

THE THIRD BRIDE

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 Pooja (36)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Shaadi ka shor hotel ke corridor mein dhoom macha raha hai, lekin bridal suite ke andar ajeeb si khamoshi hai. Vanity bulbs ki peeli roshni mein Ananya red lehenga mein mirror ke saamne khadi hai, dupatta ka ek kona bed par gira hua, jewelry thodi tedhi, aur aankhon mein makeup se zyada tension. Bed par half-packed trousseau, suitcase, guest list aur khula wedding ring box pada hai—bas ring gayab. Inspector Pooja crisp shirt aur trousers mein andar aati hai, notebook haath mein, aur pehli nazar mein hi samajh jaati hai ki yeh normal theft nahi hai. Venue manager Seema, formal wear mein, master keys ka bunch pakde, bahut polished aur bahut defensive lagti hai.

Pooja seedha sawaal karti hai: ring kahan gayi? Ananya turant bolti hai ki yeh sabotage hai. Uske hisaab se koi nahi chahta ki shaadi ho. Seema kehti hai ki usne kuch nahi dekha, bas corridor mein do baar lights flicker hui thi. Pooja guest list utha kar names cross-check karti hai, phir mirror ke saamne khadi Ananya ki reflection ko notice karti hai—jewelry ka placement, bangles ka order, aur dupatta ka pin aise laga hai jaise kisi ne jaldi mein sab set kiya ho. Pooja ka tone sharp hai, par uski aankhon mein curiosity zyada hai. Woh Seema se master keys maangti hai, aur Seema ek pal ke liye hesitate karti hai. Yeh chhota sa pause Pooja ke liye enough hota hai. Koi kuch chhupa raha hai.

Jab Pooja ring box ko close dekh kar poochti hai ki box ke andar ring ka velvet slot kyun naya sa lag raha hai, Ananya ka chehra ek second ke liye stiff ho jaata hai. Woh bolti hai, “Meri shaadi hai, Inspector. Ring gayi ya nahi, ceremony rukni nahi chahiye.” Is line mein desperation bhi hai aur rehearsed calm bhi. Seema beech mein aakar baat ghuma deti hai—“Madam, hotel ka staff bahut professional hai. Main guarantee deti hoon, kisi ne kuch nahi kiya.” Pooja halki si muskurahat ke saath bolti hai, “Guarantee aur guilt mein farq hota hai, Seema ji.”

Pooja guest list par ek naam dekhkar ruk jaati hai: “A. Mehra.” Phir Ananya ke suitcase se nikalti ek extra file, jisme do passports ki photocopies aur ek old photograph chipki hoti hai. Photo mein wahi lehenga, wahi room, aur ek alag chehra—same features, different identity. Ananya ka saans ek pal ko atak jaata hai. Pooja mirror ke saamne khadi hokar dheere se bolti hai, “Bride ka naam Ananya hai... ya yeh bhi set-up ka part hai?” Room ka temperature jaise aur gir jaata hai.

Twist tab aata hai jab Seema finally crack karti hai. Woh master keys se ek locker kholti hai aur andar se wedding ring box nikalti hai. Pooja ka haath notebook par ruk jaata hai. Seema bolti hai ki ring usne chhupayi thi—paise ke liye nahi. Usne guest list aur documents dekh liye the. Jo aadmi shaadi ke venue par aane wala tha, woh Ananya ka fiancé nahi, kisi aur identity ke naam par jee raha tha. Shaadi ek false identity ko legally seal karne wali thi. Ring usliye gayab ki gayi taaki ceremony ruk jaaye aur sach bahar aa sake. Ananya pehli baar poori tarah toot jaati hai aur confess karti hai ki usne bhi sab jaante hue chup rehna chaha tha, kyunki sach bolti toh uski duniya bikhar jaati. Seema ne ring hide karke use ek chance diya—sach ka, aur shayad bachne ka.

Pooja ring box kholti hai, phir Ananya ko dekhti hai, phir Seema ko. Uski awaaz hard hai, par judgmental nahi. “Aap teenon ne marriage ko drama bana diya. Lekin ab crime clear hai: identity fraud.” Door ke bahar dhol aur mehendi wali hansi ka shor aur tez ho jaata hai, jaise duniya ko abhi bhi kuch pata na ho. Pooja notebook band karti hai aur final line bolti hai: “Shaadi kal bhi ho sakti thi. Jhooth ke saath nahi.” Ananya ka dupatta dheere se phisal kar bed par aa girta hai. Seema master keys ko tight pakad leti hai. Aur bridal suite ke mirror mein, teen auraton ki reflections ek hi frame mein khadi rehti hain—ek inspector, ek bride, aur ek manager—teeno ke chehre par ek hi sach ka boj.