

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE LOCKED WARD

3 Male (M + M + M) | Genre: Psychological Thriller | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A locked psychiatric ward consultation room becomes a psychological trap when a restless patient claims the system has rewritten his identity—and the doctor begins to suspect he may be the one who was treated, not the one treating. As the truth fractures, the keys, the records, and the room itself turn against everyone inside.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: sterile, claustrophobic, and quietly menacing, with institutional realism that slowly bends into paranoia. • Thematic depth: identity as a construct, authority as performance, and memory as the most dangerous weapon in a controlled system. • Pacing: restrained and dialogue-driven at first, then tightening beat by beat as visual evidence and behavioral cracks accumulate. • Camera language: mostly locked-off and observational early, then increasingly subjective as Dr. Nair's certainty collapses. • Emotional arc: from clinical calm to destabilized dread, ending on a cold, irreversible realization. • Spatial strategy: keep the room feeling small, airless, and over-managed, with the observation window acting like a silent witness and reveal surface.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Dr. Nair age: 50 look: Lab coat over formal wear, tired eyes, composed posture that gradually fractures; professional, controlled, slightly worn by long institutional pressure. dramatic_arc: Begins as the calm authority in the room, then becomes unsettled by inconsistencies, and finally realizes he may be the patient trapped inside the system he thought he controlled. • character: Rudra age: 32 look: Hospital gown, intense stare, restless hands, physically contained but mentally alert; his body carries constant tension. dramatic_arc: Appears like a volatile patient at first, but steadily reveals himself as the one who remembers, exposes the manipulation, and ultimately takes control of the room. • character: Anil age: 37 look: Simple uniform, keys clipped to belt, watchful stance near the door; practical, guarded, and increasingly defensive. dramatic_arc: Starts as a dismissive witness with authority-adjacent access, then hardens into a defensive manipulator, and finally shows fear when the room's power shifts away from him.
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 consultation room should feel clean, institutional, and emotionally deadened. Use padded chairs with slightly worn vinyl texture, a small observation window with reflective glass, and a narrow table holding the patient file, clipboard, water glass, and ward chart. Walls should be muted and pale, with a faintly green or beige hospital tone that absorbs light rather than reflecting it. Blinds must cast thin corridor-light stripes across the room, creating a visual cage. The door should feel heavy and secure, with visible lock hardware and a practical key mechanism. Keep the room spatially layered: foreground table, midground chairs and actors, background door and observation window. Everything should look organized but oppressive, as if the room has been scrubbed of personality but not of dread.
2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY: • Dr. Nair: Lab coat over formal wear, neat but slightly tired and lived-in. Shirt and trousers should remain clean and professional, with continuity showing subtle stress through loosened posture rather than wardrobe damage. • Rudra: Hospital gown that reads as institutional and vulnerable, but worn with restless energy. Keep continuity on the gown's drape and his exposed, tense body language; no added accessories. • Anil: Simple uniform with practical fit, keys clipped to the belt as the defining wardrobe detail. The uniform should feel functional, slightly rigid, and consistent with ward staff access.
3. HERO PROPS MASTER CHECKLIST (PRACTICAL ON-SET ASSETS): • prop: Patient file visual_details: A worn but orderly case file with visible papers, including the note about identity discrepancy and inconsistent logs. • prop: Clipboard visual_details: Plain institutional clipboard used by Dr. Nair to compare records; should feel official and slightly heavy in hand. • prop: Water glass visual_details: Clear glass on the table, untouched or barely used, catching the dim light and reflecting the blinds. • prop: Ward chart visual_details: A clinical chart with bed numbers, admission dates, and incident logs that can be visually compared against the file. • prop: Keys visual_details: Metal keys clipped to Anil's belt, audible when they jingle; they must feel like the central power object in the room. • prop: Observation window visual_details: Small reflective glass panel in the wall or door area, used for the final reflection reveal and corridor sign visibility.
4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA): Keep makeup naturalistic and restrained. Dr. Nair should have tired under-eyes, slight sheen from stress, and a controlled but increasingly strained face. Rudra should look slightly disheveled, with subtle sweat at the temples and hands, emphasizing agitation without overt injury. Anil should remain clean and functional, but his face should harden visually as tension rises. Use sweat selectively to catch light on foreheads, upper lips, and hands. No heavy SFX wounds are needed; the distress must come from performance, skin texture, and lighting reactions. For the final reveal, ensure Dr. Nair's face can hold a frozen, stunned expression clearly in the reflection and direct frame.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Dr. Nair:** {'super_objective': 'To restore order and determine who is telling the truth in the room.', 'subtext': 'I need this session to make sense because my authority depends on it, and if it doesn't, then my identity may be the lie.'}
- **Rudra:** {'super_objective': 'To force the truth into the open and reclaim the identity that was taken from him.', 'subtext': 'I remember what happened, and I will not let them reduce me to a diagnosis or a role.'}
- **Anil:** {'super_objective': 'To protect the system, protect himself, and keep control of the narrative.', 'subtext': 'If the records are exposed, my position and my version of reality collapse.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

