

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE UNOPENED DRAWER

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

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A dead man is found in a middle-class bedroom, but the real mystery is hidden in an unopened drawer that no one wanted to touch. As two inspectors interrogate a composed widow-like figure, the room reveals that the victim was blackmailing the wrong person—and the truth was sealed away in letters he never read.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: restrained, claustrophobic, and forensic, with the bedroom treated like a sealed evidence chamber. • Thematic depth: suspicion versus silence; what is hidden is not always guilt, and what remains unopened can hold the deepest truth. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens beat by beat, ending in a sharp reveal rather than action. • Performance style: minimal movement, micro-expressions, and controlled tension; every glance should feel like a clue. • Camera language: observational and precise, with deliberate emphasis on the drawer, dust line, letters, and the shifting power dynamic between the three characters.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character_name: Inspector Salim age: 46 look: Trench coat, gloves, tired eyes, measured posture, forensic calm. dramatic_arc: Begins as a quiet observer reading the room, then gradually identifies the drawer and letters as the real center of the case. He ends by reframing the crime from suspicion to truth. • character_name: Inspector Nitin age: 40 look: Rolled-up sleeves, restless energy, flashlight and evidence bag, impatient body language. dramatic_arc: Starts aggressive and certain, treating every object as motive. His certainty collapses when the letters reveal he misread the victim, the suspect, and the crime. • character_name: Kriti age: 37 look: Controlled, elegant, guarded, coffee mug in hand, composed even under pressure. dramatic_arc: Appears suspicious because of her calmness, but gradually reveals she is withholding emotion, not evidence. Her final truth shows she protected herself from a painful memory rather than hiding guilt.
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 middle-class bedroom converted into a crime scene, with practical realism and emotional residue. The room should feel lived-in but recently disturbed only by the presence of death. Use a bed near frame center-left, bedside table with the unopened lower drawer, a bedside lamp casting warm yellow light, partially closed curtains filtering gray morning daylight, and a dressing table/almirah area that can be scanned by flashlight. Surfaces should carry subtle dust, soft wear, and domestic texture: slightly faded paint, modest furniture finish, fabric curtain folds, and a quiet clutter of everyday life reduced to forensic stillness. The drawer must be visually distinct through its dust line and untouched handle. Spatial layers should allow doorway presence for Kriti, bedside investigation for Salim, and roaming scan paths for Nitin.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **character_name:** Inspector Salim | **costume_details:** Trench coat over neutral investigative clothing, gloves on throughout, practical shoes, slightly worn professional look. | **continuity_notes:** Gloves remain consistent during evidence reading and drawer observation. Trench coat should stay visually grounded and unflashy.
- **character_name:** Inspector Nitin | **costume_details:** Rolled-up sleeves, practical detective attire, flashlight and evidence bag as functional extensions of his look. | **continuity_notes:** Sleeves remain rolled; his physical restlessness should be reflected in how he carries the flashlight and bag.
- **character_name:** Kriti | **costume_details:** Elegant, controlled, middle-class domestic sophistication; coffee mug in hand as a constant prop. Clothing should read polished but not extravagant. | **continuity_notes:** Her composed appearance must remain intact throughout, with no visible breakdown in wardrobe continuity. The mug should stay with her until she places it down near the end.

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

- **prop:** Bedside lamp | **visual_details:** Warm yellow practical light source, visible in frame, creating a contrast with gray daylight.
- **prop:** Covered body under sheet | **visual_details:** A human form near the bed, fully covered, used only as a presence and not visually sensationalized.
- **prop:** Case file | **visual_details:** Held by Salim, used for measured investigation and scene reading.
- **prop:** Flashlight | **visual_details:** Held by Nitin, used to scan the bedside table and finally illuminate the drawer contents.
- **prop:** Evidence bag | **visual_details:** Carried by Nitin for the letters and any recovered material.
- **prop:** Coffee mug | **visual_details:** Held by Kriti throughout most of the scene; should feel ordinary, domestic, and emotionally defensive.
- **prop:** Bedside table lower drawer | **visual_details:** The unopened drawer with a clearly visible dust line and a handle that has not been recently touched.
- **prop:** Letters and envelopes | **visual_details:** A bundle of sealed and torn letters tied with an old ribbon, discovered inside the drawer.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep all makeup naturalistic and scene-specific. Salim and Nitin should have subtle under-eye fatigue and matte skin suitable for morning investigation. Nitin may carry a slight sheen of stress from the flashlight-lit scan. Kriti should appear controlled, with minimal makeup that reads elegant and composed; her face should only show micro-flinches, not overt distress. No heavy SFX gore is required because the body remains covered. Add faint morning-room pallor, slight tension in the jawlines, and realistic skin reactions to mixed lighting from lamp and daylight.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character_name:** Inspector Salim | **super_objective:** To identify the true emotional and physical center of the crime before making a premature judgment. | **subtext:** He is not just solving a murder; he is reading the room like a confession that has not yet spoken.
- **character_name:** Inspector Nitin | **super_objective:** To force the truth out quickly and prove his instincts are correct. | **subtext:** He believes speed equals clarity, but his impatience is the very thing that blinds him.
- **character_name:** Kriti | **super_objective:** To protect herself from being misread while keeping the painful truth sealed away. | **subtext:** Her calm is not innocence or guilt alone; it is emotional self-preservation.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

