

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE SILENT WITNESS

2 Male + 1 Female (M + M + F) | Genre: Mystery/Crime | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A rain-soaked late-night interrogation in a cramped apartment kitchen turns into a psychological trap when a frightened witness reveals she is actually the victim's sister—and the detective across the table is the man she came to expose. As the recorder keeps rolling, a buried cover-up surfaces and the truth becomes more dangerous than the murder itself.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, rain-drenched noir with a single-source practical light and deep shadow falloff. • Thematic depth: truth as a weapon, memory as evidence, and guilt exposed through silence rather than spectacle. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens beat by beat, with each answer creating a new contradiction. • Performance style: restrained, micro-expressive acting; tension lives in eye contact, pauses, and controlled interruptions. • Camera philosophy: keep the room feeling smaller as the truth gets larger; let the recorder and table become a battlefield. • Emotional arc: from procedural questioning to intimate psychological collapse, ending on a quiet but devastating reveal.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Inspector Arvind age: 43 look: Raincoat pehne, stern face, hard stare, notebook haath mein; physically grounded and slightly imposing. dramatic_arc: Starts as the aggressive, controlling interrogator and gradually loses composure as Kavya's clues point toward his buried past. By the end, his authority fractures into panic and confession. • character: Inspector Mohit age: 39 look: Clean shave, careful eyes, calm posture; recorder aur file folder ke saath measured, observant presence. dramatic_arc: Begins as the softer, procedural counterweight to Arvind. He slowly pieces together the inconsistencies, discovers the hidden complaint and photo, and becomes the witness to Arvind's collapse. • character: Kavya age: 35 look: Elegant but visibly tense; bandaged wrist, steady gaze, controlled body language with a faint, unsettling composure. dramatic_arc: Appears as a frightened witness, then reveals herself as the victim's sister and the architect of a trap. She shifts from defensive to commanding, using ambiguity and timing to force the truth out.
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.

SET ARCHITECTURE & PROPS

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ART, WARDROBE & PROP MASTER

1. SET DESIGN & SPATIAL DEPTH PLAN:

A small apartment kitchen converted into an interview room, with the spatial feel of a temporary police setup inside a lived-in domestic space. The table should be central and slightly cramped, forcing all three characters into close proximity. Surfaces should show everyday wear: matte laminate, faint stains, chipped edges, and a slightly damp atmosphere from the rain. The window must be visible enough to register the pale exterior light and rainfall texture, but not so open that it breaks the intimacy. The pendant lamp should be the dominant practical, hanging low enough to create a pool of interrogation light and hard shadow under brows and cheekbones. Background layers should include a sink, cabinets, and minimal kitchen clutter kept out of focus to preserve the interview-room illusion. The apartment key, recorder, file folder, and tea cups must sit clearly on the table as visual anchors. The room should feel narrow, airless, and emotionally overfurnished by tension rather than objects.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **Inspector Arvind:** Dark raincoat over plain investigative clothing; practical, slightly damp look. Wardrobe should stay consistent and unglamorous, with the raincoat reinforcing his hard-edged approach.
- **Inspector Mohit:** Neat, understated police/procedural attire with a clean shave and controlled presentation. Clothing should read as functional and calm, with no visual aggression.
- **Kavya:** Elegant nightwear or refined home attire that still feels believable in an apartment setting. Bandaged wrist must remain visible and continuity-accurate throughout. Her look should balance vulnerability and control.

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

- **item:** Recorder | **details:** Small handheld recorder placed prominently on the table; must be functional in blocking, with visible ON state and rewind moment.
- **item:** File folder | **details:** Used by Mohit; contains the hidden complaint copy and photo. Must look official, slightly worn, and easy to open on camera.
- **item:** Tea cups | **details:** Two cups on the table, one occasionally offered forward by Mohit. Should feel domestic but tense, never comforting.
- **item:** Apartment key | **details:** Single key placed on the table and later picked up by Kavya. It should be visually distinct and easy to isolate in close-up.
- **item:** Notebook | **details:** Arvind's notebook, used for note-taking and as a sign of his procedural control.
- **item:** Bandage on Kavya's wrist | **details:** Visible, slightly imperfect wrap that can be covered and uncovered by Kavya during the scene.
- **item:** Complaint copy and photo | **details:** Hidden inside the file folder; must be readable enough to imply evidence without needing exposition.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup naturalistic and performance-led. Arvind should have a slightly tired, rain-dampened face with subtle under-eye fatigue and a hard matte finish under the lamp. Mohit should remain cleaner and more neutral, with minimal shine and controlled skin texture. Kavya needs the most nuanced work: faint stress in the eyes, slight under-eye softness, and a believable bandaged wrist that suggests recent injury without overplaying trauma. Add light perspiration or humidity sheen only where motivated by the room's heat and tension. Under the pendant lamp, skin should catch highlights selectively, especially on cheekbones, forehead, and the bandage wrap. No overt gore or injury effects are required; the scene's distress is psychological and procedural.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Inspector Arvind:** {'super_objective': 'To control the room and prevent the past from surfacing.', 'subtext': 'Every question is also self-defense. He attacks because he feels the floor shifting under him.'}
- **Inspector Mohit:** {'super_objective': 'To uncover the truth accurately, without letting emotion distort the case.', 'subtext': 'He wants facts, but he is increasingly aware that the facts are pointing toward someone in the room.'}
- **Kavya:** {'super_objective': 'To force the guilty man to expose himself on record.', 'subtext': 'Her fear is real, but it is being used as camouflage. She is always one step ahead of the men questioning her.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

