

Episode -31 (AI based Story)

Someone is Always Around

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Characters:

Dr. Sneha: 45 years. Deputy Director. Intelligence Bureau

Raghavan : 55 years. Deputy Director. Intelligence Bureau

Sunil Kumar: 55 years. Director. Intelligence Bureau

Mr. Nandu: 19 years. College student and Partner at a start-up company

Miss Ashu: 19 years. College student and Partner at a start-up company

Mr. Om: 18 years. College student and Partner at a start-up company

2 other officers. Voice 1 and Voice 2.

Scene 1

(Indistinct conversation as if some people are conversing in a large hall)

Sunil: Ladies and Gentlemen...I beg your pardon...Dr Sneha, you are the only lady present here today...so, Dr Sneha and Gentlemen, as all of you are aware the Intelligence Bureau is passing through trying times. As Director of the Bureau I request all of you to be patient. Dr. Sneha....

Sneha: As you all know, we are awaiting the arrival of the two entrepreneurs who run an AI or Artificial Intelligence- start-up. They will assist us to find a solution to our problem by using technology that is powered by artificial intelligence.

Raghavan: You mean Aviral and Ashu! They are the ones who have launched the start-up company named Airspy, haven't they? They have provided effective solutions to many of our problems in the past.

Sunil: Yes, Aviral and Ashu. Yet somehow I prefer to use the name Nandu instead of Aviral. Well, these two boys are coming here straight from college...they know nothing about our problem...we will brief them once they reach.

Raghavan: Nandu is your son, isn't he Dr. Sneha?

Sunil: Yes, Raghavan. Nandu is the smart son of our Deputy Director Madam, Dr. Sneha. On his own initiative and using his own capabilities, he has launched his own company at such a young age...the best part is that the Government has utilized many of the solutions his company has presented.

Voice 1: And he has also received the President's Award for Innovation, hasn't he?

Sneha: Yes...He got the award last year.

Raghavan: That is great! Didn't you also receive the National Medal last year for successfully finding answers to many of our nation's security challenges?

Sneha: Yes, Mr Raghavan, I did.

Sounds of a door opening

Voice 2: Sir, Mr Aviral and Miss Ashu are here.

Sunil: Send them in.

Sounds of two pairs of feet walking.

Sunil: Come in Aviral. ..I mean Nandu! Ashu, come in. Come sit.

Sounds of chairs being pushed.

Sunil: The photos that are being projected on the screen belong to two men you have never met and do not know. About twenty years back, these two traitors...Rajan and Rajat Kumar were arrested for passing on confidential documents to our enemies. They were both young men at the time. Their activities hurt national interests and directly led to many of our colleagues being martyred.

Ashu: Are these two still in your custody?

Sneha: No, Ashu...these two were killed in a bomb blast in the court premises where they had been produced as part of the judicial process. This happened about 17 years ago.

Nandu: So, why are we remembering these traitors...they are dead!

Sunil: The blast was so powerful that sixteen people perished and the remains were mangled beyond recognition. Identification was impossible.

Ashu (with emphasis): Do you suspect these two are still alive?

Nandu: Ashu...if these two are still alive, then they continue to represent a threat...(to the officers) but you must have finished off their network when these two were first caught, Right?

Sneha: These two were high-ranking Intelligence officers with access to information that would greatly profit our enemy nations. Let me tell you that these two officers had been instrumental in setting up our nuclear command.

Nandu and Ashu (simultaneously): Nuclear command!

Ashu (angrily): How can the nation remain secure if there are traitors in the Intelligence Agency!

Sunil: Yes Ashu, that is indeed a misfortune. However, we suspect that these two traitors are still hands in glove with our enemies. They are working with them...while living amongst us... to launch an attack on our nation as well as trying to disable and destroy our nuclear missiles.

Ashu: So...so...how can we help in all this?

Sneha: Well, we have identified their networks. However, even you are aware that no network can be completely eliminated nor can each and every operative be caught. Still, we can keep all members of the network under surveillance.

Nandu: Yes, I am aware of this...but what happened suddenly to make you think that these two are still active? Can't it be some other people?

