

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE ROOFTOP PROMISE

3 Female (F + F + F) | Genre: Slice of Life/Family | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: Blue hour par apartment rooftop mein teen generations ki auratein ek dusre ke assumptions se takraati hain, jab Shanta ek chhote rented room ka secret plan reveal karti hai. Jo baat pehle paison ka masla lagti hai, woh ek emotional promise ban jaati hai: ab koi akeli nahi rahegi.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: intimate, lived-in realism with soft blue-hour melancholy and warm string-light relief. • Thematic depth: women's invisible labor, inherited loneliness, and the quiet courage of choosing togetherness. • Pacing: slow-burn tension in the first half, then a clean emotional release after the key reveal. • Performance style: restrained, naturalistic, with micro-expressions carrying the subtext. • Camera language: observational at first, then progressively closer and more embracing as the family reconnects. • Emotional arc: suspicion → misunderstanding → revelation → relief → collective warmth.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Shanta age: 65 look: Simple sari, composed posture, observant eyes, weathered but gentle presence; she sits like the rooftop's guardian. dramatic_arc: Begins as silent and unreadable, then reveals herself as the emotional architect of the family's future. She moves from guarded calm to decisive tenderness. • character: Meera age: 40 look: Office clothes, tired face, grocery bag in hand, practical and slightly defensive body language. dramatic_arc: Starts as stressed and assumption-driven, expecting a financial crisis. She softens through the album, then breaks into guilt, relief, and gratitude when she realizes Shanta's sacrifice. • character: Asha age: 15 look: School uniform, backpack on shoulder, trying to appear unimpressed while actually being highly alert. dramatic_arc: Begins as cautious and overthinking, worried about school trouble. She shifts into curiosity, then surprise, then childlike joy when the new room is revealed.
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 narrow apartment rooftop at blue hour with a strong sense of vertical confinement and open sky. The set should include a low parapet, one visible water tank, a folding stool near center, and a laundry line crossing the space to create layered depth. String lights should be practicals overhead or along one side, giving a soft warm contrast against the cool sky. The rooftop surface should feel worn: slightly cracked cement, dust, faint water stains, and lived-in edges. The old photo album should be placed near the stool as a tactile anchor. The space must feel intimate enough for family tension, yet open enough for the final emotional release and city-view ending.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **character:** Shanta | **costume:** Simple sari in muted, everyday tones; no ornamentation that distracts from her grounded presence. | **continuity_notes:** Must remain consistent through the scene; sari should allow her to stand, reach the laundry line, and hug comfortably.
- **character:** Meera | **costume:** Office clothes that read as end-of-day worn: practical, slightly rumpled, with the grocery bag as part of her arrival state. | **continuity_notes:** Should look tired but functional; no wardrobe change. Keep the office-to-rooftop transition believable.
- **character:** Asha | **costume:** School uniform with backpack; neat but slightly lived-in from the day. | **continuity_notes:** Uniform should remain intact for the emotional reveal and final hug; backpack should be removable without disrupting continuity.

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

- **prop:** Folding stool | **details:** Small, simple, centered near Shanta; used as a symbolic seat of authority and later as a visual anchor.
- **prop:** Grocery bag | **details:** Carried by Meera on entry; should look like a real after-work grocery carry, not stylized.
- **prop:** Backpack | **details:** Asha's school backpack, worn on shoulder at entry; practical and age-appropriate.
- **prop:** Old photo album | **details:** Physical album near the stool; contains old rooftop photos, younger women, laundry, and festivals.
- **prop:** Small envelope | **details:** Pulled from behind a hanging sari on the laundry line; must feel hidden but intentional.
- **prop:** Rooftop key | **details:** Inside the envelope; the key to a rented room, visually clear and emotionally significant.
- **prop:** Tea glasses | **details:** Present in the final rooftop moment; simple household glasses that support the ending's domestic warmth.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup natural and age-appropriate. Shanta should have minimal makeup with subtle texture, mature skin detail, and a calm, lived-in face. Meera should show end-of-day fatigue: slight under-eye darkness, mild shine, and stress-softened features. Asha should look youthful, clean, and school-day fresh, with only slight perspiration or rooftop wind disturbance. For the final emotional beat, allow tear sheen on Meera and a slightly flushed face on Asha after the hug. No heavy SFX required; only realistic sweat, wind-touched hair, and emotional moisture.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Shanta | **super_objective:** To keep her family together before loneliness becomes inherited. | **subtext:** I have already carried too much alone; now I will make you understand without begging.
- **character:** Meera | **super_objective:** To protect the household through practicality and control. | **subtext:** If I can solve the money problem fast, I can stop the fear underneath it.
- **character:** Asha | **super_objective:** To avoid being seen as a burden while secretly wanting reassurance. | **subtext:** Please don't make this about my mistakes; I'm trying to be strong.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

