

THE THIRD PASSENGER

A Horror/Supernatural 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Horror/Supernatural	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Sanjay (33)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Raat ke kaale paani mein dhaba ki peeli roshni doob rahi hai. Baarish ki boondein parked taxi ki khidkiyon par aise tik-tik kar rahi hain jaise koi dheere-dheere gaadi ki body par ungliyaan chala raha ho. Sanjay, 33, thaka hua taxi driver, apni seat par dhansa hua hai, ek haath steering par aur doosre se radio ka dead knob ghumata hua. Dashboard ki halki glow mein uska road-weary chehra aur zyada purana lagta hai. Tabhi Aman, 25, ek wet jacket aur pale face ke saath, chup-chaap back seat ka darwaza kholta hai aur bas itna bolta hai: "Ghar chhod doge?" Sanjay bina zyada soche haan kar deta hai. Raat ka kaam hai, kiraya hai, bas chalo.

Taxi chalti hai. Par kuch hi der mein road ajeeb hone lagti hai. Left turn lene par taxi wahi dhaba ke saamne laut aati hai. Right turn par bhi wahi neon sign. Sanjay pehle ise rain, fatigue aur purani battery ka khel samajhta hai. Aman poori tarah shaant hai, bas window se bahar dekh raha hai, jaise kisi yaad ko follow kar raha ho. Meter badhta rehta hai, par distance zero jaisa lagta hai. Sanjay ke jokes bhi fail ho jaate hain. "Bhai, GPS bhi shaadi se pehle waali commitment dikhata hai kya?" Aman bas halki si muskurahat deta hai. Phir, rearview mirror mein Sanjay ko ek weird cheez dikhti hai—Aman ka reflection nahi hai.

Isi beech dhaba ke paas khada mechanic Prakash, 46, grease-stained vest mein, wrench haath mein liye, taxi ki bonnet par tap karta hai aur bolta hai ki gaadi mein koi problem nahi, problem driver ki hai. Woh khidki se jhank kar Aman ko dekhta hai, phir seedha Sanjay se kehta hai, "Is aadmi ka saans sunayi de raha hai? Pulse feel ho raha hai?" Sanjay ghabra kar rearview mein dekh hai. Aman calmly bolta hai, "Uncle ko bolo, haath zara aur andar daalein. Main bite nahi karta." Prakash ka chehra aur tight ho jaata hai. Woh kehta hai, "Iska reflection nahi hai." Sanjay hasne ki koshish karta hai, par hansi gale mein atak jaati hai.

Ab dialogue mein ek strange triangle ban jaata hai. Prakash insist karta hai ki Aman ko utaro. Aman softly bolta hai ki agar Sanjay ne aage wale highway par one specific turn liya, toh uski taxi ditch mein palat jaayegi, aur brake fail hone se woh bhi marega. Sanjay gusse aur darr ke beech phans jaata hai. "Mera future tujhe kaise pata?" Aman seedha uski taraf dekh kar bolta hai, "Kyuki main us future ka hissa tha." Yeh line sun kar Prakash ka sarcasm bhi chup ho jaata hai.

Phir Aman apni wet jacket ka zipper kholta hai, aur uske andar se ek purana, crumpled school ID card nikalta hai. Card par same family name. Sanjay ka chehra safed pad jaata hai. Aman dheere se kehta hai, “Tu mujhe bhool gaya, bhai.” Sanjay ki aankhon mein flashback jaisa kuch toot-ta hai—bachpan ka rain-soaked road, ek accident, ek chhota bhai jo wapas ghar nahi aaya. Prakash, jo pehle skeptic tha, ab dheere se piche hat jaata hai. Woh samajh jaata hai ki yeh koi normal passenger nahi.

Climax mein Aman apni seat se ek inch bhi hile bina Sanjay ko final warning deta hai: “Woh turn mat lena. Wahan truck ka oil spill hai. Teri speed, tera gussa, aur tera purana luck—teenon milke seedha maut ko invite karenge.” Sanjay ka haath key par jam jaata hai. Taxi ke bahar baarish aur neon sign ka flicker dono milke ek haunted rhythm bana dete hain. Prakash, ab fully shaken, bas itna bolta hai, “Sanjay... sun le.” Sanjay aakhir ek deep breath leta hai aur steering ko forcibly seedha rakhta hai.

Taxi ek pal ke liye freeze jaisi lagti hai. Meter ruk jaata hai. Rearview mirror mein Aman ka chehra dhundhla padne lagta hai. Woh bas itna kehta hai, “Is baar ghar pahucha dena.” Phir back seat khaali. Door band nahi hota, bas khula reh jaata hai, aur seat par sirf thandi nami aur ek purana school photo ka corner bacha hota hai. Bahar dhaba ki light mein Prakash ki aankhen nam ho jaati hain. Sanjay ka phone charger dashboard par padi vibration se halki si awaaz karta hai, jaise kisi ne door se call ki ho.

Final beat mein Prakash chup-chaap taxi se hat kar side mein chala jaata hai. Sanjay mirror mein apne aap ko dekhta hai—aur pehli baar, uske piche back seat mein ek second reflection dikhta hai: Aman ka, muskuraata hua, phir gayab. Sanjay gaadi start karta hai, aur is baar road seedhi jaati hai. Dhaba ka neon sign peeche chhoot jaata hai. Baarish continue rehti hai, lekin ab uski tik-tik dhamki nahi, farewell jaisi lagti hai.