Raghavan: You two provided us with an A.I-enabled software earlier, remember? It could help us to monitor the way a person spoke...that is... it could track voice modulation when the speaker was sad...or happy...or even angry. It could compute all these variables in tonal quality and almost instantly identify an individual even if attempts were made to disguise the voice. Your software recognizes an individual by computing all these parameter, doesn't it?

Ashu: Yes Sir...that was our Air Voice software...and we got a government award for it too!

Raghavan: Yes, that is the software I am referring to...well, for the past three months your Air Voice software has been relaying messages to us in Rajat's voice...although I must admit the voice sounds somewhat different to us. However, the software has consistently and confidently identified the voice as being Rajat's. The message is troubling as it is a broadcast to our enemy nations about the locations of our nuclear missiles.

Nandu (somewhat surprised): Is that so!

Sunil: Yes, Nandu. Unfortunately it is true...we have intercepted three messages in Rajat's voice. The information in these messages is correct. The location of these missiles is known to just two people. You know both these people....They are none other than Dr. Sneha and me.

Nandu and Ashu: OH! But how is that possible? How can the information have been leaked by you two?

Sneha: Yet, that seems to be the case! The locations of those missiles that I knew about and Sunil Sir knew too were those that were part of Rajan and Rajat's projects. The missiles were not kept there at that point in time. Only future planning had been done; because then, we did not even have these missiles. Even if you assume that Rajat is alive and he simply guessed the location...you still have to agree that he has been incredibly accurate about the location.

Sunil (grave tone): Very right Dr. Sneha. However, what is even more dangerous is that yesterday we had a confidential meeting which just four Intelligence Officers and the Minister attended. The locations of a few other missiles and some sensitive topics were discussed. Today, your Air Voice software has intercepted another message relaying all this information to the enemy!

Ashu: Oh! Another message.

Raghavan: Yes, another message...but this time the software has identified the voice as being that of Rajan's. It is not Rajat's but Rajan's.

Nandu and Ashu (simultaneously): What!!

Nandu: But...how is it possible that a person is not even in the room yet has access to all the information: It is not possible to plant spy cameras or surveillance microphones etc., in any room in this office. These rooms are swept for "bugs" multiple times every day. Electronic equipment is also deployed to prevent snooping activities.

Ashu (thoughtful tone): Is it possible that this is the work of someone who was present in that room that day?

Sunil: You may be thinking that the traitor is one of us...and Yes, I agree with this suspicion of yours. Therefore, we have not only carried our surveillance of all our officers but also temporarily suspended those officers whose information has been leaked. They are suspended from their respective projects till our investigation is completed. We are present...here...before you.

Sneha: Yes, Any one of us maybe the traitor. And till the name of the traitor is revealed, no one will be allowed to leave the room. Oh! And we all gave samples of our voices which were analyzed by Air Voice software but it has not identified any sample as being that of either Rajat or Rajan.

Ashu: Ok. How can this be possible, Aunty...I mean this is impossible! If Air Voice has identified a voice then, there is no scope of mistakes.

Nandu (contemplative tone): It is possible Ashu...who knows but a person may have three voices!

Voice1: Eh? What do you mean?

Nandu: Nothing...nothing. Just thinking aloud. Well, tell us...what is it that you want us to do?

Sunil: I want you to help us catch Rajat and Rajan or whoever the traitor is! And it goes without saying, neither you nor Ashu can leave this room till the traitor is identified.

Ashu: Oh...but why?

Nandu: Never mind, Ashu...there is no need to be frightened. This is for our country. **(To Sunil)** Sunil Sir, we need our friend Om to join us and yes, we need some extra equipment too.

Sunil: No problem Nandu. We get Om to join us and we will arrange to get the equipment too.

Scene 2

Scene-change music.

Rapid footsteps

Nandu: Come in Om...come in....**(To Sunil)** Sir, This is Om. Om let me explain.

Music

Om (Slowly): Oh...so you are in trouble and you got me into trouble too...I am going home.

Nandu: It isn't like that Om. I have an idea but I need your help to carry it out. I thought we could tryout the Netra software that you developed. Test it you know!

Om: Netra software...Ah! NOW, I understand.

