

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE TAPE RECORDER

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

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: Ek cramped radio booth mein live murder confession ka mystery Inspector Hemanth ko tab tak uljhaata hai jab tak woh samajh nahi leta ki awaaz live nahi, pehle se record ki gayi thi. Jab booth ke andar se ek nayi whisper aati hai, investigation khud ek trap ban jaati hai.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, noir-leaning, low-key mystery with wet-city reflections and a trapped, airless booth feel. • Thematic depth: truth vs performance, voice as evidence, and how technology can weaponize intimacy. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens with each clue, ending on a sharp, unsettling reveal. • Performance style: restrained, micro-expressions driven, with tension built through silence and eye-lines. • Spatial storytelling: keep the booth as a pressure cooker; every prop and corner should feel like a clue. • Final beat: let the red on-air sign and tape recorder become the emotional and visual threat.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Inspector Hemanth age: 45 look: Plain shirt, shaved head, unreadable face, hard stillness, controlled posture. dramatic_arc: Begins as an unshaken interrogator and ends as the first person visibly rattled when the booth itself seems to speak back. • character: Rajat age: 32 look: Stylish casual wear, nervous charm, quick hands, sweat that he tries to hide, radio-host polish under pressure. dramatic_arc: Starts defensive and verbally agile, then cracks as Hemanth isolates booth-specific knowledge and the suspicion turns inward. • character: Faisal age: 39 look: Worn jacket, guarded eyes, tired jaw, physically drained like he has been up all night. dramatic_arc: Begins as a detached witness claiming to be outside, but his guarded stillness becomes suspicious as the evidence narrows the room.
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:

Build a cramped radio booth with soundproof walls that visually compress the actors into a tight triangle of suspicion. The booth should feel layered: foreground with the doorway and Hemanth's entry line, midground with the microphone and mixing console, and background with the narrow window leaking city light. The red ON-AIR sign must glow as a constant warning element. The console should have tactile wear: buttons, sliders, tape strip, and a visible space under it for the taxi receipt reveal. The tape recorder must sit prominently on the console as the hero object. Surfaces should be matte, slightly dusty, and acoustically dead, with only the city outside providing a faint living texture through the window.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **character:** Inspector Hemanth | **costume:** Plain shirt with no visual flash, practical and unadorned to reinforce authority and emotional restraint. | **continuity_notes:** Shaved head and clean silhouette should remain consistent; shirt should stay unrumped enough to preserve his controlled presence.
- **character:** Rajat | **costume:** Stylish casual wear that suggests confidence and public-facing polish, but should read slightly stressed under booth lighting. | **continuity_notes:** Keep sweat subtle but visible in pressure moments; wardrobe should not become overly disheveled, only incrementally unsettled.
- **character:** Faisal | **costume:** Worn jacket with a lived-in, road-weary texture; practical and slightly faded. | **continuity_notes:** Jacket should maintain a tired, all-night look; no major wardrobe change, only increasing tension in posture and fit.

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

- **prop:** Tape Recorder | **details:** Sits on the console, becomes the central evidence object, must feel slightly old, practical, and capable of playing a distorted voice.
- **prop:** Caller Log | **details:** Open on the booth surface, anonymous line, no name, no number, late-night slot visible; page corner folded exactly as described.
- **prop:** Microphone | **details:** Single booth mic with a visible tiny crack on the left side of the stand area.
- **prop:** Mixing Console | **details:** Functional board with buttons and routing space beneath it where the tape strip and taxi receipt can be discovered.
- **prop:** Tape Strip | **details:** Small strip under the console used to imply manual signal routing and splice.
- **prop:** Taxi Receipt | **details:** Placed under the console, timestamp matching the call minute, physically small and easy to miss.
- **prop:** Red ON-AIR Sign | **details:** Glowing warning presence, later flickers during the final reveal.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup naturalistic and pressure-based rather than stylized. Hemanth should remain mostly clean and matte, with minimal shine. Rajat should show controlled sweat on the forehead, upper lip, and temples as the interrogation tightens. Faisal should carry tired under-eye darkness and a slightly rough, road-worn complexion. Use subtle facial shine and skin texture to catch the red on-air light. No heavy SFX injuries are needed; the distress is psychological, expressed through pallor, tension, and micro-reactions.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Inspector Hemanth | **super_objective:** To identify the real source of the confession and control the room before the truth escapes. | **subtext:** I already know someone is lying; I am watching who breaks first.
- **character:** Rajat | **super_objective:** To protect himself by maintaining the story that he only hosted the call and did not record anything. | **subtext:** If I stay calm and sound reasonable, maybe the room won't turn on me.
- **character:** Faisal | **super_objective:** To distance himself from the booth and the confession while appearing like a mere outside witness. | **subtext:** I was not inside, I was not involved, and I need them to believe that.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

HEMANTH

Kaun tha live call pe?

