

THE GAME OF TRPs

*Text and Performance: Western
Performance, Theories and Practice*



Submitted to:
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Casting:

Narrator 1- Geetika Singh

Narrator 2- Sejal Bhashani

Khabri 1 (Saurav) - Shalini Gupta

Khabri 2 (Anil) - Shivani Pokhriyal

Editor - Aahana Tayal

Journalist 1 - Reshu Singh

Journalist 2 - Mallika Dembla

Journalist 3- Pooja Garg

Friend 1 - Pragya Raj

Friend 2 - Simran Ahlawat

Friend 3 - Shivani Tyagi

Sanjay - Prashasti Choudhary

Rishika - Apoorvanshu Sahasi

Directors:

Yukti Anand, Aparna verma

Co-ordinators:

Reshu Singh, Mallika Dembla

Scriptwriters:

Ishika Mishra, Prashasti Choudhary

SCENE 1

J1: Hello?

Saurav: Hello ma'am, main Saurav bol raha hun – aapka khabri! Yahan Firozpur mein abhi abhi ek Kisan Rajkishore ne apni jaan le li. Is baar uski kheti kharab nikli. Usne is chakkar mein kafi loan liya aur chuka nahin paya. Aaj Thakur aaye the uske ghar apna paisa vapas lene. Uske ghar kaafi tod fod hui. Parivar mein uske chaar log hain – teen bacche hain aur ek patni.

J1: Achha theek hai, achi news hai, main baat karungi apne editor se. Kya naam bataya tumne aur kaun se gaon ka hai woh Kisan?

Saurav: Uh...ma'am Rajkishore, aur Firozpur gaon se.

J1: Okay!

(Knocking on the door)

J1: Ma'am, may I come in?

Editor: Yes, please come in.

J1: *Ma'am ek news aayi hai. Firozpur gaon mein ek Rajkishore naam ke Kisan ne suicide kar liya hai because uski kheti acchi nahin hui. Mujhe lagta hai we should cover this news.*

Editor: This is a joke, like you're kidding me, right? I mean this has to be a joke only! Do you not know that these things happen every year? What's so new about this, and if we show these things, who is going to watch our show? It's like everyday some farmer commits suicide, so will you go and cover each news?

J1: *But, ma'am yahi toh aaj ki reality hai humari country ki.*

Editor: It's a business, Reshu. We need TRPs to give you your salaries. Reality se TRP nahin aati hai. I want some spice. Get me some gossip and don't bring such news to me next time onwards – please! I have all sorts of work to do, and if you bring something like this again you might get demoted. Do not forget that.

(Knocking on the door)

J2: Ma'am, may I come in?

Editor: Yes, come on in.

J2: *Abhi abhi pata chala hai ki ek celebrity apna brand launch kar raha hai. I guess we should cover this news, Ma'am.*

Editor: *Kaunsa celebrity and what brand?*

J2: Ma'am, Viraj Singh, and his brand is 'Stay wild'.

Editor: Hmm, Viraj Singh, huh? Celebrity *toh achha hai*, renowned *bhi hai*. Brand seems pretty cool, too. Undoubtedly masala hai is news mein. We should definitely cover this. Great work, Mallika. Aur Reshu, *seekho isse kuchh!*

J1: Okay ma'am. Sorry.

J1: Hello!

Khabri 2: *Ma'am, ek news laya hun. Bhewani gaon mein ek kisaan ne aatm hatya kar li h. Bahut saalon ka karz tha uss par. Aap isey cover karo, breaking news hai!*

J1: *Listen, mujhe aaj ke baad aisi news ke liye call mat karna. News deni hai toh kuchh masaledar do, yeh kisanon ke baare mein cover kar ke kuchh nahi milega humein – hum social workers nahi hain, news channel hai hamara.*

Khabri 2: *Lekin Ma'am, aap pura toh suno, bahaut TRP milegi, yakeen maano mera-*

J1: *Tumhein samajh nahi aaya? I don't want this category of news, theek hai?*

Khabri 2: Okay Ma'am. Samajh gaya.

(Scene ends)

Narrator's monologue:

How many times have we heard the statement, “The sheer suddenness of the move”? – But is journalism really sudden and not strategically planned? Does it really cover what needs to be shown, or do they turn a blind eye to the real issues? Today, Journalism has become a source of comedy and comedians are showing reality. In this game of TRP who is to be blamed? Channels which show such news and decide what not to show based on their biases, or the audience who choose to see such gossip munging news?

SCENE2

(F1: Friend 1)

(F2: Friend 2)

(F3: Friend 3)

F1: *Arey yaar, woh wala channel laga jis pe kutta billi wala entertainment chalta hai!*

F2: *Haan yaar vaise bhi bore ho rahe hain. Aur din bhi kuch khaas nahi gaya...thoda toh hasu main.*

F3: *Theek hai lagata hun. Yahin toh hum jaiso ka comedy circus hai. Ek toh yeh remote bhi nahi chalta.*

F1: *Arey laga de jaldi se bhai!*

F3: *Arey sabar kar, laga raha hun. Ek teri zabaan aur ek Alka Ma'am ke assignments Shatabdi ki tarah chalte hain. Dekh abhi chalega.*

(F3 presents screen showing the video)

Journalist in the video:

J3: *“Kya aapne dekha is billi ka khauf?”*

Ek kutte ko bhi nahi kiya maaf!