Nandu (Loudly): Sunil Sir, we need a separate room. We need to deploy the equipment there and we need to set up five cameras in this hall...in front of a chair. The control to the connections will be in our room.

Sunil: No problem. This room is actually is a suite and so, you can use the attached room.

Sneha: Om, what does the Netra software do?

Ashu: Aunty, Om has developed a new algorithm according to which the machine or the software works...

Raghavan: Looks like it is A.I enabled software.

Sneha: Yes, Mr Raghavan. Nandu has always had a fascination for A.I. And these days A.I is powering a host of technologies especially those that are self-governing and can carry out actions without human intervention...say like a driverless car or precision-surgery being done by robots.

Sunil: Correctly said, Sneha. These days A.I. is everywhere; be it when employers look for new recruits or when new markets are surveyed...everything depend on A.I.

Scene 3

Scene change music

Sounds of equipment being installed. Chairs etc., being dragged

Ashu: We are on a sticky wicket all right...these people are suspecting Sneha aunty as well.

Om: Yes...and why not when the Director has not excused himself from the list of suspects! And look at the photo of Rajan and Rajat that they have provided...these photos are twenty years old!

Nandu: **(Sound of the monitor being clicked ON):** Om, my brother...all this is for our country!

Ashu **(Computers whirring):** I have input the data of all the employees in my system...the A.I-based software is reading the database now. It will sequester all those files that show anomalies of any kind. Say, a sudden fluctuation in weight...or a change in normal gait or prolonged unexplained absences.

Nandu: Good. Om...go and fix those five cameras in the hall.

Om: Sure...be back in a jiffy.

Ashu: Wait, Om. Let me get the chair. You can then focus on it. Let's go.

Scene 4

Scene-change music

Ashu: Dr. Sneha please come and sit on the chair.

Sounds of sandals

Om: Dr Sneha, did you ever share the location of the missiles with anyone?

Sneha: No.

Ashu: Ok, You may go Dr. Sneha.

Raghavan (softly, almost to himself): What are these teenagers up to? And they posed just one question to Dr. Sneha.

Suddenly Nandu's voice resonates in the hall: Shri Raghavan.

Sound of a chair being pushed back.

Nandu: Where did you serve before you came to the headquarters?

Raghavan (rough tone): Kerala. I was in the Regional Intelligence Branch.

Ashu: When did you join the Headquarters?

Raghavan (thinks before replying): Ahhh....about 12 years ago.

Om (whispers): Ashu, focus the camera properly...Nandu, check the screen.

Nandu (softly): Oh! Then loudly: Raghavanji, where is your wife? How many children do you have?

Raghavan (Without hesitation and normally): I had two daughters. My wife and daughters died in a boating accident in Kerala.

Om (Quietly): Ashu, Nnadu...take a look at this data.

Raghavan (almost shouting): What sort of questions are these? You must have accessed the information in my file anyway. Sunil Sir, why have you invited these kids on Dr Sneha's recommendation? They will not be able to prove anything. We must carry out a proper investigation. We are merely wasting time.

Nandu (Patiently and politely): Raghavan ji, kindly answer our questions. When did your wife and children die?

Raghavan (somewhat uncomfortably): A...a...about 15 years ago.

Om's voice echoes in the hall: Why did you kill Raghavan ji?

Suddenly there is confusion...everyone talks at the same time

Sunil (shouts): Arrest him.

Sounds of boots

Sunil: Catch him. Make him sit on the chair. Om, go on with your questions.

Om (Speaks fast and loudly): Look. This is you, Raghavan ji...you do not resemble your current self...what is your identity...go on...tell us.

Raghavan (Upset. Shouts): Yes, yes. I killed Raghavan.

Voice 1: If you are not Raghavan...then, who are you?

Nandu: He is Rajan.

Sneha: If he is Rajan...then, where is Raghavan?

Approaching footsteps

Nandu: Sunil Sir, this task would have taken much longer but we had some A.I – enabled software ready which helped us to fast track the job. A.I caught their falsehoods easily and helped us to spot the real face hiding behind the face created by plastic surgery.

Sunil: Plastic surgery...but how did you spot it, Nandu?

Ashu: Sir, Rajan altered his facial features to look like Raghavan. Or let us say he “borrowed” Raghavan’s face and adopted it as his own...whatever small discrepancies remained were explained as being aberrations because of the accident.