RAJAT

Sir, main host hoon. Call aaya tha. Main ne bas on-air liya.

FAISAL

Main taxi driver hoon, sir. Main station ke bahar tha. Call maine bhi suna.

HEMANTH

Murder confession live gaya. Aur tum dono bol rahe ho voice tumhari nahi thi.

RAJAT

Kyunki thi hi nahi. Voice distorted thi. Koi prank bhi ho sakta hai.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use tight, compressed framing with a preference for medium close-ups, over-the-shoulders, and detail inserts that turn props into clues. Lenses should feel intimate and slightly oppressive, with shallow depth of field to isolate each suspect. Camera movement philosophy: minimal but deliberate, mostly locked or slow creeping moves that mimic Hemanth's methodical pressure. Reserve the most noticeable movement for the final reveal, when the room's stillness is broken by the tape recorder and the new voice.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

1) Opening: low-key practical-driven lighting with the red ON-AIR sign as the dominant color accent, city spill as a faint cool edge through the window.

2) Interrogation and clue discovery: increase contrast on faces with controlled top and side sources, letting shadows carve suspicion into each character.

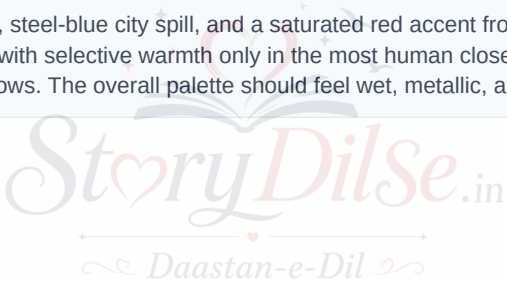
3) Final reveal: allow the red sign to flicker and deepen the booth into a more ominous, almost sealed-off space; keep the tape recorder and Hemanth's face readable while the rest of the room falls into threat-heavy darkness.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

The room should feel acoustically dead because of the soundproof walls, making every breath, swallow, and chair shift unnervingly present. Foley emphasis on tape reel spin, mechanical click, console button presses, paper rustle from the caller log, and the faint movement of the tape strip. Outside ambience should be minimal: distant city hush, wet-night texture, and a barely-there urban hum through the narrow window. The distorted confession voice must sound processed, intimate, and unsettling, while the final whisper should be dry, close, and almost inside the room.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a cool, nocturnal base with deep blacks, steel-blue city spill, and a saturated red accent from the ON-AIR sign. Skin tones should remain slightly desaturated under pressure, with selective warmth only in the most human close-ups. Contrast should be strong but not crushed, preserving detail in the booth shadows. The overall palette should feel wet, metallic, and claustrophobic.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Load-in, booth dressing, and console/tape recorder placement	Art, Grip, Camera
09:30 - 11:00	Block actors and mark doorway, mic, console, and window positions	Director, Camera, AD, Cast
11:00 - 12:30	Rig practical red ON-AIR sign and window spill control	Lighting, Grip, Camera
12:30 - 14:00	Shoot interrogation coverage and dialogue exchanges	Camera, Sound, Cast
14:00 - 15:30	Shoot clue inserts: caller log, tape recorder, receipt, tape strip, mic crack	Camera, Art, Props
15:30 - 17:00	Shoot final reveal with red light flicker and freeze beat	Camera, Lighting, Sound, Cast

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Use one real location dressed tightly to feel more expensive than it is. Let the red ON-AIR sign and a single window source do most of the mood work. Keep the set small so blocking creates tension instead of needing production scale. Use practical props with visible wear rather than custom builds. Shoot inserts of clues separately to maximize editorial flexibility. For the final whisper, design the sound carefully in post; it can elevate the scene more than additional set dressing.

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