SALIM((*calm*))

Body kab discover hui?

KRITI

Subah ke around seven. Main coffee le rahi thi.

NITIN

Ye drawer kyun unopened hai?

KRITI

Kyunki wo band tha.

NITIN

Itna perfect answer suspicious lagta hai.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT**1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:**

Use restrained, investigative framing with 35mm and 50mm lenses for most dialogue, shifting to a tighter 85mm for micro-expressions and the drawer reveal. Favor static or very slow creeping movement, as if the camera itself is reading the room. Keep compositions layered: doorway for Kriti, bedside table for the clue, and bed/body as a silent anchor. Flashlight beams should create motivated highlights and selective visibility, while the final drawer reveal should feel like a forensic unsealing of truth.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

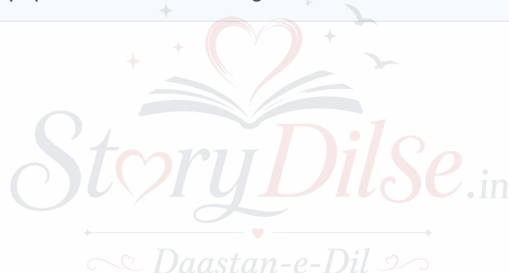
- 1) Opening: gray daylight through partially closed curtains as the dominant ambient source, with the bedside lamp adding a warm practical pool near the bed.
- 2) Interrogation: maintain low-key contrast, allowing flashlight sweeps to carve out the drawer, dust line, and faces in fragments.
- 3) Reveal and exit: keep the lamp and daylight balanced, but slightly soften the room after the letters are found so the emotional truth feels exposed rather than sensationalized.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Use a quiet morning room tone with faint exterior hush, soft curtain movement, and the low hum of the bedside lamp. Foley should emphasize glove rustle, flashlight clicks, drawer friction, coffee mug handling, paper rustle, and the subtle sound of evidence bag handling. Keep dialogue clean and intimate, with silence used as a pressure tool after key lines.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

A muted, desaturated crime-drama grade with cool gray daylight and a warm amber lamp contrast. Skin tones should remain natural but slightly subdued. The palette should lean toward dusty neutrals, soft browns, faded whites, and pale yellow highlights, with the drawer reveal carrying the clearest contrast through paper texture and flashlight beam.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Set dressing, body placement, and prop continuity check	Art, Props, Continuity
09:00 - 10:00	Lighting setup with curtain daylight control and bedside lamp practical	Gaffer, Camera, Grip
10:00 - 11:30	Blocking and performance rehearsal for interrogation beats	Director, Cast, Camera
11:30 - 13:00	Shoot dialogue coverage and reaction shots	Camera, Sound, Script Supervisor
13:00 - 14:00	Shoot drawer reveal, letters insert, and final exit beat	Camera, Art, Props

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Use one real bedroom with controlled window light and a single practical lamp to keep the setup lean. Build the crime-scene feel through art direction, not expensive dressing: dust line, sheet-covered body, and a few carefully placed domestic objects are enough. Shoot most coverage with one camera and minimal lens changes. The flashlight can replace complex lighting effects for the reveal. Keep the body fully covered to avoid makeup/SFX costs. Use paper props with aged printing and handwritten inserts to make the letters feel authentic without expensive fabrication.

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

