

SIGNAL LOST

A Sci-Fi/High-Concept 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Sci-Fi/High-Concept	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Dr. Ishan Rao (42)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ke 2:13 baje, remote observatory ka control room ek metallic cave jaisa lag raha tha—monitor glow, blinking LEDs, aur narrow window se aati moonlight ki ek thandi lakeer. Dr. Ishan Rao apni rumpled shirt aur tired eyes ke saath tablet par deep-space signal ke logs scroll kar rahe the. Neil, grease-stained hands ke saath satellite console ke neeche ghusa hua, cables ko jhaad raha tha. Vivek, headphones neck par latkaye, coffee mug ko ek haath se pakde hue radio frequencies pe kaan laga raha tha. Teenon ka routine boring, predictable, aur half-cafeinated tha—jab tak speaker se ek distorted burst nahi aaya.

Pehle toh lagaa interference hai. Phir signal ne ek aisi line repeat ki jo abhi tak kisi ne boli hi nahi thi: “Neil, left relay ko mat chhedna.” Neil freeze ho gaya. “Maine chhedna bhi nahi hai,” usne defensive tone mein kaha. Vivek hansa, “Haan haan, aur main NASA ka secret agent hoon.” Ishan ne tablet par waveform dekha—signal ka pattern human speech ke pauses jaisa tha. Phir agle pal speaker se aaya: “Vivek, abhi joke mat kar. Tumhara headset on nahi hai.” Vivek ka chehra utar gaya. Usne turant headphones pehne. “Okay... this is not funny.”

Ab room mein tension ka voltage badh gaya. Har private thought jaise monitor light mein chipakne laga. Neil ne bina soche bol diya, “Agar ye system fault hai, toh main main antenna reset kar deta hoon.” Speaker se turant reply: “Mat kar. Reset se next transmission open ho jayegi.” Neil aur Ishan ne ek saath Vivek ko dekha. Vivek bhadak gaya, “Mujhe kyun dekh rahe ho? Main prankster lagta hoon kya? Is facility mein aur kaun hai?” Ishan ne chilled voice mein kaha, “Exactly. Aur kaun hai?” Silence. Sirf fans ki ghurghurahat aur coffee mug ke andar bachi hui last sip ka slurp.

Ishan, jo pehle scientific logic mein believe karta tha, ab signal logs ko ek pattern ke saath match karne laga. Signal har 11 seconds baad aata, aur har line unke aane wale words ko pre-empt karti. Neil ne satellite maps khol kar dikhaya ki source deep space ke kisi fixed point se nahi, balki Earth ke orbit ke ek dead satellite cluster se bounce ho raha hai. “Ye impossible hai,” Neil bola. “Signal ka path khud ko hide kar raha hai.” Vivek ne dry sarcasm mein kaha, “Toh phir ya toh aliens bahut sharmile hain, ya koi humse zyada smart banda room mein hai.”

Ishan ne suddenly ek old signal log nikaala—six months pehle ka, same frequency, same timestamp, but incomplete. Uske margin mein pencil se likha tha: “Don’t open the next transmission.” Handwriting uski thi. Ishan ka chehra safed

pad gaya. “Yeh... yeh meri writing hai.” Neil ne uske haath se tablet almost le liya. “Doctor, aap thik ho?” Ishan ne shaky breath li. “Main kal bhi yahi report likh raha tha. Ya... shayad kal likh chuka hoon.” Vivek, ab genuinely scared, bola, “Mujhe ye sab pasand nahi aa raha. Main bas night shift kar raha tha, time travel ka EMI nahi bhar raha.”

Tab signal ekdum clear hua. Speaker se teen alag-awazen ek saath, slightly delayed, nikalin—unhi ki voices, lekin thaki hui, older, aur cracked. “Agar tum ye sun rahe ho, toh room abhi tak khula nahi.” Neil ne ek step peeche liya. “Who the hell—” “Shh,” Ishan whispered. Signal continue hua: “Hum future se bol rahe hain. Next transmission open mat karna. Is room se signal nikalte hi observatory ka system loop mein phans jayega. Har reply tumhe aur tumhari facility ko erase karta jayega.” Vivek ka haath instinctively power switch ki taraf gaya. “Aur proof?”

Speaker se ek final line aayi, almost pleading: “Coffee mug ke neeche dekho.” Teenon ne ek dusre ko dekha. Neil ne mug uthaya. Neeche ek tiny metal key chipki thi—old manual override key. Us par label tha: TRANSMISSION LOCK. Ishan ne saans roki. Uske tablet par live feed ke corner mein ek hidden door indicator blink kar raha tha—ROOM 7, NEXT TRANSMISSION BAY, currently sealed. Neil ka face horror se bhar gaya. “Humne kabhi ye room dekha hi nahi.” Vivek ne slow, disbelieving voice mein kaha, “Aur agar ye future se warning hai... toh future wale hum hi kyun itne desperate hain?”

Ishan ne key ko haath mein liya. Bahar moonlight window par ek thin line ki tarah kaat rahi thi. Speaker se unki hi voices phir aayi, almost in unison: “Because agar tumne next transmission open kiya, toh signal lost nahi hoga. Tum lost ho jaoge.” Neil ne ek long breath li, phir control panel ki taraf badha. “Toh ab?” Ishan ne pehli baar seedha un dono ko dekha, scientist nahi, insaan ki tarah. “Ab hum trust karte hain apne future ko.” Vivek ne headphones hata diye. “Aur agar future galat nikla?” Ishan ne key slot mein daalte hue kaha, “Phir kam se kam humne apni galti apne aap se suni.”

Key turn hoti hai. Monitor screens ek saath black. Room ki lights ek heartbeat ke liye dim hoti hain. Bahar, dead silence. Phir—ek soft click. Door lock ho jata hai. Signal cut. Teenon bas ek dusre ko dekhte reh jaate hain, room ke dense technological cocoon mein, jaise abhi bhi koi unhe sun raha ho. And then, from the dark speaker, ek last whisper: “Good. Ab kabhi mat kholna.”