

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THREE CHAIRS, ONE SECRET

3 Female (F + F + F) | Genre: Emotional Drama | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A hospital waiting room becomes the battleground for three generations of women when an ailing mother reveals that the family home will pass not to the dutiful daughter, but to the outspoken granddaughter. What begins as a tense pre-surgery meeting turns into a reckoning about sacrifice, ownership, and the right to tell the truth.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: - Intimate chamber drama with emotional pressure built through stillness, pauses, and the oppressive sound of a ticking wall clock. - Visual language should feel sparse, clinical, and emotionally exposed: pale fluorescent light, plastic textures, and a single tea table as the center of family power. - Pacing must be restrained at first, then gradually tighten as the property reveal lands, allowing silence to do the heavy lifting. - Thematic core: love is not the same as ownership; duty is not the same as freedom; truth is the inheritance that matters most. - Performance style should be naturalistic, with micro-reactions, held eye-lines, and controlled emotional release rather than melodrama. - The final beat should feel quietly transformative, not triumphant: a family reconfigured, not resolved.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: character: Amma age: 72 look: Faded silk sari, upright posture, weathered dignity, hospital file held close, calm eyes that can turn decisive in a second. dramatic_arc: Begins as a quiet, seemingly fragile mother and reveals herself as the emotional architect of the room. She moves from silence to authority, making a final decision that protects both daughters in different ways. character: Leela age: 46 look: Simple salwar kameez, tired eyes, straight back, restrained body language, always trying to keep the room together. dramatic_arc: Starts as the dutiful caretaker carrying years of responsibility. She is wounded by the inheritance reveal, then slowly understands that her mother's choice is not rejection but release from a crushing role. character: Nidhi age: 22 look: College casuals, restless legs, phone in hand, defensive posture, sharp gaze that masks vulnerability. dramatic_arc: Begins as the skeptical outsider in her own family. She challenges the silence, then discovers that her rebellion is actually the quality her grandmother trusts to carry the family forward.
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 hospital waiting room with a compressed, emotionally charged layout. Three plastic chairs must sit in a visible line facing a tiny tea table, making the room feel like a tribunal. The wall clock should be prominent and slightly too loud, becoming a sonic and visual antagonist. The tea table holds a tissue box and a water cup, both practical and symbolic. An old family bag should sit close enough to reveal the family photo peeking out. Surfaces should be matte, worn, and easy to clean: scuffed plastic chairs, dull tile or linoleum floor, pale walls with institutional wear. The space should feel airless, with minimal depth and no decorative warmth, so that every object becomes emotionally loaded. The family photo and property paper copy must be physically legible as key story objects.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **Amma:** Faded silk sari with an aged, softened sheen; colors should feel muted and lived-in. Keep continuity consistent with a woman who has dressed with dignity despite illness. No flashy jewelry; any visible accessory should feel minimal and practical.
- **Leela:** Simple salwar kameez in subdued tones, practical and modest. Clothing should suggest a life built around responsibility and routine. Continuity note: she should look slightly more composed than the others, as if she has been holding herself together for years.
- **Nidhi:** College casuals that feel current but not stylized. Comfortable, slightly restless silhouette. Wardrobe should support her defensive energy and youth without making her look careless. Continuity note: her look should contrast with Leela's discipline and Amma's traditional dignity.

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

- **prop:** Hospital file | **visual_details:** Held in Amma's lap at the start; must be sturdy enough to conceal the folded property paper copy and family photo inside.
- **prop:** Property paper copy | **visual_details:** A folded document revealed from inside the hospital file; should read as official and important without needing close-up text clarity.
- **prop:** Family photo | **visual_details:** A physical photo peeking from the old family bag and later removed from the file; it must clearly show the three women standing in front of the old house.
- **prop:** Old family bag | **visual_details:** Worn, practical, and slightly overstuffed; it should feel like a container of family history.
- **prop:** Tissue box | **visual_details:** Placed on the tiny tea table; should be visibly used and slightly out of place, reinforcing the waiting-room realism.
- **prop:** Water cup | **visual_details:** Small disposable or hospital-style cup used by Amma near the end before she walks to surgery.
- **prop:** Small key | **visual_details:** A simple key taken from Amma's shawl pin and placed into Leela's hand; this is the final symbolic object of shared responsibility.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup naturalistic and age-accurate. Amma should show subtle signs of fatigue and hospital stress, but remain dignified. Leela should carry under-eye tiredness, slight dryness, and the emotional strain of long-term caregiving. Nidhi should look younger, with minimal makeup and a slightly restless, lived-in face. Add controlled sweat sheen only if needed under fluorescent lighting. No heavy SFX required; emotional distress should be conveyed through skin texture, watery eyes, lip tension, and flushed reactions under pale hospital light.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Amma | **super_objective:** To protect both daughters by assigning each the role she is best suited to carry. | **subtext:** I have seen enough silence to know what it costs; I will not leave this family trapped in it.
- **character:** Leela | **super_objective:** To be seen as more than duty and to understand whether her years of sacrifice meant anything. | **subtext:** I gave my life to this house; please tell me I was not invisible.
- **character:** Nidhi | **super_objective:** To force the family to speak honestly and to claim her place without being dismissed as immature. | **subtext:** If I keep asking questions, maybe someone will finally tell the truth.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

