

THE THREE KEYS

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 Anjali (37)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Dim apartment corridor mein ek hi bulb baar-baar jhapak raha hai. Stairwell window se jo halka sa daylight aa raha hai, woh bas utna hi hai ki deewar par latki purani nameplates aur center mein band storage room ka lock chamak uthe. Detective Anjali, plain shirt mein, haath mein evidence pouch aur dusre mein flashlight liye, corridor ko jaise measure kar rahi hai. Uske saamne Farah khadi hai—casual clothes, aankhen neeche, ungliyaan kaanp rahi hain. Thodi door, Mrs. Verma, sari mein seedhi, handbag ko itna tidy pakde hue ki woh khud hi suspicious lagti hai. Teenon ke beech ek tenant register khula pada hai, aur uske upar teen same-looking keys rakhi hain.

Anjali seedha sawal se start karti hai: missing tenant kahan gaya, aur keys kiski hain? Farah bolti hai ki woh bas apna charger lene aayi thi, lekin uski awaaz mein itna darr hai ki lagta hai woh khud apni baat par yakeen nahi kar rahi. Mrs. Verma calm tone mein kehti hai ki woh building secretary hai, register check karne aayi thi, aur keys storage room ki hain. Anjali notice karti hai ki Farah ke paas bhi ek key ring ka nishaan hai, aur Mrs. Verma ke handbag mein kuch hard object ke corners dikha rahe hain. Corridor ka har sound—bulb ka buzz, stairwell se aati hawa, lock cylinder mein key ke scratch—sab kuch ek interrogation ban jaata hai.

Anjali tenant register ko ulat-pal kar dekhti hai. Ek apartment number ke neeche teen alag-alag initials likhe hain, jaise ek hi flat ke andar teen zindagiyan chal rahi hon. Farah pehle jhuth bolti hai, phir toot jaati hai: missing tenant ne uske saamne bola tha ki building mein “hisab-kitab” ka kuch gadbad hai. Woh bas usse milne aayi thi, kyunki tenant ne use kaha tha—“Agar main kal tak na milun, storage room mat kholna. Pehle keys dekhna.” Mrs. Verma turant react nahi karti, bas handbag aur tight kar leti hai. Ye silence Anjali ko aur zyada pareshaan karta hai.

Phir twist ka pehla layer khulta hai. Anjali lock cylinder ko flashlight se inspect karti hai aur notice karti hai ki storage room ka lock recent nahi, balki intentionally replace kiya gaya hai. Teenon keys us lock mein fit hi nahi hoti. Mrs. Verma finally bolti hai, “Kyuki woh room ke liye keys nahi hain.” Uske calm chehre mein pehli baar ek crack aata hai. Farah usse ghoorti hai. Anjali register ke ek corner par chhupa hua duplicate apartment number dekhti hai—same flat number, par teen names. Missing tenant ne ek hi apartment ke andar teen separate identities ka record banaya tha: ek legal tenant, ek unofficial sublet, aur ek “visitor” jo saalon se wahin reh rahi thi. Teen keys in teen logon ke personal drawers, cupboards, aur hidden compartments ki thi—teen lives ka private lock system.

Ab sab kuch ulta pad jaata hai. Missing tenant koi seedha sa victim nahi tha; woh in teenon ke against evidence jama kar raha tha—illegal occupancy, forged entries, aur ek purana crime jo building ke maintenance funds se juda tha. Farah ka darr isliye tha kyunki usne apna naam register mein chhupaya tha. Mrs. Verma ka suspiciously tidy handbag isliye tha kyunki usmein missing tenant ke original papers the. Aur Anjali ko jo “three identical keys” mili thi, woh actually ek hi apartment number ke andar chhupi teen alag-alag sachchaiyon ka symbol thi.

Climax mein Anjali teenon ko ek line mein khada karke bolti hai ki storage room ka lock bas distraction tha. Asli mystery ye hai ki ek building ne ek apartment number ke neeche teen zindagiyan daba di thi—ek tenant, ek illegal occupant, aur ek system jo sab kuch manage karke bhi sabse zyada chhupa raha tha. Mrs. Verma finally apna handbag kholti hai: andar missing tenant ka diary, teen chhote envelopes, aur ek purani photo. Farah us photo mein khud ko pehchan leti hai. Missing tenant ne sabke khilaaf evidence nahi, balki unke liye escape route chhoda tha.

Last reveal mein Anjali samajh jaati hai: keys storage room ki nahi thi; woh un teen logon ke liye thi jo ek hi apartment number ke under alag-alag jhooth jee rahe the. Missing tenant ne teen keys isliye chhodi thi taaki sach khulne par har koi apni alag zindagi ka darwaza khol sake. Bulb ek aakhri baar jhapatta hai. Corridor mein silence girti hai. Farah ka darr, Mrs. Verma ka control, aur Anjali ki sharp aankh—teenon ek hi moment mein samajh jaate hain ki building ka sabse bada lock storage room nahi, unka apna banaya hua jhooth tha.