur memory card ka packet dikhai deta hai. Leena ka expression change hota hai. Mansi bhi dekh leti hai. Ek beat ka silence.

Twist yahin aata hai: Mansi ka dead battery wala claim jhooth nahi, balki distraction tha. Woh pehle se janti thi ki uska phone dead hai, lekin asli problem phone nahi thi—usne jo card chhupaya tha, woh us card ka duplicate nahi tha. Usne jo card Leena ke patrol bag mein dekh liya, woh wahi stolen evidence tha jise police chain-of-custody mein secure karne ke liye rakha gaya tha... ya rakha jaana tha. Leena ko samajh aata hai ki uska bag khul chuka hai, aur koi andar se evidence swap kar chuka hai. Mansi courier thi, par victim nahi—she was the messenger who got used and then hunted. Aur Leena, jo ab tak Mansi ko suspect kar rahi thi, khud us conspiracy ka unknowingly part ban chuki thi.

Final confrontation mein Mansi seedhi aankhon se Leena ko dekhti hai: “Madam, main chor nahi hoon. Main bas time pe wrong bag ke paas khadi thi.” Leena ka stern face dheere-dheere hardens into something more dangerous—certainty. Woh apni notepad band karti hai, card ko pocket mein rakhti hai, aur sirf itna kehti hai: “Ab jo bhi sach hai, woh is underpass se bahar nahi jayega.” Dono ek dusre ko judge nahi, measure kar rahi hoti hain. Distant traffic ka noise aur streetlamp ki flicker ke beech, Leena Mansi ko scooter start karne ka signal deti hai. Mansi ka haath phir cracked phone par jaata hai—battery dead, screen dead, par raat ab dead nahi rahi. Kyonki ab evidence mil chuka hai, aur is raat ka asli crime sirf hit-and-run nahi, balki trust ka theft tha.