

**darna zaroori hai**  
'Main Story'

Screenplay & Dialogues  
by  
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**EXT. JUNGLE - TWILIGHT HOUR**

A group of children aged between 10 and 12 years are trekking through a dense jungle. In the lead is a confident boy ASHU (12). The other four are - a sissy boy ROHAN (11), a short-haired tomboy girl PRIYA (12), a cute and pretty long-haired girl EISHA (11) and a plain-looking plump girl ADITI (11). The sun is about to set and the sky is turning dark. As Ashu moves ahead confidently, the others begin to feel uneasy.

ADITI                      It's getting dark and creepy yaar...

EISHA                     Haan, Ashu abhi vaapas hotel chalna chahiye hum logon ko...

ROHAN                    Haan yaar...Sir ko bhi bata ke nahin aayein hain hum...

Ashu turns around, annoyed.

ASHU                      Yaar saal mein ek baar hoti hai school picnic, aur voh bhi tum log hotel mein baith ke bitaana chaahte ho?

PRIYA                     Lekin Ashu...

ASHU                     (to Priya)  
Kya Lekin...tera hee idea tha naa trekking pe jaane ka...  
(to Rohan)  
Aur tu...tu hee keh raha tha naa...explore karte hai area ko...dekhte hain ke aaju-baaju kya hai...  
(to all of them)  
Toh abhi kya ho gaya? .

ROHAN                    Voh...er...

Ashu gives the sissy Rohan a sharp look and moves ahead. Ashu is clearly the leader of the group. The others look at each other, they shrug and follow him. The tomboy girl Priya is nearly as bold as Ashu but the other three are a little afraid of the jungle around.

Moving ahead through the forest, the children soon come upon a huge abandoned house, built right in the middle of the jungle. Priya is excited as she sees this house.

PRIYA                     (to the others)  
Guys check this out...  
Bhoot bangla hai yahan toh...

EISHA                    Shut up... it's such a nice bungalow... hai naa Aditi?

ADITI                    Maybe...

EISHA                    I wonder...kaun rehta hoga yahan?

ROHAN                    (gulps)  
I wonder... kaun rehta bhi hoga yahan nahin?

The other children laugh at Rohan.

ADITI                    (in an appealing manner)  
Ashu...abhi kaafi time ho gaya hai yaar...chalte hain jaldi vaapas,  
varna Sir daatenge...

Ashu nods agreeing now. He turns around. The other four turn around too, but as they begin to walk away, it begins to rain. The children curse and they run for cover for the nearest shelter around – the large abandoned house.

The children run into the arched verandah of the large house and they huddle up near the door trying to keep themselves dry. The rain soon breaks into a storm.

ADITI                    (reacting to the storm)  
Oh shit yaar!  
Abh hum hotel vaapas kaise jaayenge?

Knowing that they have nothing else to do but wait, Rohan leans his back against the large door of the house. The door suddenly gives way and opens up making Rohan fall right inside the house. The others look at Rohan and laugh. Rohan is inside the house now, on the ground. The other four enter the house to help him up.

## **INT. INSIDE BUNGALOW - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT**

As the children enter the house, we are introduced to the ambience of the house. It's a very old house built in the early nineteenth century. But it is not abandoned. It seems clean, neat and maintained well. The five kids begin to look around in awe admiring this ancient house.

EISHA                    (in awe)  
Itna bada ghar....kiska hoga yeh ghar?

Outside, it is still raining very heavily. So they begin walking around this house to kill their time. While looking around the house, the sissy boy Rohan's gaze falls on an old wooden cupboard, the cupboard's doors are slightly open, suddenly the cupboard doors move. Rohan

frowns. Rohan begins to wonder if there is someone inside the cupboard. As he steps up to take a closer look, the cupboard suddenly opens (**Beat!**) and something flies right out at Rohan's face. But it's only a pigeon. Rohan laughs at his own stupidity and he turns back to his friends but (**Beat!**) an old woman is standing there and staring down at him.

OLD WOMAN            Kisse milna hai?

The old lady has white hair, a heavily wrinkled face and is draped in a white sari. She has a regal appearance.

Seeing that Rohan has been caught by the owner of the house, Ashu walks up to the old lady and explains:

ASHU                    Aunty we are sorry...voh kya hai ke baarish hone lagee thi...aur koi jageh nahin thi...isliye hum...

OLD LADY            (looking at each of them)  
Tum sab ko...is ilaake mein...maine pehle toh kabhi nahin dekha hai...

ROHAN                Aunty hum log Bombay se aaye hain...school ke annual picnic ke liye...vahaan peeche resort mein thehri hai humari poori class...

