

THE LAST WITNESS

A Mystery/Crime 1-Character Solo Monologue in Hinglish

Genre: Mystery/Crime	Format: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor)	Runtime: 4 - 6 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor) Character: Retired Court Interpreter (Male, 55-62)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ka ek aadha andhera study room. Desk lamp ki peeli roshni mein ek retired court interpreter, KAPOOR SAAB, apni careful posture ke saath table par jhuke hue baitha hai. Silver baal, wire-rim glasses, plain sweater, aur unke around stacked files ki bilkul seedhi, archival duniya. Unke haath mein purana transcript hai—yellowed pages, stamped seals, aur margin par unki hi purani pencil marks. Woh bas ek file ko dhoondh rahe the. Lekin file ne unhe dhoondh liya.

Woh pehle bas padhte hain. Dheere. Professional aadat mein. Phir ek line par ruk jaate hain. Unki aankhon ka focus badalta hai. Transcript mein ek sentence hai jo unhe yaad nahi. Jo court mein kabhi bola hi nahi gaya tha. Woh sentence itna seedha, itna plain hai, ki pehle toh lagta hai shayad unki memory ka dhoka ho. Lekin phir woh tape recorder nikalte hain—purana, dust-covered, archive box se mila hua. Play button dabate hain. Tape mein trial room ki khurduri awaaz, kagaz palatne ki khar-khar, ek judge ki distant cough, aur phir woh witness ki awaaz—par woh sentence phir bhi nahi.

KAPOOR SAAB ki saans dheemi ho jaati hai. Unhe yaad aata hai woh din: ek murder case, ek family jo justice ke liye toot rahi thi, aur ek accused jiska face unhone kabhi clearly nahi dekha. Unka kaam tha translate karna—har lafz, har pause, har tremor. Court mein language se zyada unki zimmedari thi trust. Aur ab, is transcript mein, ek line mojud thi jo kisi ne nahi boli thi. Kaise aayi? Kisne likhi? Aur sabse bada sawaal—kya unhone sign-off kar diya tha bina dekhe? Ya phir unki hi translation ne truth ko shape de di thi?

Woh apni reading glasses utaar kar table par rakhte hain. Unke haath kaanpne lagte hain, par awaaz control mein rehti hai. Woh line ko baar-baar padhte hain, jaise shayad baar-baar padhne se woh sach ban jaaye ya mit jaaye. Phir unhe yaad aata hai ek chhota sa detail: us raat transcript finalizing ke waqt lamp flicker hua tha, aur clerk ne jaldi mein pages jod diye the. Ya shayad clerk nahi tha. Shayd woh khud the. Memory ab file ki tarah stack nahi ho rahi; woh hil rahi hai.

Phir tape recorder ki hiss mein ek aur layer khulti hai—unke apne purane voice notes, jo unhone retirement ke baad safai ke liye record kiye the. Unmein ek note tha: “Case 17B. Missing line. Check tomorrow.” Lekin tomorrow kabhi

aaya hi nahi. Kyunki uske baad file close ho gayi thi, case unsolved chhod diya gaya tha, aur woh bhi. Unhone socha tha system ne decide kiya. Ab lagta hai system ne sirf unka silence use kiya.

Study room aur zyada chhota ho jaata hai. Curtain ke gap se daylight ki ek patli lakeer transcript par girti hai, jaise evidence par interrogation light. KAPOOR SAAB pehli baar us line ko aloud bolte hain. Awaaz mein shak hai, guilt hai, aur ek late-arriving courage bhi. Jaise hi sentence room mein padta hai, woh khud uske witness ban jaate hain. Aur us ek pal mein unhe samajh aata hai: unhone murder solve nahi kiya tha. Shayad unhone truth ko translate karke dafn kar diya tha.

Ab unke paas do choices hain—file wapas archive box mein rakh dena, ya us sentence ko dobara likhna, is baar sahi tarah. Woh transcript ko seedha karte hain, pen uthate hain, aur margin mein ek naya note likhte hain: “This line was never spoken.” Phir woh seedha camera ki taraf dekhte hain, jaise court ke witness box mein.

Aur pehli baar, retired interpreter ki awaaz mein retirement nahi, testimony hai.