

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE THIRD PASSENGER

3 Male (M + M + M) | Genre: Horror/Supernatural | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: Ek thaki hui taxi ki back seat mein raat ke andhere se aaya ek passenger Sanjay ko uske bhool chuke past se milata hai. Ek loop hoti road, ek bina reflection wala Aman, aur ek aakhri warning Sanjay ko maut ke us turn se bachati hai jahan uska apna bhai chhoot gaya tha.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, rain-soaked, supernatural realism with minimal VFX and maximum practical dread. • Thematic depth: guilt, unfinished grief, sibling loss, and the idea that the dead return not to haunt, but to warn. • Pacing: slow-burn tension inside the taxi, escalating through repetition, then a sharp emotional reveal and a quiet release. • Camera language: tight interiors, mirror reveals, and restrained movement to make the taxi feel like a sealed coffin on wheels. • Horror approach: no loud monster moments; fear comes from absence, reflection mismatch, and the emotional weight of recognition. • Ending mood: not a jump scare, but a haunted mercy—survival with a lingering presence.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Sanjay age: 33 look: Unshaven, tired eyes, road-weary face, worn driver energy, physically slumped from long night shifts. dramatic_arc: Starts as a cynical, exhausted taxi driver treating the ride like routine work. As the road loops and Aman's identity emerges, he shifts into confusion, fear, guilt, and finally recognition of a buried family tragedy. He ends with reluctant acceptance and a changed sense of direction. • character: Aman age: 25 look: Wet jacket, pale face, quiet presence, calm stillness, almost too composed for a night passenger. dramatic_arc: Introduced as a soft-spoken passenger with minimal words. He gradually reveals impossible knowledge, a missing reflection, and the truth that he is dead. His arc is not aggressive haunting but protective intervention, ending with a final blessing-like farewell. • character: Prakash age: 46 look: Grease-stained vest, wrench in hand, mechanic's practical body language, weathered face, skeptical eyes. dramatic_arc: Begins as the grounded outsider who dismisses the supernatural and blames the driver. He becomes the audience's reality-check, then slowly breaks as the evidence becomes undeniable. By the end, he is shaken into silence and acceptance.
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:

The primary set is the interior of a parked taxi designed to feel cramped, sealed, and slightly aged. Use a low ceiling feel, narrow seat spacing, and visible wear on upholstery, door handles, and dashboard plastics. The dashboard glow should be the main interior source, with a dangling phone charger and ignition keys visible as lived-in details. Windows must carry rain streaks and occasional condensation to create layered depth. Outside, the roadside dhaba should be physically suggested through a flickering neon sign, wet ground reflections, and a dim practical light source. The dhaba frontage should feel old, utilitarian, and slightly abandoned, with enough negative space to make the taxi feel isolated. The car exterior should be wet and reflective, with bonnet and windshield catching intermittent neon flicker. Spatially, the set should allow clear sightlines from driver to rear seat to outside mechanic, so the triangle of Sanjay, Aman, and Prakash can play in one contained visual field.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

• **Sanjay:** Worn driver clothes, slightly rumpled and sweat-damp from a long shift. Shirt should look lived-in and practical, with no bright colors. Keep continuity of tiredness: collar loosened, sleeves slightly creased, face and neck showing fatigue.

• **Aman:** Wet jacket as the key wardrobe element, visibly rain-soaked and darker at the shoulders and sleeves. Underlayer should remain understated, with the jacket zipper used for the ID reveal. Pale, cold appearance should be supported by wardrobe texture and dampness.

• **Prakash:** Grease-stained vest over work clothes, mechanic-appropriate and functional. The vest should show oil marks, grime, and outdoor wear. He should look like someone who has been standing in the rain near the dhaba for a while.

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

• **prop:** Taxi meter | **details:** Visible and functional-looking, used to show the ride progressing before it unexpectedly stops.

• **prop:** Phone charger | **details:** Dangling from the dashboard, lightly vibrating at the end, adding a subtle eerie sound cue in the final beat.

• **prop:** Car keys | **details:** Inserted in the ignition throughout, emphasizing that the taxi is ready to move but trapped in the loop.

• **prop:** Rearview mirror | **details:** Critical supernatural reveal surface; must clearly show Aman's missing reflection and later the brief second reflection.

• **prop:** Wrench | **details:** Held by Prakash, grease-stained and practical, reinforcing his mechanic identity.

