

Mystery Fiction Excerpt

Shadows of Truth

The room was immersed in darkness. The clock hands were striking twelve, and Neerja was working, staring at her laptop screen. Suddenly her mobile vibrated. Voicemail notification from an unknown number.

She was startled. Who could be calling at this time? Hesitatingly she pressed play.

“Neerja...” The voice was slow and trembling, as if someone was hiding in the shadow of fear. “I have such evidence... which, if revealed, will remove the masks of big faces. If something happens to me... then this message itself is my testimony. The old cupboard of my house... in its lower compartment... everything is there...”

The voice suddenly broke and there was silence.

Neerja’s fingers became cold. In her profession, one would hear many rumours, but this was something different. So clear, so urgent—as if death was standing in front of her.

The phone was still in her hand when the screen flashed again. The same number... this time a message with just one word—

“Run.”

Her heart began to beat faster. When she looked out of the window, the street was deserted, but she felt as if someone’s eyes were fixed on her.

The morning news turned her suspicions into reality. The same man—Ashok Verma, a former government employee—was found dead in his flat. The police called it a “heart attack,” but Neerja knew this was no ordinary death.

The question now was—should she reach that cupboard and reveal the truth?

Or... should she heed the warning of that one word—“Run”?

In the silence of the room, Neerja’s phone started vibrating again. This time, only her name was written on the screen.

Neerja.

Her breath caught.