

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE TENANT IN ROOM 304

2 Male + 1 Female (M + M + F) | Genre: Psychological Thriller | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A hotel receptionist and a nervous security guard are forced to confront a woman whose room exists in the register but not on CCTV. As Nandini exposes a buried cover-up tied to Room 304, the polished calm of the hotel collapses into a reckoning with guilt, silence, and erased truth.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, polished, and unsettling; the hotel should feel clean on the surface but morally rotten underneath. • Thematic depth: memory versus record, truth versus institutional convenience, and the violence of silence. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation energy that tightens with each reveal, ending in a sharp, quiet emotional detonation. • Performance style: restrained dialogue with loaded pauses; the tension should live in looks, micro-reactions, and withheld answers. • Spatial feeling: the reception desk becomes a courtroom, a confession booth, and a crime scene all at once. • Horror language: no overt supernatural effects; the dread comes from absence, repetition, and the cold authority of systems.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Mr. Bhatt age: 55 look: Immaculate hotel uniform, polished presence, controlled posture, polite smile that can harden instantly. dramatic_arc: Begins as the composed authority figure defending the hotel system, then cracks when the recording surfaces, revealing he was a witness to the cover-up and not just an administrator. • character: Rohit age: 31 look: Thin, jumpy, wrinkled shirt, headset on, visibly stressed and sleep-deprived, constantly adjusting his gear. dramatic_arc: Starts as a nervous observer obsessed with the missing CCTV trace, then becomes exposed as someone who saw enough to know the truth but stayed silent to protect his job. • character: Nandini age: 28 look: Elegant, dark coat, controlled steps, locked suitcase, calm face with intense eyes; composed and unreadable. dramatic_arc: Enters as a seemingly ordinary guest with a key-card complaint, then reveals herself as the previous manager's daughter and the keeper of the buried recording, turning the room into a truth chamber.
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 set is a compact hotel reception at night with a corridor entrance visible beyond the desk. The reception desk should be polished but slightly worn at the edges, with fingerprints, scuffed laminate, and a lived-in administrative clutter that suggests routine and secrecy. Amber lobby lamps should create warm pools of light over the desk while the security monitor emits a cold rectangle of blue-white glow. The register book must sit prominently open on the desk, with visible aged pages and a hard-copy administrative feel. The room key card should be placed near the register as a small but important object. The locked suitcase should stand beside a chair, visually isolated like evidence. Spatially, the desk should separate Bhatt and Rohit from the entrance, creating a barrier between authority and intrusion. The corridor entrance should feel empty and slightly too long, allowing the monitor to become the only witness to absence. Textures should emphasize polished surfaces, paper grain, plastic headset sheen, and the matte fabric of uniforms and coats.
2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY: • Mr. Bhatt: Immaculate hotel uniform with a crisp, controlled silhouette. The costume should read as authoritative and carefully maintained. Continuity note: his polished appearance must remain consistent until the final crack in his composure; no visible disarray unless performance calls for a subtle shift in tension. • Rohit: Wrinkled shirt, headset, and a slightly fatigued, under-maintained look. The wardrobe should suggest long hours and stress. Continuity note: headset must remain on or near his head throughout, with visible adjustment moments; shirt wrinkles and posture should remain consistent to support his nervous energy. • Nandini: Elegant dark coat with a calm, deliberate presence. She carries a locked suitcase. Continuity note: coat should stay clean and composed, reinforcing her control; suitcase remains locked until the reveal, and the key card is handled only at the end.
3. HERO PROPS MASTER CHECKLIST (PRACTICAL ON-SET ASSETS): • prop: Register Book details: Open hard-copy register with visible entries, including the old page Nandini points to. It must feel physical, official, and slightly aged. • prop: Room Key Card details: A single hotel key card resting near the desk, later picked up and placed beside the register by Nandini. • prop: Security Monitor details: Cold-glow screen showing an empty corridor and the room 304 number; should be the visual source of absence and tension. • prop: Headset details: Rohit's headset with a visible wire, including a frayed end that Nandini points out. • prop: Locked Suitcase details: Dark, rigid suitcase carried by Nandini and placed on the desk; it functions as a sealed evidence container. • prop: Audio Recorder details: Small recorder inside the suitcase, labeled 'Manager's Log' in the story narrative but in screenplay revealed only as a small audio recorder; it must feel old, compact, and crucial.
4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA): Mr. Bhatt should have a controlled, clean appearance with minimal shine, but by the reveal his face should show a subtle loss of composure: slight under-eye fatigue, tension around the mouth, and a faint sheen under warm light. Rohit should read as stressed and sleep-deprived, with mild sweat at the temples, a pale or drained look during the confrontation, and visible nervous swallowing. Nandini should remain composed with minimal makeup, but her eyes should carry intensity and precision; no overt distress effects. For all three, lighting reactions are important: amber light should warm skin tones while the monitor's cold glow should flatten and sharpen facial features, especially during the reveal. No heavy SFX required; the realism should come from micro-expressions and subtle physical stress.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Mr. Bhatt:** {'super_objective': 'To preserve the hotel's order and protect himself from exposure.', 'subtext': 'If I keep smiling, the truth stays contained. If I admit anything, everything collapses.'}
- **Rohit:** {'super_objective': 'To survive the night without losing his job.', 'subtext': 'I saw enough to be afraid, but not enough to be brave. Please don't make me the one who says it out loud.'}
- **Nandini:** {'super_objective': 'To force the truth back into the record and make the hotel remember her father.', 'subtext': 'I am not here to ask permission. I am here to make you face what you erased.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