Sunil: Now, Rajan...you better come clean. You are well aware that we are quite capable of extracting the information from you...so it is better that you volunteer it.

Raghavan: I will tell you everything. That blast was engineered by foreign enemies. Rajat died in that blast. However, they managed to smuggle me, that is Rajan, out alive. They also managed to successfully execute the plan to ‘plant ’me in the Intelligence Bureau.

Sneha (Angrily): Plan, what plan?

Raghavan: Dr Sneha, according to the plan, they kidnapped an intelligence officer from Kerala...this was the real Raghavan. He was later murdered. My facial features were altered to resemble him. At that point of time, Raghavan and his family had been posted in Turkey. I was given adequate training and then sent back to Kerala...where the fake news was circulated that Raghavan’s family had perished in a boating accident. After some time, I was recalled to headquarters....I meaning Raghavan...of course. And I began to pass on classified information to the enemies of our country.

Sunil (Livid with anger): And how much were you paid to sell your country, Rajan?
(Shouts even louder): Deepak, take him into custody. Begin interrogation. I will join you shortly. You remain here, Dr. Sneha.

Departing footsteps

Sunil: Wow Sneha...you were correct. These kids really showed their worth...you were confident they would succeed. But Nandu, Ashu, Om...how did you do it?

Nandu: Sir, we have designed an A.I.-based system that can spot the physiological changes that take place when a person is lying. For example, it can spot the variation in body temperature, or changes in the rate of heartbeat. Sometimes, the tip of the nose begins to quiver because of suppressed excitement or anxiety. The software computes all these changes that it spots. We noted that Rajan scratched the tip of his nose...that alerted us.

Sneha: **(Perplexed tones):** How did you know it was Rajan...and what about the voices of Rajan and Rajat?

Om: Aunty, there are some facial features that never change...say for example, the space between the nose and the eyes or even the pattern of the iris. So, it does not matter if the photo is two decades old or a childhood photo...artificial intelligence cannot be fooled. It computes correctly and identifies the person without fail...even if the person has taken recourse to plastic surgery.

Ashu: Aunty, as far as the matter of Rajan's voice is concerned...this guy had got surgery done to his vocal cords such that it altered his voice. The two voices of Rajan and Rajat can easily be simulated using software that runs on A.I. Voices of Rajan and Rajat were deliberately used while passing on the messages. This was done to confuse and confound you. The rest ...well, you find out everything, won't you?

Nandu, Ashu and Om laugh.

Sunil: That we definitely will!

All laugh.

Nandu: There is one more point...these days these days face-recognition software uses A.I, no doubt but to make it more skilled we need more data...and this is what people are happily giving to companies.

Sunil: We are giving our personal data to companies? How so?

Nandu: Haven't you seen request from social media platform owners to submit our recent photos along with photos taken ten years ago? In our thirst to get many "Likes" we happily submit photos that are maybe two decades old. The company can now easily check its software using the before and after photographs we post. They can use these photographs to enhance the software they have developed.

Sunil: Ah! So, we are all helping the company. I will recommend that we use your Netra software in every airport, railway station and market place. Constant surveillance is necessary. Anyway, all of you...go home now. Rest. I will call you again in a couple of days. Dr. Sneha, thank you so much. You go home too. I need to go and meet Rajan now.

All: Good night, Sir.

Sneha: Well done, all of you. I will drop you home...you must be exhausted...you need to rest.

Om: I have told everyone at home that I will be staying over at Nandu's...so you will have to give me a special treat.

Sneha: That goes without saying. Collect your stuff while I go get the car.

Scene 5

Sound of the car moving swiftly.

Sneha (on phone): Yes, Manisa...good to know my husband has reached home...look, cook dinner for two extra guests. OK? And make kheer. Let me speak with my husband (**Speaks to her husband**): Yes, yes...it all went well. The three were awesome, here speak with them...Oh they are all fast asleep...you can chat with them once we reach. Suffice to say, they were instrumental in averting a major national danger...the times are changing...it belongs to this young generation or perhaps I should say it belongs to Artificial Intelligence!

Sneha laughs