

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE ROOFTOP TENANT

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

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A late-night rooftop check turns into a supernatural reckoning when a caretaker and a tenant confront a woman who claims to be the building's missing resident—only to discover their own buried guilt may be the force keeping her there. As the footsteps return, the rooftop becomes a trap where memory, denial, and the dead refuse to stay hidden.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic rooftop horror with cold moonlight, unstable torch practical, and distant neon bleed creating a lonely urban nightmare. • Thematic depth: guilt as a haunting force; denial as a form of imprisonment; the building itself as a witness to buried wrongdoing. • Pacing: slow-burn tension with a controlled reveal, then a sharp emotional turn once the register is exposed, ending on a chilling, unresolved supernatural echo. • Performance style: restrained realism at first, then increasingly fractured reactions as the truth lands. • Camera language: minimal movement early, then subtle push-ins and handheld instability as Zoya's presence destabilizes the space.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character_name: Imran age: 32 look: Faded uniform, thin build, wary eyes, practical caretaker presence, torch and keys always in hand. dramatic_arc: Begins as the skeptical authority figure trying to dismiss the haunting, then cracks when the register reveals his complicity, ending in frozen guilt and fear. • character_name: Varun age: 28 look: T-shirt and pajama pants, restless body language, sleep-deprived, jittery, visibly reactive. dramatic_arc: Starts as the hyper-alert believer in the footsteps, escalates into panic when Zoya appears, and collapses into remorseful terror when the truth is exposed. • character_name: Zoya age: 30 look: White dress, damp hair, calm and detached presence, wet shawl on shoulder, unnervingly composed. dramatic_arc: Introduced as a polite, impossible tenant; gradually reveals herself as the buried truth of the rooftop; ends by reclaiming the space and vanishing into the tank's darkness.
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:

A small rooftop water-tank area at night, designed to feel cramped and exposed at once. The tank should dominate the space with rusty metal texture, chipped paint, damp streaks, and a heavy lid that reads as sealed and old. The rooftop floor should have rough concrete with water stains, grime, and subtle puddle sheen to catch moonlight and torch spill. Add a low parapet edge with distant city neon visible below as soft bokeh. Keep the environment sparse: tank, lid, register, keys, and a narrow walking path. Spatial layering should emphasize depth through foreground torch flare, midground actors, and background city glow. The area must feel like a place people pass through but never truly inhabit, except for the unsettling suggestion that someone has.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **Imran:** Faded caretaker uniform with worn fabric, muted earth tones, practical and slightly sweat-marked. Continuity: torch in hand, keys bunch visible, register carried during the reveal.
- **Varun:** T-shirt and pajama pants, casual homewear with a sleep-disheveled look. Continuity: no major costume change, but his body should read increasingly tense and disordered through performance.
- **Zoya:** White dress that catches moonlight, damp hair, and a wet shawl on the shoulder. Continuity: clothing should appear slightly moist throughout, with no sudden dry change, reinforcing her uncanny presence.

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

- **prop:** Single torch | **details:** Handheld practical torch with a narrow, shaky beam that can isolate faces, tank lid, and register. Beam should flicker slightly in the climax.
- **prop:** Keys bunch | **details:** Metal key ring in Imran's hand, audible and visible, used to show authority and later fear through trembling grip.
- **prop:** Building register | **details:** Old register with a faded page, visible entry 'ZOYA' and a cut mark reading 'SHIFTED OUT.' Paper should look aged, brittle, and partially torn.
- **prop:** Water tank lid | **details:** Rusty metal lid with a heavy, sealed look. Must produce a dull wet tap sound when Zoya touches it.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup grounded and subtle, with supernatural enhancement through texture and lighting response. Imran and Varun should have light sweat, under-eye fatigue, and slight skin shine from humid night air. Varun's face should progressively blanch as fear rises. Zoya should have a pale, calm complexion with damp hair and a soft wet sheen on skin and clothing, avoiding overt monster makeup. Use lighting-reactive makeup to catch moonlight on cheekbones and forehead. No gore is required; the horror is psychological and spectral.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Imran:** {'super_objective': 'To maintain control of the building and suppress any disturbance that threatens his sense of responsibility.', 'subtext': 'He is not just denying footsteps; he is denying his own role in what happened. His authority is a shield over guilt.'}
- **Varun:** {'super_objective': 'To prove the footsteps are real and force someone to acknowledge the threat.', 'subtext': 'He wants validation, but beneath the fear is a dawning realization that he has been hearing something he helped bury.'}
- **Zoya:** {'super_objective': 'To make the living finally see, hear, and remember her.', 'subtext': 'Her calmness is not peace; it is the power of someone who no longer needs to beg. She is reclaiming identity through confrontation.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

