

THE BENCH IN THE PARK

A Slice of Life/Family 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Slice of Life/Family	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Hari (68)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Late afternoon ka golden light park ke pedon se chhan kar bench par gir raha hai. Hari apni purani cap theek karta hai, newspaper ko fold karke side mein rakhta hai, aur ek halka sa mazak fenk deta hai, "Aaj kal ka park bhi AC jaisa ho gaya hai, bas ticket nahi lagta." Vishal, loosened tie aur office bag ke saath, thoda defensive smile deta hai. Om, school uniform mein, backpack ko pairon ke paas rakh kar idhar-udhar dekh raha hai, jaise uske liye yeh sab routine bhi hai aur kuch chhupa hua tension bhi. Teenon ke beech jo baat seedhi bolni chahiye thi, woh bench ke lakdi ke neeche kahin atak gayi hai.

Hari ko pata hai ki Vishal overseas move ke baare mein baat karna chahta hai. Vishal ko lagta hai ki baat karne ka sahi waqt kabhi aata hi nahi. Om ko bas itna samajh aa raha hai ki bade log smile ke peeche kuch aur chhupa rahe hain. Hari newspaper ke through jokes karta hai—"Foreign mein sab kuch milta hai, bas ghar ka raasta Google Maps bhi confuse ho jaata hai." Vishal irritate hota hai, phir sambhal kar bolta hai ki opportunity achhi hai, career ke liye zaroori hai, aur woh family ko chhod nahi raha, bas kuch saal ke liye ja raha hai. Hari ki aankhon mein ek pal ke liye dard chamakta hai, par woh turant usse hansni mein badal deta hai. "Saal? Tum log aaj kal saal ko weekend samajhte ho."

Om pehle chup rehta hai, phir dono ko ek-ek karke dekhta hai. Uski restless energy ab serious ho jaati hai. Woh school project folder apne backpack se nikalta hai aur bench par khol deta hai. Andar ek hand-drawn family map hai—park se ghar, ghar se school, school se office, aur office se airport tak ek line. Hari, Vishal aur Om ke naam alag-alag nodes par likhe hain, beech mein chhote arrows aur notes: "Dada ke bina chai nahi," "Papa ke bina homework pending," aur "Om ke bina dono ka jhagda complete nahi." Vishal aur Hari dono ek second ke liye silent ho jaate hain.

Om, bilkul seedhe aur sachche tone mein bolta hai ki teacher ne family map banana bola tha, par usne socha family ka map sirf ghar ka nahi hota—jahan-jahan family ka dil hota hai, woh sab jagah map mein aati hai. Usne airport bhi isliye banaya kyunki papa ka plan uske dimaag mein already baith gaya tha. "Aap log mujhe chhota samajhte ho," woh kehta hai, "par main sun leta hoon. Aap dono jab chai ke time chup ho jaate ho na, tab bhi sab samajh aa jaata hai." Yeh line bench par seedha lagti hai.

Vishal ka defensive posture dheere-dheere tootne lagta hai. Woh admit karta hai ki usne move ke baare mein isliye der se bataya kyunki use lag raha tha Hari hurt hoga. Hari, jo ab tak mazaak mein bach raha tha, ek gehri saans leta hai aur bolta hai ki hurt toh hua hai, par usse zyada dar is baat ka hai ki kahin beta usse itna door na ho jaaye ki uski awaaz hi sunai na de. Phir woh smile karke newspaper ko tap karta hai: "Par tum jaa rahe ho toh jao. Bas wahan bhi Indian time mat le jaana—uska refund nahi milta." Vishal hansi aur guilt ke beech phans jaata hai.

Climax mein, Om folder ka ek final page nikalta hai: ek family photo collage nahi, balki ek route map jahan teenon ke beech ek continuous line bana hua hai. Usne likha hota hai: "Family is not a place. Family is a way back." Hari us line ko padhkar chup ho jaata hai. Vishal ki aankhen nam ho jaati hain. Om, jo ab bhi schoolboy hi hai, par is moment mein sabse mature lagta hai, bolta hai ki agar papa ko jaana hi hai, toh woh jaa sakte hain, lekin har Sunday video call fix hogi, aur Dada ke liye har month ek postcard. Hari turant bolta hai, "Postcard? Arre, main toh WhatsApp pe stickers bhej dunga." Vishal finally hansi ke saath apne father ke kandhe par haath rakhta hai.

Bench par tension ka weight halki shaam mein dissolve ho jaata hai. Koi grand speech nahi, bas teen generations ka ek chhota sa compromise: doori bhi, connection bhi. Aakhri shot mein Om ka map bench par khula pada hai, uske arrows golden light mein chamak rahe hain. Hari newspaper fold karke cap set karta hai. Vishal apna tie loosen kar ke pehli baar relaxed dikhta hai. Aur teenon, bina kuch aur kahe, ek dusre ke saath park ke quiet background mein baith jaate hain—jaise family ka sabse sachcha map kabhi paper par nahi, bench par banta hai.