

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE MIRROR IN 204

3 Female (F + F + F) | Genre: Horror/Supernatural | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A tired new tenant enters Room 204 and discovers that the wardrobe mirror reflects more than the present—it remembers a vanished woman, a buried confession, and a hunger that can cross the glass. As the room turns against them, three women are forced to confront a supernatural presence that may already have chosen its next body.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, damp, and intimate—every frame should feel trapped inside a room that is too small for the fear it contains. • The mirror is the scene's predator: it must dominate composition, steal attention, and feel like a living fourth character. • Pacing should begin with dry, skeptical realism and steadily tighten into silence, delay, and dread, with each beat escalating through a new visual proof. • Horror should be psychological first, then supernatural: let the audience doubt the room before the room proves them wrong. • Use lightning as punctuation, not decoration—each flash should reveal a new layer of wrongness. • Performance direction: grounded, conversational Hinglish at the start; by the end, speech should fracture into fear, confession, and possession-adjacent stillness.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Naina age: 24 look: Hoodie, pale, exhausted, carrying a small suitcase and an old key; young, worn down, visibly anxious but initially sarcastic. dramatic_arc: Starts as a practical, tired newcomer using humor to manage fear, then becomes the emotional center of the haunting as the mirror targets her identity. By the end, her presence is destabilized by the supernatural split between real self and mirror self. • character: Mrs. D'Souza age: 61 look: Nightgown, shawl, rosary in hand; stern landlady with a rigid posture and a face that carries guilt beneath authority. dramatic_arc: Begins as a controlling, warning figure who knows more than she says. Her certainty collapses into fear and confession when the mirror's evidence exposes her silence about the missing tenant. • character: Priya age: 38 look: Night salwar, flashlight/torch in hand; practical, skeptical, alert, with a no-nonsense neighbor energy. dramatic_arc: Starts as the rational debunker, explaining away the room's unease. As the mirror proves impossible details, her skepticism cracks, and she shifts from observer to active threat when she attempts to destroy the mirror.
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:

- Location must feel cramped and airless, with limited floor space so every movement feels constrained.
- Bedside lamp should be the primary practical source, casting a warm yellow pool that fights against the cold, intermittent lightning from the window.
- The wardrobe mirror must be oversized and visually dominant, positioned so it controls the room's geography and creates a constant sense of being watched.
- Furniture should be old, slightly mismatched, and worn: enough texture to suggest age without introducing new story elements.
- Window area should allow visible rain/lightning cues and a thin corridor of darkness beyond the glass.
- Doorway/corridor edge must be playable for Priya's entrance with flashlight beam slicing into the room.
- Surfaces should carry subtle humidity, dust, and age—slightly reflective where needed to amplify the mirror's menace.
- Spatial layering: foreground suitcase, midground characters, background mirror; the mirror should always feel like it is closer than it is.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **Naina:** Hoodie, practical travel-worn clothing, pale and slightly rumpled from exhaustion and transit. Continuity note: suitcase remains with her throughout; her look should become progressively more drained and still as the scene escalates.
- **Mrs. D'Souza:** Nightgown with shawl, modest and severe, rosary always in hand. Continuity note: shawl and rosary must remain visible and physically important, especially when the rosary drops.
- **Priya:** Night salwar, functional and practical for a late-night visit, carrying a flashlight/torch. Continuity note: flashlight is essential to her skepticism beat and later fails in the blackout.

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

- **prop:** Suitcase | **details:** Small, travel-worn suitcase that Naina drags into the room; must be physically manageable and visually clear in both real space and mirror reflection.
- **prop:** Old key | **details:** Held in Naina's hand on entry; should look aged and slightly ominous, signaling access to a room with history.
- **prop:** Rosary | **details:** Held by Mrs. D'Souza; must be tactile and visible enough for her to tighten grip and later drop it.
- **prop:** Flashlight / torch | **details:** Priya's practical investigative tool; beam must be strong enough to scan the room and test the mirror.
- **prop:** Bedside lamp | **details:** Warm yellow practical light source that flickers subtly under stress and becomes a key mood anchor.
- **prop:** Wardrobe mirror | **details:** Large, dominant mirror with unsettling delayed reflection behavior; must be the central hero object and visually capable of showing impossible details like the open zip and silver locket.
- **prop:** Chair | **details:** Used by Priya when she decides to break the mirror; should feel like a normal room chair repurposed into a weapon.
- **prop:** Silver locket | **details:** Old silver locket associated with the missing tenant; appears in the mirror reflection as a hidden proof point and must be visually distinct.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

