

THE CONFESSION BOOTH

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: Detective Shalini (40)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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St. Jude Church ke pichhle kone mein, jahan frosted glass se soft daylight gir rahi thi aur ek akeli candle ka flame halki si hawa mein kaanp raha tha, Detective Shalini apna notebook khol kar baithi thi. Uske saamne ek wooden confession booth tha, aur booth ke bahar ek simple pew par Sister Agnes seedhi, calm aur bilkul unreadable baithi thi. Maya, office wear mein, thodi tense, apni sleeve ko baar-baar neeche kheench rahi thi, jaise uske bruised wrist duniya se chhupa rahi ho. Missing woman Naina ko last yahan dekha gaya tha. Shalini ke questions sharp the, lekin church ki khamoshi aur Sister Agnes ki measured replies un questions ko aur bhi dangerous bana rahi thi.

Maya ne pehle toh bohat kam bola. Woh bas itna keh rahi thi ki Naina "bas kuch der ke liye" church aayi thi. Sister Agnes ne turant correction diya: "Yahan log araam ke liye aate hain, madam. Crime ke liye nahi." Shalini ne notice kiya ki booth ke confession screen ke peeche halki si rustle ho rahi thi, aur prayer book ke beech kuch folded slips chhupi hui lag rahi thi. Usne keys ka jhund dekha jo Sister Agnes ke haath mein tha—old, heavy, aur ek particular brass key baar-baar uske anguthe se ghis rahi thi. Shalini ne booth ke slot aur pew ke neeche hidden movement ke traces pakad liye. Koi yahan confession ke bahane messages pass kar raha tha.

Jab Shalini ne seedha poocha, "Naina kahan hai?" Maya ka chehra aur tight ho gaya. Sister Agnes ne calmly kaha, "Jo khoya hai, woh aksar dhoondhne wale ke saamne hota hai." Ye line Shalini ko irritate bhi kar gayi aur alert bhi. Usne notebook mein dates, timings aur church visitors ke naam likhne shuru kiye. Phir usne ek folded note nikala jo booth ke wooden edge mein phansa hua tha. Note par sirf ek line thi: "Aaj candle jalana. Main aungi." Neeche ek symbol bana tha—do circles aur ek cross. Maya ne woh symbol dekhte hi apni saans rok li.

Shalini ne pressure badhaya. Maya ne finally admit kiya ki woh Naina se milti thi, lekin affair ya blackmail ke liye nahi. Naina uski purani dost thi, aur woh dono kisi aadmi se bach rahi thi jo unhein dhamka raha tha. Sister Agnes ne pehli baar aankhon mein thoda dard liye kaha ki church un dono ko shelter deta raha, because "har ghar mein darwaza hota hai, par har darwaze par naam nahi hota." Shalini ne notice kiya ki Sister Agnes ki voice mein sirf compassion nahi, ownership bhi thi—jaise woh kisi ko protect kar rahi ho.

Climax tab aaya jab Shalini ne booth ka confession screen gently side mein kiya. Peechhe ek chhota sa concealed passage tha, jahan se prayer book aur notes exchange hote the. Usne ek aur note uthaya—us par likha tha: “Maa, main yahin hoon. Dar mat.” Maya ka chehra pal bhar mein collapse ho gaya. Sister Agnes ke haath ka key-ring zameen par halki si jhankaar ke saath gir gaya. Shalini ne dheere se bola, “Naina... alive hai.”

Sister Agnes ne pehli baar poori tarah confession kiya: Naina uski long-lost beti thi, jo saalon pehle ghar se gayab ho gayi thi. Wapas milne par bhi woh apni pehchaan public nahi kar sakti thi, kyunki jis aadmi se woh bach rahi thi woh ab bhi uske piche tha. Church ka confession booth unka coded communication point ban gaya tha—candle jalti, note aata, aur ek safe signal milta. Maya unki friend aur office colleague thi, jo messages bahar tak pahunchati thi. Uske bruised wrist ka raaz bhi khul gaya: usi aadmi ne usse pakad kar note chheenne ki koshish ki thi.

Shalini ne notebook band kiya. Uski tired eyes mein ab suspicion se zyada understanding thi. Usne church ki khamoshi ko ek crime scene ki tarah nahi, ek rescue map ki tarah dekha. Sister Agnes ne softly candle ki flame seedhi ki. Maya ne pehli baar apni sleeve uthai aur bruise ko chhupana band kiya. Booth ke peeche se ek halki si aurat ki saans sunai di—Naina alive thi, bas ab tak shadow mein thi. Shalini ne sirf itna kaha, “Aaj se yeh booth confession ke liye nahi, protection ke liye use hoga. Aur jo bhi bahar hai, us tak main pahunch jaungi.”