

THE ROOFTOP PROMISE

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: Shanta (65)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Shaam ka blue hour hai. Purane apartment ki chhat par halki hawa chal rahi hai, laundry line par kapde dheere-dheere hil rahe hain, aur door shehar ka shor ek thandi si goonj ban kar aa raha hai. Shanta apni simple sari mein folding stool ke paas baithi hai, jaise poori chhat ki rakhwali wahi kar rahi ho. Usne Meera aur Asha ko upar bulaya hai, aur dono ke chehre se hi lag raha hai ki unke dimaag mein alag-alag andaze chal rahe hain. Meera office se seedha aayi hai, grocery bag ek haath mein, thakaan doosre mein. Asha school uniform mein hai, backpack kandhe par, aur apni umar se zyada serious dikhne ki koshish kar rahi hai. Shanta chup hai, bas dekh rahi hai. Isi khamoshi mein tension aur pyaar dono ghule hue hain.

Meera sabse pehle bolti hai. Use lagta hai maa ne is waqt sabko isliye bulaya hai kyunki paison ka koi naya masla hai. Woh thodi defensive ho jaati hai, bolti hai ki is baar rent, medicines aur Asha ki fees sab manage ho jayega, bas ek baar seedha bata do problem kya hai. Asha ko lagta hai ki shayad school ya tuition ka koi complaint aane wala hai, toh woh pehle hi safai dene lagti hai ki usne last test mein kaafi mehnat ki hai. Teenon ke beech ek funny but slightly painful rhythm ban jaata hai—Meera practical, Asha overthinking, aur Shanta sab sun kar bhi kuch nahi bolti. Phir Shanta old photo album nikaalti hai. Album mein purani tasveerein hain: isi chhat par khadi teen generations ki auratein, ek hi jagah, alag-alag waqt mein. Meera ki aankhen thodi naram padti hain, Asha pehli baar curiosity se dekhne lagti hai.

Shanta batati hai ki jab woh bahu thi, tab usne bhi socha tha ki ghar sambhal lena hi zindagi hai. Phir Meera ne socha tha ki bas kaam aur bachchi ko sambhal lo, toh sab theek ho jayega. Ab Asha bhi wahi kar rahi hai—khud ko strong dikhane ki koshish, taaki kisi ko uski zarurat mehsoos na ho. Shanta ki awaaz mein daant kam, dar zyada hota hai. Woh kehti hai ki auraton ka sabse bada dukh paisa nahi hota, “akela pad jaana” hota hai—aur us ghar mein har generation ne apni akelapan ko duty ka naam de diya. Meera ko lagta hai maa shayad uski shaadi ya life choices par bol rahi hai, Asha ko lagta hai uspar pressure aa raha hai, aur dono thoda resist karte hain. Tab Shanta folding stool par khadi hokar, laundry line ke peeche se ek chhota sa envelope nikaalti hai. Usme rooftop key hai.

Twist yeh hai ki yeh ghar ka roof nahi, balki paas ki gali mein ek rented room ki chabi hai—ek chhota sa, saaf, sunlit room jahan teenon saath reh sakte hain. Shanta ne apni savings aur kuch beche hue gehne se deposit diya hai. Meera shock mein hai, kyunki woh samajh rahi thi maa usse paise maang rahi thi. Asha pehle confuse, phir khush

hoti hai. Shanta bolti hai ki monsoon se pehle yeh chhat ka last “promise” hai: ab koi akeli nahi rahegi. Meera ki guilt ek pal mein pighal jaati hai, kyunki use samajh aata hai ki maa ne usse bachane ke liye, aur Asha ko ek stable ghar dene ke liye, chupchap sab plan kar liya. Asha, jo hamesha khud ko bada dikhati thi, pehli baar sach mein bacchi ban jaati hai aur dadi ke gale lag jaati hai. Meera bhi un dono ko pakad leti hai.

End mein teeno chhat par khadi hoti hain, city lights ke neeche, laundry line ke beech, tea glasses ke saath. Hawa tez ho gayi hai, jaise monsoon bas aane hi wala ho. Shanta bas itna kehti hai, “Ghar deewar se nahi, saath se banta hai.” Meera hasti hui aansu pochte hai. Asha key ko haath mein le kar bolti hai, “Toh phir kal se packing?” Shanta muskura kar jawab deti hai, “Kal nahi, abhi se.” Aur teenon ki hansii, rooftop ke blue hour mein, ek nayi shuruaat ka vaada ban jaati hai.