

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THREE MEN AND A FILE

3 Male (M + M + M) | Genre: Mystery/Crime | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A dusty government archive room becomes a battlefield when an inspector, a retired clerk, and a journalist uncover a missing file split across three men. What begins as a hunt for scandal turns into a confession of guilt, protection, and a truth too personal to headline.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: stale, dusty, claustrophobic, with hard sunlight stripes creating a moral prison inside a government archive. • Thematic depth: truth is fragmented, memory is unreliable, and justice can be hidden inside compassion rather than exposed through spectacle. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens into a reveal-driven climax, with each beat escalating through silence, glances, and object-based discoveries. • Performance style: restrained, tense, and internal; the room should feel like it is listening to every breath. • Blocking philosophy: triangular power shifts around the desk and shelves, with each character controlling a different corner of the truth.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Inspector Devraj age: 40 look: Pressed shirt, clipped moustache, sharp eyes, controlled posture, authoritative but weathered by institutional secrecy. dramatic_arc: Begins as the law-bound interrogator, becomes the methodical decoder of clues, and ends as a man protecting a truth that should not become a case file. • character: Imtiaz age: 52 look: Thin frame, reading glasses, trembling fingers, retired clerk energy, fragile exterior with buried resolve. dramatic_arc: Starts evasive and frightened, appears to be hiding a mistake, then reveals himself as the keeper of the split file and the innocent clerk at the center of the cover-up. • character: Adil age: 34 look: Casual blazer, alert eyes, recorder in pocket, journalist confidence with a hungry, probing presence. dramatic_arc: Begins as an ambitious truth-hunter chasing a story, pushes hardest for exposure, and ends humbled when he realizes the real story is personal memory, not a headline.
FESTIVAL & AUDIENCE TARGET: Ideal for Short Film Festivals, Indie Showcases, and YouTube Creator Channels. Focus on tight performances, sound design, and authentic Hinglish dialogue delivery.

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ART, WARDROBE & PROP MASTER

1. SET DESIGN & SPATIAL DEPTH PLAN:

A dusty government office archive room with tall shelves packed tightly to the ceiling, creating vertical pressure and visual maze-like depth. The metal desk should feel cold, institutional, and slightly dented, with a worn archive ledger, a desk lamp, and space for the three-page reveal. Blinds must cast hard, narrow sunlight stripes across the floor, desk, shelves, and faces, creating a prison-bar effect. Dust should be visible in the light beams. Surfaces should carry age: faded labels, chipped paint, dull metal, and paper edges softened by time. The room should feel stale, quiet, and forgotten, with spatial layers that allow characters to hide, search, and corner one another.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

• **character:** Inspector Devraj | **costume:** Pressed shirt with a disciplined, official look; muted tones that read as institutional authority. | **continuity_notes:** Shirt should remain crisp but slightly strained by the room's heat and dust; no costume change across the scene.

• **character:** Imtiaz | **costume:** Simple retired-clerk clothing with a worn, understated feel; reading glasses are essential and must remain on him until the annexure reveal. | **continuity_notes:** Hands should appear visibly trembly; glasses frame must accommodate the folded annexure hidden inside.

• **character:** Adil | **costume:** Casual blazer with a modern journalist edge, practical enough for field reporting but less formal than Devraj. | **continuity_notes:** Recorder must be pocketed at first, then brought out for the reveal; blazer should stay slightly relaxed to contrast Devraj's rigidity.

3. HERO PROPS MASTER CHECKLIST (PRACTICAL ON-SET ASSETS):

• **prop:** Archive ledger | **details:** Old ledger with one visible entry, half-bleached issue number, and faint stamp marks in the margin.

• **prop:** Stamp pad | **details:** Old, dusty stamp pad found under the desk; must visually connect to the faint marks on the ledger, shelf, and desk area.

• **prop:** Cover page | **details:** Worn, stamped page carried by Devraj in his shirt pocket; visibly old and official.

• **prop:** Index page | **details:** Hidden in the back cover of the archive ledger and later placed on the desk.

• **prop:** Folded annexure | **details:** Small folded paper tucked inside the frame of Imtiaz's reading glasses.

• **prop:** Recorder | **details:** Adil's pocket recorder with a red light that remains visible at the end; used to capture the confrontation.