NIDHI

((looking at the clock))

Yeh clock bhi surgery ka side le raha hai kya?

NIDHI

Main baithi hi hoon, Maa. Aap dono hi aise behave kar rahe ho jaise main koi extra chair hoon.

AMMA

Extra chair nahi. Bas zyada bolne wali chair.

LEELA

((to Amma))

Amma, doctor ne bola tha aap tension mat lo. Phir bhi aapne humein yahan bula liya. Kuch serious hai kya?

AMMA

Serious toh tum logon ka silence hai.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use intimate, observational framing with a restrained handheld or locked-off hybrid approach. Favor 35mm and 50mm lenses for natural perspective, with occasional tighter 85mm close-ups for emotional fractures. Start with wider compositions that emphasize the three chairs and the oppressive geometry of the room, then progressively move into tighter singles and two-shots as the truth emerges. Camera movement should be minimal and deliberate, allowing pauses and eye-lines to carry tension. Avoid flashy coverage; the room itself is the dramatic engine.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Establishment with pale fluorescent overheads, flat and clinical, creating a cold institutional baseline. Tier 2: During the reveal, subtly shape faces with soft negative fill and controlled side bounce so emotional shifts read in the eyes and cheek planes without breaking realism. Tier 3: Final beat near surgery departure should maintain the same fluorescent world but allow slightly warmer skin separation through practical bounce or gentle key refinement, making the ending feel human without becoming sentimental.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

The wall clock tick must be a dominant rhythmic motif, almost louder than comfort allows. Room tone should include faint hospital HVAC, distant footsteps, muted corridor movement, and occasional offscreen medical ambience. Foley should emphasize chair creaks, tissue box handling, file paper rustle, the water cup touch, and the small key transfer. Dialogue should sit close and dry, with minimal reverb to preserve the claustrophobic waiting-room acoustic profile.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a cool, desaturated LUT with pale greens, washed whites, and muted skin tones to preserve the hospital atmosphere. Keep contrast moderate but let blacks stay soft rather than crushed. The palette should lean institutional: fluorescent white, gray-blue, faded sari tones, subdued salwar colors, and the warm but restrained accent of the family photo. The final image should retain emotional warmth only through faces and the symbolic photo, not through overall scene color.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Load-in, art placement, chair and table blocking	Art, Grip, Camera
09:00 - 10:00	Rig fluorescent practicals and test wall clock sound level	Electric, Sound, Camera
10:00 - 11:00	Wardrobe continuity check and prop dressing	Wardrobe, Props, Art
11:00 - 12:30	Rehearsal for silence beats, key reveal, and photo placement	Director, Cast, Script Supervisor
12:30 - 14:30	Shoot wide master and dialogue coverage	Camera, Sound, Script Supervisor
14:30 - 16:00	Shoot close-ups, property paper reveal, key handoff, final photo beat	Camera, Art, Props

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Shoot in a real hospital-approved waiting area or a convincingly dressed small room to avoid expensive set build. Use practical fluorescent fixtures and enhance with simple bounce and negative fill instead of full lighting rigs. Keep the cast to three performers and one offscreen nurse voice to minimize logistics. Use one hero prop package: file, photo, key, cup, tissue box, and bag. Cover the scene with a minimal lens package and prioritize performance over coverage. Record clean room tone and clock ticks separately if needed to strengthen the sound design without adding production complexity.

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