• **prop:** School ID card | **details:** Old, crumpled, water-stained card pulled from Aman's wet jacket; must visibly carry the same family surname as Sanjay.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Sanjay should have under-eye fatigue, slight stubble, rain moisture on skin, and a progressively stressed facial tension. Aman needs pale complexion, damp hair or hairline, and a cold, almost drained look without overt gore. His skin should react subtly to dashboard glow and neon flicker, enhancing the uncanny stillness. Prakash should have outdoor grime, sweat-rain mix, and mechanic dirt on hands and vest. No heavy prosthetics are required; the supernatural effect should come from performance, lighting, and the reflection mismatch. Add subtle wetness continuity on faces, jackets, and hands throughout.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Sanjay:** {'super_objective': 'To complete the ride and maintain control of his night, while avoiding the emotional truth buried in his past.', 'subtext': 'He is trying to stay practical, but every strange detail forces him closer to the memory of the brother he lost.'}
- **Aman:** {'super_objective': 'To stop Sanjay from taking the fatal turn and to make him remember the bond he abandoned.', 'subtext': 'He speaks softly because he is not here to punish; he is here to protect and be recognized.'}
- **Prakash:** {'super_objective': 'To identify the problem and restore normal logic to the situation.', 'subtext': 'He begins as a skeptic, but once the impossible becomes visible, he becomes the witness who validates Sanjay's fear.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

AMAN

Raat mein zyada bolna achha nahi hota.

SANJAY

Mirror mein tu dikh kyun nahi raha?

AMAN((*calm*))

Kyunki main wahan nahi hoon.

PRAKASH

Iska reflection dekh.

AMAN

Kyunki main dead hoon, Sanjay.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use intimate lenses in the 35mm to 85mm range for the taxi interior, with occasional wider framing outside to show the loop and isolation. Keep the camera mostly locked or gently handheld to preserve the feeling of being trapped in a moving box. Favor over-the-shoulder compositions, mirror inserts, and tight two-shots that let silence become suspense. Movement philosophy: minimal but purposeful—slow push-ins for reveals, static frames for dread, and one or two subtle reframes when reality shifts. The camera should never feel flashy; it should feel like an observer stuck in the car with them.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Interior dashboard glow as the base key, low and motivated, shaping Sanjay's face and the back seat in partial shadow.

Tier 2: Exterior neon sign flicker as intermittent color contamination through windows and mirror surfaces, creating supernatural rhythm and visual instability.

Tier 3: Practical rain reflections and occasional dhaba spill light to separate silhouettes, reveal the mechanic outside, and support the final emotional release. As the story progresses, reduce contrast slightly on the reveal of Aman's identity, then let the final departure fall into softer, more open darkness.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Rain is the constant bed: sharp on glass, softer on metal, and heavier in the distance. Add subtle windshield tick-tick, faint road ambience, and the low hum of a parked vehicle. The taxi meter, phone charger vibration, ignition clicks, and door movement should be crisp and intimate. Silence is crucial inside the car, especially after Aman's lines. The dhaba exterior should carry a muted neon buzz and occasional distant roadside noise. In the final beat, let the rain feel less threatening and more like a fading farewell.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a cold, desaturated night palette with dirty blues, muted grays, and sickly neon greens/yellows from the sign. Dashboard glow should be warm but weak, creating emotional contrast against the exterior chill. Keep skin tones slightly drained, with highlights controlled to preserve the wet, reflective surfaces. The final frames should soften contrast marginally so the ending feels less like a jump scare and more like release.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Scout, lock set, and prep taxi interior continuity	Direction, Art, Continuity
09:30 - 11:00	Rig dashboard practicals, mirror placement, and neon flicker source	Camera, G&E,, Art
11:00 - 12:00	Wardrobe, makeup, wet-look prep, and prop continuity check	Wardrobe, Makeup, Props
12:00 - 14:00	Shoot taxi interior dialogue and mirror reveal coverage	Camera, Sound, Direction
14:00 - 15:30	Shoot Prakash exterior window interaction and ID card reveal	Camera, Art, Sound
15:30 - 17:00	Shoot climax, final warning, and departure beats	Camera, G&E,, Direction

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Keep the entire film centered on one taxi set and one roadside dhaba frontage. Use practical rain, a single neon sign, and dashboard LEDs instead of expensive lighting rigs. The supernatural effect should rely on blocking, mirror composition, and performance rather than VFX. Shoot the road loop with repeated angles and slight continuity shifts to sell repetition cheaply. Use one exterior car position and re-dress the frame for different beats. The school ID card can be a simple printed prop with weathering. Sound design will do much of the horror work, so prioritize clean dialogue and rain recording.

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

