

NO SIGNAL

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: Inspector Anika (33)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ka time hai. Ek purane apartment building ke narrow hallway mein ek bulb baar-baar flicker kar raha hai. Door ke bahar muted traffic ka shor hai, kahin se lift ki halki si ghurr-ghurr, aur signal sirf ek bar pe atka hua. Locked flat ke saamne Inspector Anika khadi hai—plain kurta, jacket, badge, notebook, aur woh khas detective wali aankhon mein aisi intensity jaise jhooth bolne se pehle hi pakad leti ho.

Uske saamne Tanya hai—29 saal ki livestream influencer, trendy loungewear mein, makeup half-done, haath mein phone, doosre haath mein ring light ka stand. Woh dikhne mein fearless hai, lekin uski body language mein halka sa tremor hai. Woh baar-baar apne hair ko set karti hai, phone screen check karti hai, jaise audience abhi bhi usko dekh rahi ho. Anika seedha sawaal karti hai: “Tumne 11:17 pe livestream dekha tha?” Tanya haan bolti hai, phir kehti hai ki uske neighbor ke flat mein “something bad” hua—shouting, ek girne ki awaaz, aur phir signal cut.

Anika notebook mein likhti hai, lekin Tanya ki story har minute badalti hai. Pehle woh kehti hai murder dekha. Phir kehti hai sirf shadow dekha. Phir bolti hai ki actual victim ko nahi, sirf “panic” feel hua. Anika notice karti hai ki Tanya ka phone screen par last call logs blank hain, aur livestream app open hai, lekin koi recent live nahi. Woh Tanya ke ring light ko dekhti hai—extra battery pack laga hua. Charger hallway ke corner mein pada hai. Anika poochti hai, “Aaj raat ka content kis liye tha?” Tanya smile karti hai, “Growth ke liye.”

Dono ke beech dialogue mein tension ke saath saath dark comedy bhi aati hai. Anika Tanya ki performative fear ko expose karti hai; Tanya Anika ko “old-school detective” bolkar tease karti hai. Lekin jab Anika flat ke key card ko examine karti hai, us par building maintenance ka sticker nahi, kisi private event ka access tag hota hai. Anika ko shakk hota hai ki Tanya ne police ko yahan bulaya hi kyun. Tanya pehle deny karti hai, phir half-truths deti hai: usne ek anonymous DM receive kiya tha—“Aao, agar sach dekhna hai toh 3B ke bahar ruko. Inspector bhi aayegi.” Anika ka expression change hota hai. Woh samajh jaati hai ki usko yahan bait ki tarah laya gaya hai.

Twist dheere-dheere open hota hai. Tanya confess karti hai ki livestream staged tha. Usne fake audio, ring light, aur weak signal ka drama create kiya tha taaki Anika building mein aayen. Uska target koi “inside the flat” wala mystery nahi tha. Real target Anika herself thi. Tanya ke words pehle flirty, phir sharp, phir cold ho jaate hain. Woh batati hai

ki Anika ne ek purane case mein kisi ko cover-up kiya tha—ya kam se kam uss raat building ke records mein uska naam tha. Public ko bas ek inspector chahiye thi, aur Tanya ko ek stage.

Anika ke liye moment personal ho jaata hai. Woh notebook band karti hai, badge ko thoda straight karti hai, aur Tanya ko calmly dekhte hue poochti hai: “Toh livestream audience ke liye tha, ya mere liye?” Tanya ka answer simple hota hai: “Dono ke liye. Par mostly tumhare liye.” Ab hallway mein bulb aur bhi zyada flicker karta hai. Signal ab bhi sirf ek bar. Locked flat ke andar se koi awaaz nahi. Sirf do auratein, ek dusre ko measure karti hui—ek jhooth bolkar truth ko chase kar rahi hai, doosri truth ko weapon bana rahi hai.

Climax mein Tanya phone uthakar live button dabati hai, lekin screen par “No Signal” flash hota hai. Anika samajh jaati hai ki recording locally save ho chuki hai. Tanya muskurati hai—fearless nahi, prepared. Anika ek step aage badhti hai aur key card Tanya se le leti hai. Tanya bhi apna charger cord kheench kar Anika ke notebook ke edge se chipka hua chhota mic reveal kar deti hai—room mic nahi, portable recorder. Dono ek dusre ko dekhte reh jaate hain. Ab clear hai: is hallway mein jo murder story thi, woh kisi flat ke andar nahi, kisi reputation ke bahar thi.

End par Anika flat ki taraf nahi, Tanya ki taraf dekhti hai. Tanya pehli baar mask drop karti hai aur quietly bolti hai, “Main victim nahi hoon, Inspector. Main invitation hoon.” Anika ka jaw line tight hota hai. Bulb ek baar aur flicker karta hai. Cut to black.