OLD LADY            Achcha, achcha...voh cottages waalle hotel mein?

ROHAN                (nervously)  
Haan...er...vahi...

The old lady nods understanding their position due to the rain.

OLD LADY            Thik hai...tumlog ruk jaoo yahan kuch der, jab tak baarish nahin rukti...

The kids happily thank her for her kindness.

ADITI                    (innocently, to the old lady)  
Vaise...Daadi maa aap itne bade ghar mein akeli rehti hain?

OLD LADY            (sweetly)  
Nahin beta...mera naukar Sukhiya rehta hai mere saath...ghar ki dekh-bhaal vahi karta hai...lekin aaj shyaam ko...

**FLASHBACK:**

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The old lady is sitting on her rocking chair and weaving a sweater. Her servant boy SUKHIYA (22) comes in.

SUKHIYA           Jee Maaji, bulaaya aapne?

OLD LADY           Sukhiya beta...(holding out a medicine bottle)  
...yeh waalli dawa hai ghar mein?

SUKHIYA           (looking at the medicine bottle)  
Nahin Maaji...yeh toh khatam ho gayi hai, main shaher jaake dawa ki sheeshi le aataa hoon...

OLD LADY           Thik hai beta...lekin jaldi vaapas aanaa, haan...

SUKHIYA           Main yoon gaya, aur yoon aayaa...

The old lady coughs.

**FLASHBACK ENDS:****INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The old lady is still coughing as she informs the kids between her coughs:

OLD LADY           Jaakar toh kaafi time ho gaya usse...lekin kambhakt ab tak pahoncha nahin...(sighs) thik hai...aa jaayega...

ADITI               (curious)  
Lekin Daadi maa...phir aise time pe...aapko itne bade ghar mein akele dar nahin lagta?

The old lady stares at Aditi and then she brings her face close to Aditi's face and says:

OLD LADY           Lagta hai beta... bahot dar lagta hai.

ASHU               (in his usual fearless manner)  
Kya aunty...darne ki kya baat hai yahan?

OLD LADY           Kyun beta...tumhe dar nahin lagta?

ASHU                      Kabhi bhi nahin...

ROHAN                     Sachi aunty...yeh toh kisee se bhi nahin darta...

OLD LADY                 Aur agar mein daraa doon toh?

ASHU                      (in a challenging manner)  
Koshish keejiye...

OLD LADY                 Thik hai phir...  
Main chhe kahaniyaan sunaungi tumhe...  
...jiske anth mein tum zaroor daroge...

The old lady brings her face even more closer to Ashu's and says:

OLD LADY                 Tumhara darna zaroori hai.

Ashu is undaunted.

OLD LADY                 Kaho, manzoor hai?

ASHU                      (undaunted)  
Manzoor hai.

OLD LADY                 Thik hai phir...chalo mere saath...

The old woman starts walking towards a rickety wooden staircase that leads up to the first storey of the bungalow. The children are hesitant. But Ashu begins to follow her. Seeing Ashu moving ahead, the other four also follow though unsure of what they are getting into.

## **INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The old lady slowly walks into a dark room lit only by a table lamp kept on a small wooden side-table. Next to the side-table is a rocking chair. The old lady sits down wearily on her chair as the kids enter the room a little tentatively.

OLD LADY                 Arey...baitho...baitho...khade kyun ho?

The children sit down on the ground surrounding the old lady's chair and they make themselves comfortable on the ground.

OLD LADY                 (asks Ashu)

Toh kaho...kahaniyaan shuru karein?

ASHU

Bilkul.

EISHA

(sweetly)

Jee...Dadimaa...shuru kejiye...

All the others also excitedly ask the old lady to start.

OLD LADY

Sabse pehle...main tumhe...

...Professor Chaturvedi ki kahani sunaati hoon...

FADE OUT

**STORY 1**

## INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The five children are listening mesmerized as the old lady concludes her first story. Suddenly a black cat runs past Eisha's back. Eisha gets a start and she screams out. The other kids laugh heartily at Eisha.

PRIYA                    Eisha toh billi se dar gayi!  
(laughs, teasing Eisha)

EISHA                    (embarrassed, defensive)  
Aye...please...I was just shocked haan...

They all laugh at her making fun of her.

EISHA                    (turns to the old lady)  
Err...Dadi maa...bathroom kahan hai?

All the other kids burst out laughing.

PRIYA                    Kyun Eisha, itna dar gayi kahani sunke?

They all laugh.

Eisha makes a face ignoring them.

The old lady smiles and points her finger near the door of the room.

OLD LADY                Bathroom vahan baahar hai...corridor ke anth mein.

