

SIGNAL LOST

A Psychological Thriller 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Psychological Thriller	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Eshan (29)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Tez baarish mein bheega hua Eshan apni delivery bag ko seene se chipkaye ek chhoti si apartment building ke corridor mein aa khada hota hai. Uska rain jacket chipchipa sa ho chuka hai, cracked helmet uske haath mein hai, aur phone par baar-baar “signal lost” ka message blink kar raha hai. Woh sirf thoda sa sukoon chah raha hai—delivery confirm hone tak kahin dry jagah, bas itna. Rupa ka darwaza aadha khulta hai. Woh pale hai, aankhon mein neend kam aur darr zyada. “Aap aa gaye?” woh jaise Eshan ko pehle se jaanti ho, aise bolti hai. Eshan confuse hota hai, par jab thunder ke saath lights flicker karti hain, woh bina zyada soche andar aa jaata hai.

Room bahut chhota hai—sofa, coffee table, band curtains, ek tube light aur laptop ka blue glow. Rupa laptop open karti hai aur kehti hai ki doctor call par hain. Screen par Dr. Naina appear hoti hain: calm, professional, almost too calm. Woh Eshan ko naam se bulati hai. Eshan pehle mazaak samajh kar muskura deta hai, “Madam, mujhe bas confirmation chahiye, therapy nahi.” Naina bina smile kiye puchti hai ki kya usne aaj subah lift mein kisi se jhagda kiya tha. Eshan freeze ho jaata hai. Woh baat usne kisi se share nahi ki thi. Rupa aankh mila kar kehti hai, “Aap gussa bahut control karte ho, Eshan. Par kabhi kabhi control toot bhi jaata hai.” Eshan ko ajeeb lagta hai—yeh dono uske baare mein itna kaise jaanti hain?

Video call mein glitch aata hai. Naina ka face freeze hota hai, phir awaaz thodi metallic ho jaati hai. Woh Eshan se uske route, timings, aur “incident triggers” ke baare mein poochti hai. Eshan irritate ho kar kehta hai ki woh koi criminal nahi hai. Naina calmly bolti hai, “Yeh session criminality ke liye nahi, prediction ke liye hai.” Rupa glass mein paani bhar kar uski taraf badhati hai, lekin uska haath kaanp raha hai. Woh almost whisper karti hai, “Pee lo. Tumhara pulse bahut high hai.” Eshan notice karta hai ki darwaza andar se lock hai. Curtains band hain. Phone mein network zero. Laptop par ek file open hoti hai: “Subject E-29 / Aggression Response Trial.” Eshan ka chehra safed pad jaata hai. “Subject?” woh gusse mein puchta hai. “Main delivery rider hoon, test sample nahi.”

Naina ki awaaz screen se aur crisp ho jaati hai. Woh batati hai ki yeh koi normal telemedicine consult nahi tha. Eshan ko ek behavioral experiment mein monitor kiya ja raha tha—rain routes, stress, isolation, micro-aggressions, sab record ho rahe the. Rupa ko “supportive civilian proxy” ke roop mein place kiya gaya tha, taaki dekha ja sake ki Eshan unfamiliar intimacy aur perceived surveillance par kaise react karta hai. Eshan ko yaad aata hai ki pichhle kuch hafton se alag-alag log usse same sawal pooch rahe the, same delivery points, same delays, same “sir, aap

theek ho?”—sab kuch methodical tha. Woh laptop ki taraf badhta hai, par Naina usse rok deti hai: “Eshan, hum violence predict karna chahte the. Tumne ab tak jo bhi choices ki hain, woh exactly record ho rahi hain.”

Thunder ke saath tube light ek baar poori tez jalti hai. Rupa ki aankhon mein aansu aa jaate hain. Woh bolti hai, “Mujhe maaf kar do. Mujhe bola gaya tha tum dangerous ho sakte ho.” Eshan ka gussa ab fear mein badal jaata hai. Woh dekh leta hai ki Rupa bhi usi tarah trapped hai—uske haath mein kaanp, uski awaaz mein guilt. Naina, ab bhi disturbingly composed, final line bolti hai: “Signal lost ka matlab connection nahi, Eshan. Matlab tha: jab tumhe lagta hai tum dekh rahe ho, tab tumhe actually observe kiya ja raha hota hai.” Eshan slowly apna helmet uthata hai. Uske cracked visor mein laptop screen ka reflection aata hai—screen par uska hi live feed chal raha hai, aur uske background mein ek chhota red dot record kar raha hai. Woh samajh jaata hai: woh shelter mein nahi aaya tha. Woh test chamber mein enter kar chuka tha.

Last beat mein Eshan ka phone ek naya notification dikhata hai: “Stage 2 approved.” Woh Rupa aur Naina ko dekhta hai, phir darwaze ki taraf. Bahar storm ab bhi chal rahi hai. Andar, teenon ke beech ek aisi khamoshi girti hai jo kisi bhi scream se zyada khatarnak hai.