

THE CANDIDATE

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: Professor Aruna (50)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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White, sterile interview room. Ek table. Teen chairs. Ek glowing panel screen jo baar-baar soft blue pulse karta hai. Asha, ek modest formal suit mein, worn folder pakde, andar aati hai. Uske saamne Professor Aruna baithi hai—structured jacket, stack of notes, bilkul composed. Neha, smart casuals mein, polished smile ke saath tablet aur interview form sambhale hui hai. Room mein ek faint hum hai, jaise koi machine chup-chaap saans le rahi ho.

Interview shuru hota hai, par sawaal bilkul normal nahi hote. Neha resume ke baare mein poochne ke bajay poochti hai, "Aap apni sabse badi galti ko kaise justify karenge?" Aruna usse ethics ke hypothetical dilemmas deti hain—agar kisi ek zindagi ko bachane ke liye dusri ko chhodna pade, toh kya sahi hai? Asha pehle polite, phir alert, phir suspicious ho jaati hai. Woh jawab smartly deti hai, kabhi seedha, kabhi ulta sawaal karke. Aruna uski honesty test karti hai, Neha uski adaptability. Har answer ke baad screen par ek naya prompt aa jata hai: "Memory stability," "Identity consent," "Continuity of self." Asha notice karti hai ki interview form par job title blank hai. Company name ke jagah sirf ek code hai.

Dheere-dheere Asha ko samajh aata hai ki yeh recruitment nahi, selection hai. Neha ka smile thoda zyada practiced lagne lagta hai. Aruna ke notes mein candidates ke naam nahi, memory indexes likhe hain. Jab Asha seedha poochti hai, "Main kis position ke liye apply kar rahi hoon?" room mein silence aa jaati hai. Neha screen on karti hai. Ek line glow karti hai: "Candidate selected for memory transfer into cloned vessel." Asha ka chehra stiff ho jata hai. Aruna calmly explain karti hai ki original body terminal hai, par memory preserve ki ja sakti hai—legal, ethical, and commercially approved. "Aapko kaam nahi, continuity chahiye," Neha softly kehti hai, jaise yeh ek premium benefit ho.

Asha ka shock rage mein badalta hai. Woh poochti hai, "Toh main kaun hoon? Resume? Data? Ya bas ek memory file?" Aruna jawab deti hai ki identity memory se banti hai; body sirf medium hai. Asha counter karti hai ki memory aur insaan same nahi hote—dard, fear, smell, hesitation, sab kuch body mein bhi likha hota hai. Uski baat room ko hila deti hai. Neha, jo ab tak recruiter thi, thodi emotional ho jaati hai. Pata chalta hai ki woh bhi ek transferred continuity hai—purani zindagi ka polished version, jisne kabhi apna original body chhoda tha. Aruna un dono ko dekhkar aur bhi cold ho jaati hai: "Choice nahi, procedure hai."

Twist tab aata hai jab glowing screen par ek naya file open hota hai—Asha ka face, but with a different age, different name. Woh samajh jaati hai ki usse “candidate” isliye nahi chuna gaya kyunki woh best hai, balki kyunki uski memory pattern unke system ke liye compatible hai. Aur phir Asha ko ek aur line dikhti hai: “Transfer consent can be reversed if subject refuses at final confirmation.” Matlab yeh interview hi final gate hai.

Ab power Asha ke haath mein hai. Aruna, jo ethics ki professor hai, system ki spokesperson nikli. Neha, jo recruiter hai, actually the bridge between human fear and corporate process. Asha pen uthati hai, form par dekhti hai, phir seedha un dono ko. Woh sign nahi karti. Instead, woh form ko fold karke water glass ke neeche rakh deti hai aur kehti hai, “Aap log memory transfer bech rahe ho. Main identity transfer nahi karungi.” Room mein pehli baar silence heavy lagta hai.

Final beat mein screen par alert blink karta hai: “Candidate declined.” Aruna ke notes ka top page khisak kar neeche girta hai—us par likha hota hai: “If refusal occurs, initiate retention protocol.” Neha ka smile vanish ho jata hai. Asha realize karti hai ki interview ab bhi khatam nahi hua—bas role ulta ho gaya hai. Ab question yeh nahi ki woh job legi ya nahi; question yeh hai ki kya woh apni memory ko bachane ke liye apni body se bhi lad sakti hai. Cut to black on the room’s cold hum, leaving the audience with one unsettling thought: agar memory transferable hai, toh insaan ka legal owner kaun hai?