Eisha gets up to go out to the toilet. But she is a little hesitant to step out into the dark bungalow all by herself.

PRIYA                    Eisha, main aaon tere saath?

EISHA                    Shut up...main akeli jaa sakti hoon...

To prove a point to them, Eisha walks out of the room and although she is afraid from inside, she steps into the darkness of the ancient bungalow.

## INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Eisha is walking very cautiously through the long and dark corridor. The little girl looks dwarfed inside this long corridor with high walls that are rough and grey, their paint worn out

a century ago. There are dark corners all along this corridor, these dark corners give us a feeling that something is just about to spring out anytime as Eisha walks past them. Walking ahead slowly and afraid of the dark, looking over her back at the dark corridor behind her constantly, Eisha finally reaches a wooden bathroom door at the extreme end of the corridor. Eisha keeps standing there looking at the closed door. She is afraid since she does not know what could spring from inside. Eisha musters courage and puts her hand out to open the door. After hesitating for a few seconds, she pushes the door open and she steps back half-expecting something to spring at her from inside. But the door opens only to reveal a dilapidated old bathroom inside. There is an old smoked mirror here in this bathroom along with a broken commode pot with an olden type of flush system. Eisha walks to the pot and is about to squat but she hesitates. She goes to the door of the bathroom and shuts it suspecting that Rohan or Ashu could have followed her till here.

### **INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Meanwhile, Eisha's four friends are getting impatient to hear the next story.

ADITI                      Dadimaa...aap agli kahani shuru keejiye naa...

### **INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Back in the toilet, Eisha has finished relieving herself. She straightens her clothes and she walks to the door to exit the toilet. But the door does not budge. Eisha reacts in surprise. She tries to open the door again. But the door does not budge.

EISHA                      (muttering to herself)  
Darwaza kyun nahin khul raha hai? Maine toh lock nahin kiya tha...

Eisha begins to struggle with the door, but it refuses to open or even move, as if some unseen force is holding it in place. Eisha begins to frantically bang the door screaming for her friends to rescue her.

### **INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

But her four friends are beyond earshot. The old lady decides the next story in her mind and she says to them:

OLD LADY                Thik hai, agli kahani hai... .

FADE OUT

**STORY 2**

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The children are not impressed with this story.

ASHU                      Kya aunty? Yeh bhi koi kahani thi?

We see Eisha in silhouette arriving very slowly near the door of the room. She walks in very slowly back to her place. Her body language is very slow and unnatural. She comes and sits quietly in her place, her gaze held down.

ROHAN                    Yaar...even I'll go to the loo and come...I was controlling actually...

The children laugh.

PRIYA                    Carefull haan Rohan...(giggles)

ADITI                    Rohan bathroom mein bhoot hai... (giggles)

**INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Rohan is slowly walking down the same corridor leading to the loo door. Reaching the bathroom door, Rohan tentatively enters.

**INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Having finished revealing himself, Rohan comes to the basin to wash his hands. There is a mirror in front of the basin. Rohan puts the tap on. But there is no water. The tap is dry.

ROHAN                    (muttering to himself)  
Paani nahin hai...

Rohan bends to see if there is another main valve under the basin. But he recoils back in horror as he sees a dead Eisha lying there under the basin, her stone dead eyes staring at his.

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

But Eisha is sitting here in this room with her friends who are as usual getting impatient for the next story.

ASHU                    Aunty jo jaata hai, usse jaane dejiye...aap kahaniyaan sunaati

raheeye...

OLD LADY

Hmm...thik hai...

FADE OUT

**STORY 3**

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

This story has scared Aditi, she tries to hide her dread by making loose talk.

ADITI                      Rohan ab tak aayaa kyun nahin?

PRIYA                      God knows...

Rohan (seen in silhouette) arrives at the door of the room. He enters the room walking in a slow, unnatural manner. As Rohan sits down on the ground, Eisha slowly turns her face towards Rohan. Eisha and Rohan exchange weird knowing smiles at each other.

OLD LADY                Toh chauthi kahani shuru karein?

Rohan and Eisha don't react. They are silent.

Ashu and Priya enthusiastically ask the old lady to begin the third story. But Aditi interrupts them:

ADITI                      ...Ek...ek minute Dadima...thoda paani milega...(pointing with her thumb to her mouth)

OLD LADY                Neeche right side ke room me Matka hai beta...

ADITI                      Neeche...(already frightened)

PRIYA                      Kyun dar gayi? Main chalu saath...(giggles)

ADITI                      Koi zaroorat nahin hai...main akeli jaa sakti hoon...

PRIYA                      Toh jaa naa...