Dhyaan se dekhiye is billi ko,

Jisne dikhaya ek kutte ko aisa khaufnaak show.

-Rooh kaanp gai thi uss kutte ki!”

(Journalist’s voice fading in the background)

(Friends laughing in the background)

F3: *Kaash rewind ka option hota bro live television par.*

F1: *Sahi mein bhai, maza hi aa jata!*

(Scene ends)

Narrator's monologue:

If you think we have shot the video we presented, well, it's not the case. We borrowed it from YouTube to put forward the dilemma of the entire situation. The same audience which questions the media and the journalists – when will they start questioning themselves? When will they realise that in this game of TRP, the audience is equally to be blamed. Who will make them realise that news should never be a source of entertainment, but it should be an unbiased source of information for the common people. This just brings us to one conclusion that we are hypocrites in disguise of the accuser. Audience also has to stop playing the victim card. However, hypocrisy doesn't end only with the audience; channels never lag behind in this pretentious and deceitful game.

SCENE 3:

(A regular day in a household.)

Sanjay- Rishika, aaj ka newspaper dekha kya? Aur yaar mera chasma bhi nahi mil raha hai.

Rishika- I think I forgot to pick it up from the door. Bhaiya chhor ke gaye honge. Please tum utha lo.

Sanjay- Woh toh thik hai? Chasma?

Rishika- Sanjay, you must have left it on the night table itself. Please check properly.

Sanjay- Oh okay! Rishika, did you watch any news regarding farmers on the television?

Rishika- No, I didn't.

Sanjay (mockingly)- Are you sure you didn't miss it while watching TV?

Rishika- Come on, Sanjay. *Poore din TV thodi dekhti hun main*. Tell me what's the news about?

Sanjay- Alright, alright! It says that there are three bills that have been passed, aimed to change the way agriculture produce is marketed. They were passed by voice-vote in both Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha; and, uh, well it is a long article, but what's interesting is...

Rishika- Yeah, go on!

Sanjay- Haan, the great MSP debate. Farmers are protesting because they feel the need to protect the Minimum Support Price and they are threatened by the new laws.

Rishika- Sanjay, I am following but I'm not sure I completely understand the details.

Sanjay- Then start reading newspapers man!

Rishika- Uh huh, very funny, but it's terrible that they don't show such news on news channels. All I see is Viraj Singh on the television!

Sanjay- Yeah, one of those terrible things! Okay, I gotta go bathe now. I'm already so late for the office.

Narrator's monologue:

There are two sides of a coin – some people long for entertainment, while others genuinely want to know the reality. We see how we get an insight into the farmer's bill in this scene through the newspaper, but like Rishika, we as an audience do not understand it completely too. However, only if we could see these news being explained in simpler terms on news channels, the "common man" could have had the comprehension of the reality – that's the influence of the media – but only if that influence is used appropriately. Now that the news is trending in newspapers and on their respective sites, what will be the response of the mainstream media?

(Scene ends)

SCENE 4:

(Editor going through clippings while murmuring to herself):

Damn, look at these farmers getting all the attention in the world! I should've covered this news first.

Editor- Reshu, can you come to my cabin?

(Reshu enters)

Reshu- Yes, ma'am?

Editor- *Achha*, remember you talked about the farmer? Can you propose to arrange an interview with one such farmer in that area? *Mai personally interview karungi unhein.*

Reshu- *Haan ma'am woh toh khabriyon ko bol dungi, lekin kuchh hua kya?*

Editor- Read these clips yaar! *Inn site walon ne farmers ko itna trend kara diya hai.* Suddenly the whole world is revolving around them. So, whatever is trending has to be covered by our channel na!

Reshu- Hmm, yes, ma'am. You're right.

Editor- Yeah, so I want you to inform everybody to stop working on whatever they are working on and start covering the cities where farmers are protesting.

Reshu- Okay, ma'am. Anything else?

Editor- No, just get me in touch with one of the farmers as soon as possible. You may leave. Start working on it.

(Scene ends)

(Narrator's monologue)

Shakespeare once said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." - Who knew the contemporary journalists would be the living proof of this statement? The same editor who denied any ounce of her precious attention to the farmers is now craving their attention. Life is a circle, we know, but journalists try to form a synthetic circle of their own, by not focusing on the actual circumference of the real world. It is sad, but for how long would we continue blaming them? We saw how the audience plays an equally heavy role in deciding what is to be addressed. Again the same question - Who is to be blamed? We want you to think about it the next time you raise your finger on a social issue - because we are "all" the players here.

(Play ends)

Source of the YouTube video: https://youtu.be/KMvwfLQhA_Y