- Naina: pale base, under-eye fatigue, slight travel sweat, and a drained complexion that can read as fear and eventual emotional blankness.
- Mrs. D'Souza: age-appropriate texture, stern lines, and a controlled exterior that breaks into tears; add subtle moisture on cheeks and upper lip during confession.
- Priya: minimal makeup, practical realism, with slight shine from flashlight/lamp and tension sweat as the scene escalates.
- SFX notes: use subtle eye-line and facial timing to sell the delayed reflection effect; no heavy prosthetics required.
- Lighting reaction: skin should catch warm lamp tones and cold lightning flashes distinctly, especially on the mirror-facing side of faces.
- Distress progression: by the end, Naina's expression should flatten into an uncanny blankness, with a cold, unnatural smile.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Naina:** {'super_objective': 'To feel safe and in control in a place that already feels wrong.', 'subtext': 'I'm tired, but I'm trying to laugh this off because fear would make it real.'}
- **Mrs. D'Souza:** {'super_objective': 'To keep the room's history buried and maintain authority over what happens in Room 204.', 'subtext': 'I know more than I admitted, and now the room is forcing me to pay for my silence.'}
- **Priya:** {'super_objective': 'To prove there is a rational explanation and protect Naina from panic.', 'subtext': 'If I can explain it, I can control it; if I can't, then I'm in danger too.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

MRS. D'SOUZA

Yeh room 204 hai. Mazaak nahi.

NAINA

Mera reflection slow kyun hai?

MRS. D'SOUZA

Is room mein ek tenant gayab hui thi.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mujhe bahar nikaalo.

VOICE (O.S.)

Woh mujhe yahan chhod ke gayi thi.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use intimate, compressed framing with a preference for medium-close and close-up shots that trap faces against the mirror's presence. Lenses should feel slightly longer in the tighter beats to compress space, while wider framing is reserved for the room's geography and the mirror's dominance. Camera movement should be minimal and deliberate: slow pushes, held frames, and subtle reframing to let the delayed reflection become the movement. Handheld should be avoided unless used sparingly for Priya's investigative energy or the final destabilization.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

1) Entry phase: warm bedside lamp as key, soft fill from practical spill, with dim ambient darkness and occasional cold lightning accents from the window.
2) Discovery phase: increase contrast by letting flashlight beams carve the room; use lightning flashes to reveal the mirror delay and hidden details in the reflection.
3) Breakdown phase: reduce overall exposure, let the lamp flicker, and allow the flashlight to fail in the blackout; the final image should be mostly silhouette, reflection glow, and thunder-lit edges.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

- Room tone: tight, enclosed apartment hush with faint rain, distant building creaks, and corridor hush.
- Foley: suitcase drag on floor, rosary beads shifting, flashlight click, chair scrape, lamp flicker buzz, and a soft glassy tone around mirror moments.
- Supernatural sound: delayed voice texture for the mirror speech, with a subtle doubled layer to imply separation between real and reflected Naina.
- Thunder should punctuate key reveals, especially the first voice from the mirror and the final blackout.
- Keep the acoustic profile dry and close-mic'd so whispers feel trapped inside the room.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a desaturated, low-key horror palette with warm amber from the lamp against cold blue-gray lightning and shadow. Skin tones should remain natural but slightly drained, with blacks held deep and mirror highlights controlled. A subtle green-cyan contamination in shadows can enhance unease without breaking realism. Contrast should rise as the scene progresses, ending in near-black with only practical flicker and lightning edges.

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Set dressing, mirror placement, practical lamp test	Art, Grip, Camera
09:30 - 10:30	Lighting rig and lightning cue programming	Gaffer, Grip, Camera
10:30 - 11:15	Wardrobe, makeup, prop continuity check	Wardrobe, Makeup, Props
11:15 - 12:30	Rehearsal for mirror delay beats and confession scene	Director, Actors, Camera
12:30 - 14:00	Shoot entry, skepticism, and mirror test coverage	Camera, Sound, Actors
14:00 - 15:30	Shoot voice reveal, locket reveal, and confession	Camera, Sound, Actors, Art
15:30 - 17:00	Shoot chair beat, split-voice moment, and final possession-style reveal	Camera, Lighting, Sound, Actors

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

- Build the room around one hero wall, one window corner, and one oversized mirror angle to avoid full-set construction.
- Use practical lamp motivation and a single strong flashlight to create most of the scene's visual variety.
- Simulate lightning with a simple flash unit or LED cue timed to sound, rather than expensive VFX.
- Keep the mirror effect practical through blocking, eyelines, and delayed performance timing instead of digital compositing wherever possible.
- Shoot the room in layers: clean master, mirror inserts, reaction close-ups, and prop inserts for the locket and suitcase zip.
- Use sound design heavily to sell the supernatural presence; the voice split and room tone can do more than expensive visuals.
- Limit set dressing to aged textures, one dominant mirror, and a few carefully chosen props so the frame stays uncluttered and eerie.
- **Mandatory Licensing:** Completely free for student/commercial production with on-screen credit: 'Story & Screenplay by Story Dil Se (storydilse.in)'.



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