ADITI                      Jaa rahi hoon...

Aditi walks to the door of the room. Looking at the darkness outside, she hesitates. She looks at her friends to see if anyone will come with her. Just then, Priya looks back and notices Aditi hesitating to go out. Aditi becomes conscious and she quickly walks out.

**INT. BUNGALOW - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT**

A shaky Aditi walks down the rickety stairs. She enters the open area of the house on the ground floor. She walks slowly and shakily towards the room to her right as the old lady had

described. Reaching near the large arched doorway of the room, Aditi peeks inside the room, afraid to enter. Then she musters courage and enters the room slowly. Suddenly, there is a loud noise, Aditi quickly turns around in shock but it is only the thunder. Aditi walks ahead. She comes to a closed door. She hesitates at first, then she slowly pushes the door open. The door opens and reveals a small godown type of room inside. There is a matka and a glass placed on a platform and on the wall behind the matka there is a large framed black & white photograph of an olden-time lady mounted on the wall. The lady in the photograph is from the eighteenth century, probably an ancestor to the old lady, she is wearing her sari with the sari's *pallu* taken over her head. This lady in the photograph has a sad expression on her face and she seems to be staring at Aditi as Aditi walks to the matka. Aditi is getting the creeps as she looks upon the lady's life-like photograph that is staring at her. But Aditi yet comes close to the matka and takes the glass, she looks at the photograph. Just to assure herself that she is not afraid, she points her tongue out and jeers at the lady in the photograph. The glass in her hand falls down. Aditi bends to pick up the glass. As she stands up after picking the glass again, she senses something. She does not dare to look up but she senses that there is something wrong with the photograph. Aditi slowly raises her head and peeks at the photograph. The lady in the photograph is smiling at Aditi.

#### **INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Ashu is appealing to the old lady.

ASHU                      Aunty, story no. four...

OLD LADY                Main bol-bol kar thak gayi...tum sunkar nahin thake..

ASHU                      (shakes his head indicating a "no")  
Uh...huh...

OLD LADY                Thik hai phir...jaisi tumhari marzi...abh main tumhe ek film director  
Karan Chopra ki kahani sunaati hoon...

FADE OUT

**STORY 4**

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Aditi (seen in silhouette) returns to the door of the room, her body language is slow and unnatural. Looking at her, Ashu says:

ASHU                      Aditi, you missed it... achchi story thi yeh...

PRIYA                     (mocking)  
Arey good she missed it...varna dar jaati thi bechari...

Aditi replies, her head held low and her voice very subdued.

ADITI                      Kya dar jaati thi? Neeche tak akeli jaa ke aa gayi main...tere mein himmat hai kya?

PRIYA                      Excuse me...tere se pehle main neeche jaane wali thi...ok?

The tomboy Priya gets up, just to prove a point.

PRIYA                      Daadima, zara main bhi paani pee ke aati hoon...

OLD LADY                (with concern)  
Sambhal ke jaanaa beta...

PRIYA                      Jee, Daadima...

**INT. BUNGALOW - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT**

The tomboy Priya is absolutely unafraid. She coolly walks down the stairs and she reaches the ground floor of the bungalow. But as she is about to enter the room to the right which Aditi had entered, the lights go off.

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The table lamp in the old lady's room goes off. The children curse.

ASHU                      Light chali gayi...

OLD LADY                Is area mein bijlee aati aur jaati rehti hai.

**INT. BUNGALOW - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT**

Priya, now caught in pitch darkness on the ground floor of the bungalow begins to feel uneasy. She looks around her and she sees a small kerosene lamp kept on a table nearby. Priya begins walking to the lamp. Priya comes close to the lamp. But as she reaches out with her hand towards the lamp, the lamp goes off too. Priya curses and slowly walks back to the door of the room. The room is now pitch dark from the inside. Priya is afraid.

PRIYA (muttering to herself)  
It's so dark inside...should I go in or not?

As Priya struggles with her fear, she does not realize that there is something behind her. We do not see this 'something', we only see its shadow on the ground creeping up to Priya from behind. The shadow seems to be that of an old woman with long open hair. Before Priya realizes it, the shadow comes up to Priya from behind and grabs her.

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Priya returns to the room her body language slow and unnatural. She comes and quietly sits down with the others. The room is pitch-dark now, the visibility is almost nil. Ashu is unaware of what is going on around him since he can see his friends and the old lady only as odd shapes in the darkness now.

ASHU Aunty, light ho naa ho, stories chaalu rakheeye naa aap...kahani toh hum apne kaanon se sunte hain naa...andhere se kya fark padta hai? Aap kahaniyaan continue keejiye please...

