

THE UNOPENED DRAWER

A Mystery/Crime 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Mystery/Crime	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Inspector Salim (46)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Subah ka gray light aadhe band parde se room mein ghus raha hai. Middle-class bedroom ab crime scene ban chuka hai — bed ke paas ek body covered sheet ke neeche, bedside lamp ki peeli roshni, aur ek alag si khamoshi jo kisi bhi awaaz ko nigal jaati hai. Inspector Salim, trench coat aur gloves ke saath, case file ko kholkar room ka hisaab lagata hai. Inspector Nitin, rolled-up sleeves aur flashlight ke saath, har cheez ko suspect ki tarah dekh raha hai. Room mein bas teesri zinda presence hai: Kriti, elegant, controlled, coffee mug pakde, jaise usne pehle hi decide kar liya ho ki panic uska style nahi hai.

Salim sabse pehle body aur room ko read karta hai. Uske hisaab se murder jaldi mein nahi hua. Nitin ko bed ke paas, dressing table ke neeche, aur almirah ke around kuch bhi mil jaaye toh woh usi ko motive samajh leta hai. Lekin room ki sabse ajeeb cheez ek unopened drawer hai — bedside table ka neeche wala drawer, bilkul band, jaise usse jaanboojhkar bhool diya gaya ho. Nitin uski taraf baar-baar flashlight ghumaata hai, aur Salim notice karta hai ki drawer ke handle par dust ka pattern baaki room se alag hai. Kriti turant bolti hai ki usne drawer ko touch bhi nahi kiya. Uski tone calm hai, par uske jawab thode zyada perfect lagte hain.

Nitin us par pressure daalta hai. Woh poochta hai ki agar Kriti ne room use kiya, toh drawer kyun nahi khola? Kriti ka jawab simple hai: "Maine is room mein sirf coffee rakhi, secrets nahi." Salim uske expression ko padhta hai — controlled, elegant, lekin guarded. Woh samajh jaata hai ki Kriti chup hai, par zaroori nahi ki jhooth bol rahi ho. Nitin ko lagta hai woh evidence chhupa rahi hai. Salim ko lagta hai drawer hi clue hai. Dono ke beech subtle tug-of-war chalta hai, aur Kriti beech mein khadi apni mug ke rim ko dheere se rotate karti rehti hai, jaise har sawaal ka jawab usne already suna hua ho.

Jaise-jaise interrogation tight hoti hai, dead man ka profile saamne aata hai — ek aadmi jo logon ko pressure karke paisa nikalta tha, aur jisne is apartment mein kisi se milne ka plan banaya tha. Nitin ko lagta hai Kriti victim ki lover ya accomplice ho sakti hai. Salim ko lagta hai woh victim ki target hai. Kriti finally bolti hai ki dead man uska tenant ya relative nahi tha, balki uske late husband ka purana acquaintance tha. Yeh line room mein ek naya silence paida karti hai. Salim drawer ko dekhte hue dheere se poochta hai, "Aapne is drawer ko kabhi khola hi nahi?" Kriti ka jawab aata hai, "Nahi. Kyunki mere liye band rehna hi uski aadat thi."

Nitin impatient ho kar drawer kholne ki koshish karta hai, lekin Salim usse rok deta hai. Woh pehle room ki geometry, bed ke side table ki position, aur drawer ke dust line ko note karta hai. Phir woh Kriti se ek seedha sawaal poochta hai: “Dead man aapke ghar mein kya dhoondh raha tha?” Kriti pehli baar apni coffee mug ko neeche rakhti hai. Uski awaaz halki si kaanpti hai, par control ab bhi uske paas hai. Woh batati hai ki uska husband marne se pehle ek affair aur kuch financial fraud ke chakkar mein phans gaya tha. Marne wala aadmi uske husband ko blackmail kar raha tha — ya woh aisa sochta tha. Salim ko ab samajh aata hai ki victim wrong person ko press kar raha tha.

Climax mein drawer khulta hai. Nitin flashlight seedhi andar daalta hai, aur andar ek bundle milta hai — letters, envelopes, kuch unopened, kuch torn. Sab letters victim ki wife ke hain. Unmein pleadings, apologies, aur ek clear truth: victim ko lagta tha woh kisi aur ki wife ko blackmail kar raha hai, jabki asal mein woh apni hi wife ke naam se aane wale warning letters ignore kar raha tha. Letters se reveal hota hai ki dead man ka blackmail ka target Kriti nahi, balki uski wife thi — aur Kriti ne drawer isliye nahi khola kyunki uske liye woh drawer ek graveyard tha, proof nahi. Salim instantly case ka center shift kar leta hai: murder ka motive Kriti ke against nahi, victim ki apni marriage ke collapse aur uske greed ke against tha.

Nitin ki impulsive certainty toot jaati hai. Kriti, ab bhi composed, bas itna kehti hai, “Maine kuch chhupaya nahi. Main bas us cheez ko haath nahi lagana chahti thi jo mere husband ki zindagi ko pehle hi kha chuki thi.” Salim drawer ko close karte hue samajh jaata hai ki kabhi-kabhi sabse suspicious cheez woh nahi hoti jo khuli ho — woh hoti hai jo band rehkar sach ko sambhaal rahi ho. Room mein phir wahi gray light, wahi lamp, wahi khamoshi reh jaati hai, lekin ab us khamoshi mein ek naya meaning hai: victim ne wrong person ko blackmail kiya tha, aur drawer ne uska asli crime expose kar diya.