

# THE LAST CALLER

## A Mystery/Crime 1-Character Solo Monologue in Hinglish

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Genre:</b> Mystery/Crime                                                                                                     | <b>Format:</b> 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor) | <b>Runtime:</b> 4 - 6 Minutes    |
| <b>Cast:</b> FORMAT: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor)   Character: Retired Detective Running a Pawn Shop (Male, 50-58) | <b>Language:</b> Hinglish                                | <b>Credit:</b> Story Dil Se Team |

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Raat ka aakhri ghanta chal raha hai, aur meri pawn shop band ho chuki hai. Main counter ke peeche khada hoon, heavy sweater ke andar bhi thand ghus rahi hai, aur green desk lamp ki roshni mere magnifying glass par aise pad rahi hai jaise kisi purani case file par sawal. Bahar dusty front window sign ka hara glow room ko aadha zinda, aadha murda bana raha hai. Shelves par rakhe odd objects—broken watches, brass figurines, ek chipped violin, kisi ka wedding ring, kisi ka medal—sab shadows mein aise dikh rahe hain jaise gawah chup baithe hon.

Main retired detective hoon. Tha. Ab pawn shop chalata hoon. Log samajhte hain main cheezein kharidta aur bechta hoon. Sach ye hai ki main ab bhi cheezein dekhta hoon. Ungliyon se, nazar se, khamoshi se. Jo baaki log miss kar dete hain, woh mujhe cheekh ke batata hai. Isi liye shaayad main us case ko kabhi bhool nahi paya. Ek murder. Ek naam jo kabhi match nahi hua. Ek culprit jo sabke saamne tha, phir bhi haath se nikal gaya. Aur ek anonymous caller jo do saal pehle phone par aaya tha aur bola tha, “Aap galat aadmi dhoondh rahe ho.” Phir line cut.

Aaj raat, closing ke baad, desk phone phir baja. Ek hi ring. Phir do. Main ne receiver uthaya. “Haan?”

Koi awaaz nahi. Sirf saans. Dheere. Jaise koi smile kar raha ho. Phir ek voice—distorted, bahut low—“Aapne jo evidence box band kiya tha... usme sab kuch nahi tha.”

Mere haath ruk gaye. Evidence box. Woh box jo maine retire hote waqt apne saath rakh liya tha. Main uska lid kholta hoon, aur andar wahi purani files, pawn tags, aur ek chhota sa metal token pada hai—jo mujhe kabhi mil hi nahi chahiye tha. Mere throat mein ek kadak saans atak jaati hai.

Voice bolti hai, “Counter ke neeche dekhiye.”

Main dheere se jhukta hoon. Counter ke neeche ek purani pawn tag chipki hui hai, peeli pad chuki, corners ghise hue. Us par ek number likha hai. Woh number us case file ka missing exhibit number hai. Mere kaan mein blood ki aawaz aati hai. Main tag ko magnifying glass se dekhta hoon. Ink ke neeche ek aur marking. Bahut halki. Ek address. Isi shop ka.

“Kaun ho tum?” main poochta hoon, par meri awaaz detective wali nahi, kisi thake hue aadmi wali lagti hai.

Phone par halki hansii. “Main woh hoon jise aapne do saal pehle galat samjha tha.”

Meri nazar shop ke andar ghoomti hai. Tired eyes, par ab bhi kuch miss nahi karte. Shelves, shadows, cash register, front window, back door—sab check. Kuch hilita nahi. Phir bhi room mein ek presence hai. Jaise koi mere saath khada hai, bas roshni se bach raha hai.

Main evidence box ko counter par rakhta hoon, aur us metal token ko uthata hoon. Us par ek tiny scratch pattern hai—same pattern jo case ke final clue mein tha. Main yaad karta hoon: woh clue kabhi physical evidence ke taur par aaya hi nahi tha. Sirf witness statement mein mention hua tha. Aur witness? Woh anonymous tha.

Mujhe achanak samajh aata hai. Caller mujhe clue de raha tha, kyunki clue uske paas nahi... mere paas tha. Pichhle do saal se, plain sight mein. Pawn shop ke register ke neeche, ek loose drawer ke andar, ek old postcard ke peeche chipka hua. Main drawer kholta hoon. Wahi postcard. Uske peeche ek folded slip. Main unfold karta hoon.

Ek naam. Aur neeche likha hai: “I was in the room.”

Mera gala sookh jata hai. “Nahi...” main dheere se bolta hoon. Kyunki us case mein jo aadmi maara gaya tha, woh akela nahi tha. Ek aur shakhs tha. Ek witness jo kabhi report nahi hua. Aur agar woh yahin tha... to phir caller kaise? Main phone ki taraf dekhta hoon. Line dead. Par shop mein ek aur sound hai. Cash register ke andar se halki si tik-tik. Jaise koi ungli se tap kar raha ho.

Main register kholta hoon. Andar koi aadmi nahi. Sirf ek aur pawn tag aur uske neeche ek chhota tape recorder. Main play dabata hoon. Crackle. Phir meri hi purani awaaz, case se record ki hui: “Agar koi last call aaye, toh usse sunna. Woh yahin hoga.”

Main freeze ho jaata hoon.

Meri hi awaaz continue karti hai, “Aur jab tum samajh jao, toh dekhna—final clue kahin door nahi. Woh hamesha tumhare saamne tha.”

Main dheere se front window ki taraf mudta hoon. Dusty glass mein mera reflection dikh raha hai—silver stubble, reading glasses, thaka hua chehra. Aur us reflection ke bilkul piche, window sign ki green glow mein, ek shadow shape. Insaan jaisi. Khadi hui.

Main palat-ta hoon.

Koi nahi.

Phir mujhe yaad aata hai: mirror, glass, reflection—yeh shop ka sabse bada witness hai. Aur window ke neeche, old tape se chipka hua, ek chhota envelope. Main use kholta hoon. Andar ek single photograph. Main khud ko dekhta hoon—young detective, usi case scene par. Aur photo ke corner mein, mere shoulder ke piche, ek aur aadmi ka haath. Sirf haath. Uski ungli mein wahi token ka scratch.

Caller shop mein tha.

Shayad ab bhi hai.

Main slowly receiver ko cradle par rakh deta hoon aur whisper karta hoon, “Theek hai. Main sun raha hoon.”

Aur pehli baar, shop ki khamoshi jawab deti hai—desk lamp ki halki buzz mein, jaise kisi ne bilkul mere kaan ke paas saans li ho.