OLD LADY (nods in agreement)  
Thik hai...agli kahani hai...Ajay Doshi ki...

FADE OUT

**STORY 5**

**INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

OLD LADY (sighs)  
Thak gayi main toh...chalo shukra hai, khatam ho gayi saari kahaniyaan...

PRIYA (in a cold, low voice)  
Dekha daadima...Ashu abh bhi nahin daraa...kyun Ashu?

ASHU  
Kahani kitni bhi daraawni kyun naa ho? Darna zaroori thodi naa hai.

OLD LADY (conceding defeat)  
Chalo tum jeete...main haari...

ASHU  
Lekin Aunty...aapne toh sirf paanch kahaniyaan sunaayi hain, ek kahani toh baaki hai abhi...

OLD LADY  
Beta...tum paanch nahin, chhe kahaniyaan sun chuke ho...

ASHU  
Voh kaise...?

OLD LADY  
Zaraa thik se yaad karo...

ASHU  
Nahin pakka, aapne sirf paanch kahaniyaan sunaayi hain.

OLD LADY  
Beta, sabse darawni kahaani main tumhe neeche darwaaze ke paas hee sunaa chuki hoon...(begins to laugh like a witch)

Ashu is puzzled now.

ASHU  
Yeh kaunsi kahani hai?

OLD LADY  
Voh kahani...meri aur Sukhiya ki?

ASHU  
Aapki aur Sukhiya ki kahani? Aunty main kuch samjhaa nahin...

OLD LADY  
Light aane do, sab samajh jaaoge.

Ashu looks out of the window and notices that the rain has stopped.



staring at him. The old lady begins to reach out for Ashu with her bony hands. There is no place for Ashu to back off now. He succumbs, begins to cry and begins sliding down the door as the old lady reaches for him.

#### **EXT. BUNGALOW EXTERIORS - DAY**

CRANE DOWN from the morning sky to the bungalow. There are people and policemen gathered around the bungalow now. A reporter gets off from a news channel car. He walks towards another man who is standing with his back towards camera and speaking to the people and the policemen. As this man turns around, we see he is none other than SUKHIYA (the old lady's servant seen in the flashback). But he is very old not young like seen in the flashback.

REPORTER (to Sukhiya)  
Tum hee is bungley ke caretaker ho?

SUKHIYA (humbly)  
Jee saahab...

REPORTER  
Is bungley mein rehta kaun hai?

SUKHIYA  
Saahab bunglaah toh saalon se khaali padaa hai...

REPORTER  
Khaali padaa hai...?

SUKHIYA  
Haan saahab...ek zamaane mein hamari boodhi maalkin raha karti thi yahan...

REPORTER  
Toh ab kahan rehti hain voh?

SUKHIYA (in a matter-of-fact manner)  
Voh toh...saalon pehle guzar chuki hain...

REPORTER  
Oh...aur kaisi hui thi unki maut?

SUKHIYA  
Bas saahab...ek roz dawa laane ko bheja tha mujhe...lekin jab tak main lauta voh dum tod chuki theen.

REPORTER  
Aur unke bache vagerah...voh nahin rehte yahan?

SUKHIYA  
Unka koi nahin tha.  
Isliye bachon se bada lagaav tha unhe.

Yahan aas-pados ke bachon ko...bade shaunk se kahaniyaan sunaaya karti thi voh...

Kaash unka koi apna bacha hota, yehi aas lekar maareen theen bechari...

The reporter begins reporting into his camera.

REPORTER            Mumbai se kuch door is holiday destination par ek dukh-daayak ghatna ghati hai, yahan is bungley se paanch nanhe bachon ke shav baraamaat hue hain.

We see policemen and ambulance staff carrying the dead bodies of the five children (covered by white sheets) out of the bungalow and into the ambulance.

REPORTER            Aashcharya ki baat yeh hai ke in panchon ki mrityu, dil ki dhadkan rukh jaane ki vajeh se hui hai. Yahan jo doctor maujood hain unki raay mein itni kam aayu ke bacho ki dil ki dhadkan rukne ka kaaran sirf ek ho sakta hai...khauff yaani bhay...yaan phir seedhi-seedhi bhasha mein - Dar.

#### **INT. OLD LADY'S ROOM - DAY**

As the reporter talks into his camera, we see Ashu standing near the window of the old lady's room and looking down at the reporter. Ashu turns away from the window and walks to the centre of the room where his four friends are sitting and listening to stories from the old lady. Ashu comes and sits down with them. They all laugh and begin to joke amongst themselves as the old lady continues to narrate stories to them. The old lady is really happy now. She is lonely no more.

END CREDITS