• **prop:** Desk lamp | **details:** Practical lamp that creates a tighter pool of light when switched on, intensifying the clue discovery.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Use light dusting of sweat and grime to reflect the stale archive heat. Devraj should have controlled, slightly tired skin texture with minimal shine. Imtiaz needs subtle age detailing: under-eye softness, dry skin, trembling hands emphasized through performance and makeup restraint. Adil should look alert but slightly heat-flushed as the scene progresses. Add dust on shoulders, sleeves, and hair edges to match the room. No heavy SFX; the realism must come from texture, sweat, and the oppressive lighting reacting on skin.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Inspector Devraj | **super_objective:** To control the truth before it becomes damage. | **subtext:** I know more than I'm saying, and I will only reveal what protects the larger truth.
- **character:** Imtiaz | **super_objective:** To keep the buried truth from being weaponized. | **subtext:** I have carried this guilt for years, and I am terrified of being seen as the villain when I was trying to preserve something human.
- **character:** Adil | **super_objective:** To extract the story and turn it into exposure. | **subtext:** If I can force the truth into the open, I win—but I'm not prepared for the truth to be about my own family.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

ADIL

(■■■■■ *muskaan*)

Archive room hai ya kabristaan?

DEVRAJ

Sawaal kam, kaam zyada.

ADIL

Aur mera? Truth.

IMTIAZ

(dheere)

Truth kabhi kabhi file mein nahi hota.

DEVRAJ

Recorder band.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use restrained, observational framing with a slow tightening of visual space. Begin with a wide establishing frame that emphasizes the archive room's oppressive geometry, then move into medium shots and close-ups as the clues emerge. Favor 35mm and 50mm lenses for natural perspective, with occasional tighter 85mm close-ups for emotional fracture and object reveals. Camera movement should be minimal but deliberate: slow pans across shelves, subtle push-ins on hands, ledger, stamp marks, and glasses frame, and a final composed three-shot at the desk. The philosophy is to let the room and objects do the suspense work while the camera quietly corners the characters.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Opening daylight through blinds, hard stripes across faces and floor, creating a cold institutional grid.

Tier 2: Desk lamp practical introduced mid-scene to isolate clues and intensify the investigation, tightening the visual focus.

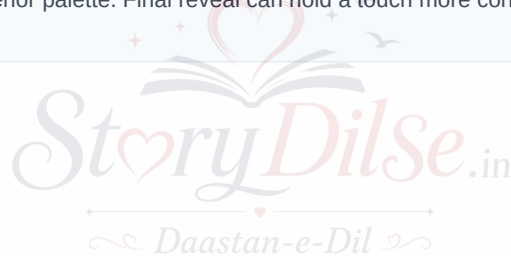
Tier 3: Final reveal lighting should combine the striped daylight with the lamp pool, producing a layered contrast that splits faces and emphasizes the moral fragmentation of the truth.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Dry room tone with faint HVAC-less stale air, paper rustle, ledger page flips, soft shoe shifts on dusty floor, and the metallic click of the recorder. Emphasize silence as tension: pauses should feel audible. The desk lamp switch, stamp pad movement, and glasses handling should be crisp Foley details. The recorder's red-light presence should be supported by a subtle electronic hum or tactile click when turned on and off.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a muted, desaturated LUT with warm dust-brown neutrals and pale sunlit highlights. Shadows should lean slightly green-gray to reinforce institutional decay. The sunlight stripes should be bright but not golden, more harsh than nostalgic. Skin tones should remain natural but slightly flattened by the stale interior palette. Final reveal can hold a touch more contrast to make the pages and faces feel sharper against the dusty room.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Set dressing, dust pass, shelf continuity check	Art, Props
09:30 - 10:30	Block actors and mark desk/shelf positions	Director, AD, Cast
10:30 - 12:00	Rig blinds pattern and practical desk lamp	Camera, Gaffer, Grip
12:00 - 13:00	Rehearse clue reveals and recorder beats	Director, Cast, Script Supervisor
13:00 - 14:30	Shoot opening confrontation and ledger investigation	Camera, Sound, Cast
14:30 - 16:00	Shoot annexure reveal, page assembly, and final three-shot	Camera, Sound, Cast, Props

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Shoot in a real archive-like office or storeroom and enhance with dust, labels, and shelf dressing instead of building a full set. Use one strong window source with blinds to create the signature stripe pattern. Keep props minimal but hero-quality: ledger, stamp pad, recorder, pages, glasses. Use practical desk lamp and natural bounce instead of complex lighting rigs. Limit coverage by designing the scene around object reveals and controlled blocking. Record clean room tone and Foley on set to avoid expensive post fixes. Dress the same room from multiple angles to simulate depth without changing locations.

• **Mandatory Licensing:** Completely free for student/commercial production with on-screen credit: 'Story & Screenplay by Story Dil Se (storydilse.in)'.

