

SIGNAL LOST

A Sci-Fi/High-Concept 3-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Sci-Fi/High-Concept	Format: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast)	Runtime: 6 - 9 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 3-Character Short Film (Trio Cast) Character 1: Dr. Sana (33)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Andheri underground control room mein sirf monitors ki blink-blink, metal shelves ka thanda saaya, aur ek laal emergency lamp ki dhak-dhak roshni hai. Citywide signal outage ne poori building ko dead zone bana diya hai. Dr. Sana, utility jacket mein tense aur razor-focused, tablet aur wire cutters ke saath cables ka jungle inspect kar rahi hai. Zoya, headset pehne, ponytail tight, readouts pe nazar gadhaye hue, har beep pe aur nervous ho jaati hai. Aur Mira, cardigan mein shaant, ajeeb si sukoon wali aurat, radio receiver ko kaan se lagaye baithe-baithe kabhi-kabhi “shh” bolkar silence sun rahi hai.

Sana ko lagta hai outage ek technical failure hai. Zoya ke according grid ke data mein impossible gaps aa rahe hain—jaise kisi ne signal ko cut nahi, edit kiya ho. Mira bas itna kehti hai, “Signal kahin gaya nahi. Signal aaya hi nahi tha... abhi tak.” Dono us par has deti hain, par phir radio receiver se ek crackle nikalta hai. Ek distorted voice, future jaisi, room ke andar hi se aati hai: “Red lamp ko mat chhuna. Cable bundle ko left port mein mat daalna. Aur Sana—tumhari tablet ka third file mat kholna.”

Zoya ka chehra safed pad jaata hai. Sana turant tablet check karti hai. Third file mein ek citywide cascade failure ka simulation hai—agar grid abhi restore hua, toh basement ke neeche pressure relay explode karega aur poori block ko jhatka lagega. Lekin file ka timestamp future ka hai. Mira, pehli baar sach mein serious hoke, bolti hai ki usne aisi transmissions pehle bhi suni hain. “Yeh future wala room hai,” woh kehti hai. “Bas humse kuch minute aage.” Sana ko lagta hai Mira delusional hai, par radio phir bolta hai: “Mira, tumne unhe abhi tak nahi bataya ki outage tumne start kiya tha.”

Room mein silence jam jaata hai. Zoya ghoom ke Mira ko dekhti hai. Sana wire cutters neeche rakh deti hai. Mira thodi der tak monitor ke black screen mein apna reflection dekhti rehti hai, phir saans chhodkar bolti hai: “Haan. Maine signal giraaya tha.” Sana ka gussa phat padta hai—kyun? Mira batati hai ki do saal pehle isi room mein ek aur signal test hua tha. Us test ne city ke old relay core ko overheat kar diya tha. Agar aaj grid full power pe restore hota, toh wohi hidden fault phir trigger hota aur ek hospital wing, metro line, aur north block sab collapse ho jaate. “Us waqt main technician thi,” Mira bolti hai. “Maine warning di thi. Kisi ne nahi suni. Aaj main retired hoon, par yaad ab bhi kaam karti hai.”

Zoya, data analyst, pehli baar emotion aur logic ke beech phansi hui, files ko dubara decode karti hai. Future transmission aur current readings match karte hain. Sana ko samajh aata hai ki outage sabotage nahi, preventive lockout tha. Par twist aur gehra hota hai: third file mein ek line flash hoti hai—"Mira will be blamed unless Sana chooses the manual bypass." Sana shock mein Mira ko dekhti hai. Mira softly kehti hai, "Ab tumhari choice hai. Grid bachana hai, ya log." Zoya panik mein bolti hai ki manual bypass se signal ek narrow window mein restart hoga—bas 12 seconds—aur phir auto-shutdown. Sana decide karti hai. Woh circuit board nikaalti hai, cable bundle ko sahi port mein lagati hai, aur Zoya ko timing control karne ko kehti hai. Mira radio ko ear ke paas rakh kar future room ki faint instructions sunti hai, jaise kisi orchestra ki conductor ho.

Climax mein red emergency lamp suddenly aur tez blink karta hai. Future voice: "Ab." Sana wire cutters se ek final insulation strip kaat-ti hai, Zoya countdown karti hai, aur Mira ek old-school relay knob ko exact second pe turn karti hai. Monitors pe city grid ka map dheere-dheere green hota hai—par ek screen par warning aati hai: "Disaster averted. Source of outage: manual intervention by S. K." Sana ko lagta hai blame us par aa gaya. Mira bas muskura deti hai. "Maine tum dono ko future se message bhej kar ek aur future bachaya," woh kehti hai.

Last beat mein radio se ek final transmission aata hai—same room, thoda aage ka time: "Mira, thank you. Sana, you chose right. Zoya, next time headset pe mute mat rakhna." Zoya ka nervous laugh nikal jaata hai. Sana bhi pehli baar relax karti hai. Mira silence sunte hue aankh band kar leti hai. Red lamp ab bhi jal raha hai, lekin room pehle se kam thanda lagta hai. Signal wapas aa chuka hai—par sabse bada signal yeh hai ki kabhi-kabhi future ko bachane ke liye past ko interrupt karna padta hai.