VARUN

((whispering, shaken))

Main bol raha hoon, Imran bhai, koi na koi hai.

IMRAN

((trying to dismiss, but uneasy))

Koi nahi hai. Tu bas raat ko zyada sochta hai.

VARUN

((fear rising))

Sochta nahi hoon. Sunta hoon.

ZOYA

((soft, calm))

Aap log mujhe dekh rahe ho?

VARUN

((almost screaming))

Nayi tenant? Top floor locked hai!



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use a restrained horror grammar: mostly locked-off or minimally drifting frames at first, with slow push-ins as the emotional pressure rises. Favor medium wides to preserve the rooftop geography, then cut into tight close-ups for the register reveal and guilt reactions. The torch beam should be treated as a moving visual weapon, carving faces out of darkness. Lens choice should feel intimate and slightly compressed in the rooftop space, with selective shallow depth to isolate Zoya from the environment while keeping the tank and city glow legible.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Moonlit baseline. Cool, soft top light simulating moonlight across the rooftop, with gentle edge separation on the tank and actors.
Tier 2: Torch practical. A narrow, unstable warm beam that creates hard contrast, reveals the register, and drives suspense by constantly shifting visibility.
Tier 3: Neon underglow and climax accent. Distant city neon as faint colored background texture, with torch and moonlight converging on the tank lid during the reveal, then falling back into near-darkness for the final disappearance.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Build the scene around sparse rooftop ambience: distant city hum, faint wind, occasional metal creak, and the dry hush of night air. The footsteps must be precise and repetitive, with a slightly hollow rooftop resonance. The torch should have a subtle electrical buzz if practical. Zoya's taps on the tank lid need a dull, wet metallic thud. Her voice should feel close, calm, and slightly submerged in the later lines. End with footsteps continuing and a soft wet laugh under the silence.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Cool monochrome moonlight base with steel blues, desaturated grays, and faint cyan neon spill. Skin tones should remain natural but slightly drained. Torch light should introduce warm amber contrast, creating a visual tug between safety and dread. In the reveal, increase contrast and preserve the rust texture of the tank and the faded paper of the register. Final frames should lean darker, with the white dress and wet hair of Zoya briefly catching the last usable highlights before she disappears.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Location prep, rooftop safety check, tank dressing, register and prop placement	Art, Production, Safety
09:00 - 10:30	Lighting rig and moonlight/neon simulation setup	Camera, G&E;
10:30 - 11:30	Blocking rehearsal with torch choreography and reveal timing	Director, Camera, Cast
11:30 - 13:00	Shoot dialogue build-up and footsteps tension beats	Camera, Sound, Cast
13:00 - 14:00	Shoot Zoya reveal, register insert, and confrontation lines	Camera, Sound, Cast, Art
14:00 - 15:00	Shoot final disappearance, footsteps, and ending reaction shots	Camera, Sound, Cast

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Use one rooftop location dressed with minimal elements: tank, lid, register, torch, and practical city glow. Keep lighting simple with one strong torch practical, one cool overhead source, and a distant colored accent. Shoot the footsteps with sound design rather than extra visual effects. Use a single camera setup per beat and rely on performance plus blocking to create fear. The register reveal can be achieved with a close insert and careful prop aging instead of complex VFX. For Zoya’s supernatural presence, prioritize stillness, wardrobe moisture, and controlled lighting over makeup-heavy effects.

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