ROHIT

Sir, main bol raha hoon... room 304 ka guest register mein hai, par CCTV mein nahi.

MR. BHATT

((*pleasantly*))

Aur main bol raha hoon, Rohit, hotel mein system galat nahi hota. Log galat dekhte hain.

NANDINI

Mera key card kaam nahi kar raha.

NANDINI

Aapke paas already hai.

NANDINI

Nandini. Room 304. Checked in at 10:14 PM.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

- **lenses:** 35mm for spatial context, 50mm for conversational tension, occasional 85mm for isolating emotional cracks and evidence details
- **framing_approach:** Start with balanced masters and desk-level compositions, then progressively tighten into close-ups and inserts as the truth is revealed
- **camera_movement_philosophy:** Use restrained, deliberate movement; let stillness dominate, with only subtle push-ins and controlled reframing to intensify psychological pressure

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

- **tier_1:** Amber practical lobby lamps establish the reception as warm but uneasy, with the monitor providing a cold counter-source.
- **tier_2:** Increase facial contrast during the confrontation, keeping the room dim and the corridor empty to heighten suspicion.
- **tier_3:** Introduce subtle flicker and cooler spill during the reveal, allowing the monitor glow and recorder playback to dominate the emotional temperature.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

- **foley:** ['Register pages turning', 'Headset adjustment clicks', 'Suitcase placement on desk', 'Key card tap against the register', 'Recorder button press and tape hiss']
- **ambient_room_tone:** ['Low HVAC hum', 'Soft electrical buzz from the monitor', 'Distant corridor silence', 'Barely audible lobby room tone']
- **acoustic_profile:** Dry, intimate dialogue space with minimal reverb in the reception area; the corridor should feel hollow and empty, making silence itself feel threatening.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

- **lut_style:** Muted cinematic thriller LUT with warm-to-cold contrast
- **tonal_contrasts:** Amber lobby warmth versus blue-white monitor coldness; polished surfaces versus shadowed corners
- **palette_notes:** Honey amber, muted brown, steel blue, desaturated skin tones, deep charcoal blacks, and occasional white highlights from the monitor and recorder reflection



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Load-in, art placement, desk dressing, prop layout	Art, Props, Production
09:00 - 10:30	Lighting rig and monitor glow setup	Camera, Gaffer, Grip
10:30 - 11:30	Blocking rehearsal for Bhatt and Rohit at reception desk	Director, Cast, Camera
11:30 - 12:30	Nandini entrance and first confrontation coverage	Director, Camera, Sound
12:30 - 13:30	Suitcase reveal, recorder playback, final beats	Director, Camera, Sound, Props
13:30 - 14:00	Pickup inserts: register page, key card, monitor flicker	Camera, Art, Sound

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Shoot the entire film in one controlled location with practical lamps and a single monitor as the main motivated source. Use a real hotel reception or a dressed office corner to avoid expensive set construction. Keep the corridor short and shallow to simplify lighting and continuity. Limit coverage to a few strong master shots, inserts, and close-ups so the edit can build tension without requiring many setups. Use one locked suitcase and one recorder as the only hero props. Let performance and sound carry the thriller energy instead of expensive effects. If needed, simulate monitor footage with a pre-rendered empty corridor loop on a laptop or screen.

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