MEERA

(defensive, worried)

Maa, aapne itni urgency mein bulaya... sab theek hai na?

ASHA

(trying to cover up anxiety)

Kya hua? School se call aaya kya?

MEERA

(practical, fast)

Ab bolo. Agar paision ki baat hai, toh main manage kar lungi.

ASHA

(overcompensating)

Aur agar mera koi complaint hai, toh main pehle hi bol deti hoon— Maths test theek gaya tha.

SHANTA

(dry, knowing)

Wah. Dono ek hi waqt pe guilty bhi, defensive bhi.



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

Use intimate, human-scale framing with 35mm and 50mm lenses for most dialogue, and a 75mm or 85mm for emotional close-ups during the album and key reveal. Begin with slightly wider, observational compositions that keep the rooftop environment visible, then move into tighter coverage as the emotional truth emerges. Favor subtle handheld or very gentle stabilized movement to preserve realism. The camera should feel like a quiet witness, not a manipulator, with the final tableau held in a composed wide that lets the rooftop and city lights breathe.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

- 1) Opening blue-hour base: cool ambient sky fill as the dominant source, with soft warm string lights creating a domestic island in the rooftop space.
- 2) Mid-scene tension/reveal: maintain cool overall exposure but add gentle keying on faces from practicals or hidden soft sources so the album and envelope moments read clearly without losing the blue-hour mood.
- 3) Final emotional release: slightly lift warmth on the trio and the tea-glass tableau, while keeping the city background cool; preserve the contrast between intimate family warmth and the approaching monsoon atmosphere.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Layer distant city hum, occasional traffic wash, and rooftop wind as the constant ambient bed. Emphasize laundry flutter, soft sari movement, envelope paper rustle, album page turns, and the small metallic sound of the key. Dialogue should feel close and dry, with rooftop acoustics lightly open but not echoey. In the final beat, let the wind and city noise continue under the laughter to preserve the sense of a living neighborhood.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Blue-hour cools should dominate the shadows and background, with warm amber practicals from string lights and tea glasses providing emotional contrast. Skin tones should remain natural and slightly warm against the cool environment. Keep saturation restrained, with gentle lift in highlights for the final reveal. The palette should feel slate blue, soft amber, muted cement gray, and the occasional fabric color from the sari and uniform.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Rooftop set dressing, laundry line, stool, album, envelope, tea glasses placement	Art, Props
09:00 - 10:30	Lighting rig and practical string light test, wind continuity check	Gaffer, Camera, Art
10:30 - 11:30	Blocking rehearsal for entry, seating, album reveal, key reveal, final hug	Director, Cast, Camera
11:30 - 13:00	Dialogue coverage for opening tension and album sequence	Camera, Sound, Cast
13:00 - 14:00	Key reveal coverage and emotional reaction shots	Camera, Sound, Cast
14:00 - 15:00	Final rooftop tableau, tea glasses, city-view ending, pickup inserts	Camera, Art, Sound

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:
Shoot at a real rooftop location with existing parapet and water tank to avoid construction costs. Use practical string lights and natural blue hour instead of heavy lighting setups. Keep wardrobe from actors' own believable everyday clothes with minor continuity dressing. Use one real photo album and one real envelope/key prop. Record clean production sound with a simple two-mic setup and capture wind wild tracks separately. Limit company moves by designing the scene as one contained rooftop block with coverage planned around the same axis. Use a small crew and prioritize performance over coverage volume.

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

