

THE WAITING BENCH

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: Dr. Aditya (42)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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2 baje raat ka waqt tha. Hospital ke waiting room mein sirf fluorescent tubes ki safed, thandi roshni thi, jo kabhi-kabhi corridor ke flicker ke saath aur bhi zyada bechain lagti thi. Ek bench, ek water dispenser, kuch file racks, aur corner mein khada thermos—bas itna sa samaan tha. Dr. Aditya, wrinkled scrubs aur hospital ID badge ke saath, apni thakan ko gusse mein chhupata hua andar aaya. Uske peeche Ramesh, night ward attendant, keys ka bunch hilata hua, thoda chuppa, thoda alert. Bench par ek aurat baithi thi—Pallavi. Rain-soaked sari, pale chehra, aur aankhen aisi jaise kabhi blink hi na karti ho. Woh na water dispenser ki taraf dekhti thi, na room ki taraf. Bas ek hi naam baar-baar pooch rahi thi: “Kya aapne Arjun ko dekha?”

Dr. Aditya pehle irritate hua. Hospital mein emergency, paperwork, aur raat ki fatigue ke beech ek aur “missing person” drama. Usne file racks check kiye, Ramesh ko ghura, aur bola ki agar koi patient admit hua hota to record hota. Ramesh ne surprisingly calm tone mein kaha ki admission log kabhi-kabhi miss ho jaate hain, par uski aankhon mein kuch aur hi tha—jaise woh Pallavi ko pehchanta ho. Pallavi ne kisi bhi sawal ka seedha jawab nahi diya. Na woh apna naam confirm karti, na paani leti, na bench se uthti. Bas same line repeat: “Arjun kahan hai?” Is repetition mein kuch aisa tha jo room ko aur bhi zyada khokhla kar raha tha. Dr. Aditya ne hansii mein baat udaane ki koshish ki, “Madam, yeh hospital hai ya lost-and-found?” Ramesh ne halki si muskurahat ke saath thermos khola, jaise usne yeh joke pehle bhi suna ho. Lekin Pallavi ki aankhon ka stillness dono ko uncomfortable kar raha tha.

Phir twist ki shuruaat hui. Dr. Aditya ne purani files ke drawer se ek year-old casualty register nikala. Ramesh ne bina dekhe hi kaha, “Us naam ko mat kholo, sir.” Aditya ruk gaya. Pallavi ne pehli baar head tilt kiya, jaise usne kuch sun liya ho. Aditya ne page palta. Arjun. Same room. Same date—one year ago. “Arjun Mehra,” file mein likha tha, “brought in late, declared dead before admission.” Dr. Aditya ke haath freeze ho gaye. Usne palatkar Ramesh ko dekha. Ramesh ki face se saara blood gaayab tha. “Yeh... yeh kaise ho sakta hai?” Aditya ne dheere se poocha. Pallavi ne bench par seedha baithte hue bas itna kaha, “Woh yahin tha. Main uska wait kar rahi thi.”

Ramesh ne pehli baar sach bol diya—ya shayad aadha sach. Usne bataya ki us raat Arjun ko laaya gaya tha, lekin doctor late tha, aur jab tak koi aata, sab khatam ho chuka tha. Pallavi us din se har kuch hafton mein aati rahi—kabhi rain-soaked, kabhi bilkul sookhi, lekin hamesha usi bench par baithkar Arjun ka naam leti. Ramesh ne use kabhi bahar nahi nikala. Pehle usne socha grief hai. Phir usne notice kiya ki Pallavi water dispenser ke paas nahi jaati, aur

uska shadow corridor ke flicker mein bhi theek se move nahi karta. Usne phir bhi kisi ko nahi bataya. Kyunki kuch raaton mein, jab ward bilkul khaali hota, Pallavi usse bas itna poochti thi: “Arjun aaya?”

Dr. Aditya ka skepticism ab crack ho chuka tha. Usne Pallavi se pucha, “Tum kaun ho?” Pallavi ne uski ID badge ki taraf dekha, phir bench ke neeche, aur dheere se boli, “Main us din uske saath thi.” Ek pause. “Main bhi usi room mein thi.” Room mein ek thandi hawa si chal gayi, jabki khidki band thi. Ramesh ne thermos tight pakad liya. Aditya ko yaad aaya—one year ago, isi waiting room mein ek accident case ka chaos, ek rain-soaked woman, ek naam jo forms mein clear nahi tha. Usne file mein likha hua dekha: “Companion unidentified.” Aur uske baad kuch minutes ka gap. Woh gap ab uske gale mein atak gaya.

Climax mein Pallavi khadi hui. Bench ke neeche se ek purana hospital token gira—Arjun ka. Dr. Aditya ne usse uthaya, aur uske haath kaanp gaye. Pallavi ne bas itna kaha, “Aap log us waqt the. Main aaj bhi wait kar rahi hoon.” Ramesh ne aankhen neeche kar li, jaise usse saalon ka bojh yaad aa gaya ho. Corridor ki light flicker hui, aur ek pal ke liye waiting room mein bench par do silhouettes dikhai diye—ek Pallavi ki, aur ek aur, jo uske bagal mein baitha tha. Phir sab normal. Aditya ne jab dobara dekha, bench par sirf Pallavi thi. Ya shayad sirf uski yaad.

End mein Dr. Aditya pehli baar bina bole khada raha. Ramesh ne thermos band kiya. Pallavi ne phir wahi naam poocha, lekin is baar awaaz mein gussa nahi, bas intezaar tha. “Arjun?” Aur room ne jawab nahi diya. Sirf hospital ka fluorescent buzz, ek door corridor ka flicker, aur bench—jo ab waiting bench kam, witness zyada lag raha tha.