RUDRA

Doctor, main patient nahi hoon. Main trapped hoon.

ANIL

Haan, aur main President hoon. Roz naya dialogue.

RUDRA

Tu hi hai na story ka writer?

RUDRA

Matlab mera naam, meri history, mera past... sab usne shift kiya.

RUDRA

Jo keys rakhta hai. Jo ward chalata hai. Jo sabko yaad dilata hai ki kaun pagal hai.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use restrained, clinical framing with longer static takes early on to preserve the feeling of observation and control. Favor medium wides that trap all three men in the same frame, then move into tighter singles and over-the-shoulders as the power dynamic shifts. Lenses should feel naturalistic and slightly compressed in the room to emphasize confinement; close-ups should be used sparingly but decisively on the file, keys, and Dr. Nair's face during the reveal. Camera movement philosophy: minimal at first, then subtly creeping, as if the room itself is leaning in to listen. The final unlock should be held in a clean, readable frame so the audience feels the shift rather than being distracted by motion.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Establishment - dim institutional overhead light with corridor spill through blinds, creating hard linear shadows and a cold, controlled atmosphere.

Tier 2: Escalation - slightly increase contrast on faces using soft side fill or bounce, keeping the room dark while making reactions and eye movements more legible.

Tier 3: Reveal - emphasize the observation window reflection and corridor sign with controlled practical spill, allowing the final identity reveal to land through glass and negative space rather than a flashy lighting change.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Build the room with a faint corridor hum, low HVAC presence, and a subtle institutional buzz that never fully disappears. Foley should highlight keys jingling, file pages turning, clipboard taps, chair shifts, and the soft click of the lock. Use silence strategically after key lines so the room feels like it is listening. The final lock click and door opening should be crisp and emotionally loaded, with the corridor air entering as a sonic shift in pressure.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a cold, desaturated LUT with muted greens, pale yellows, and washed institutional whites. Keep skin tones slightly subdued so the room feels emotionally drained. Contrast should rise gradually as the scene progresses, with the final reflection reveal carrying a sharper, more clinical edge. Avoid warm saturation; the palette should feel antiseptic, tired, and psychologically unstable.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Load-in, art dressing, and prop placement	Art, Props, Production
09:00 - 10:30	Block actors and mark key sightlines to observation window and door	Director, Assistant Director, Cast
10:30 - 12:00	Rig institutional lighting and blind-shadow pattern	Camera, Gaffer, Grip
12:00 - 13:30	Shoot master and medium coverage for opening confrontation	Camera, Sound, Cast
13:30 - 14:30	Shoot inserts: file, note, ward chart, keys, clipboard	Camera, Props, Script Supervisor
14:30 - 16:00	Shoot reveal sequence at observation window and final door unlock	Camera, Lighting, Cast

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Use one practical room and let blocking create the escalation. Build the corridor look with a narrow light source outside the door and blinds instead of expensive set extensions. Print the file note, ward chart, and nameplate as simple inserts rather than full graphic builds. Keep the camera package lean: one normal lens, one short telephoto, and one close-focus option can cover the whole scene. Use natural performance tension instead of extra effects. The keys, reflection, and lock click are the main production value moments, so prioritize sound and clean continuity there.

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