MOHIT

Time kya hai, madam?

KAVYA

Raat ka. Aur baarish ka.

ARVIND

Smart answer. Par hum weather report nahi likh rahe.

KAVYA

Aap dono mein se kaun good cop hai?

MOHIT

Kaunsi wall?



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use intimate, pressure-cooker framing with 35mm and 50mm lenses for most dialogue, reserving tighter close-ups for reveals and micro-reactions. Keep the camera mostly at table height or slightly above eye line to preserve the interrogation geometry. Favor static or minimally drifting shots that feel observational, with subtle push-ins as contradictions accumulate. The recorder, key, and bandaged wrist should receive insert emphasis. Avoid flashy movement; the tension should come from composition, proximity, and the slow collapse of personal space.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Base practical motivation from the single pendant lamp, creating a hard pool of warm light over the table and deep falloff into the kitchen edges.

Tier 2: Pale window spill from the rainy exterior, cool and soft, used as a counter-tone on profiles and shoulders to separate silhouettes from the background.

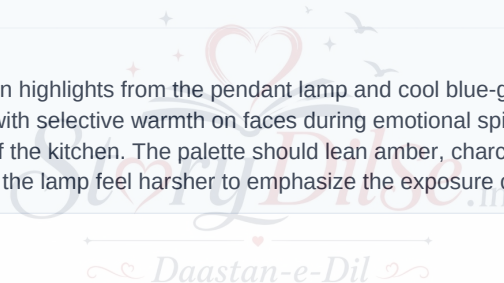
Tier 3: Controlled negative fill and selective bounce to sculpt faces, with slight flicker/jitter in the pendant lamp during the climax to heighten instability. As the scene progresses, let the room feel darker by reducing perceived ambient fill and tightening contrast around Arvind's breakdown.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Dominant rain ambience outside the window, with a constant low-frequency room tone that makes the kitchen feel sealed off. The recorder should have a clear mechanical presence: click, hum, rewind, and stop become narrative beats. Tea cup placement, file folder movement, notebook taps, and the apartment key on the table should be crisp Foley details. Dialogue should remain intimate and dry, with the room acoustics slightly boxy and close-miked. The faint distorted recorder playback line must feel like a ghost in the room. No music is necessary; silence and rain do the dramatic work.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a low-key noir grade with warm tungsten highlights from the pendant lamp and cool blue-gray shadows from the rainy window. Keep skin tones slightly desaturated but natural, with selective warmth on faces during emotional spikes. Contrast should be moderate-to-high, with deep blacks preserved in the corners of the kitchen. The palette should lean amber, charcoal, slate blue, and muted brown. In the climax, slightly deepen the shadows and let the lamp feel harsher to emphasize the exposure of Arvind's cover-up.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Load-in, kitchen dressing, prop placement, and rain-window continuity check	Art, Props, AD
09:00 - 10:30	Rig pendant lamp, shape window spill, and set negative fill	Camera, G&E;
10:30 - 11:15	Wardrobe, makeup, and bandage continuity prep	Wardrobe, Makeup
11:15 - 12:00	Rehearsal and blocking around table, recorder, and key beats	Director, Cast, Camera
12:00 - 14:30	Shoot interrogation dialogue coverage and inserts	Camera, Sound, Script Supervisor
14:30 - 15:30	Shoot reveal beats, file folder open, recorder rewind, and confession	Camera, Sound, Director

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Shoot in a real small apartment kitchen and enhance it with controlled dressing instead of building a set. Use one motivated practical pendant lamp plus a single soft source through the window for the entire scene. Keep the cast to three performers and let blocking create tension instead of extra production value. Use a real recorder and practical tea cups for authentic sound and texture. Hide the complaint copy and photo in a cheap office folder. Rain can be simulated with off-screen sound and window dressing rather than full exterior effects. Prioritize close-ups, inserts, and performance over coverage-heavy shooting to save time and preserve intensity.

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

