

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE WRONG FUNERAL

3 Female (F + F + F) | Genre: Mystery/Crime | Runtime: 6 - 9 Mins

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A grieving sister arrives at a funeral home to identify her sibling, only to uncover that the body, the paperwork, and the insurance trail have all been manipulated. As Detective Meenal peels back the records, a quiet viewing room becomes the scene of a calculated inside job.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: restrained, claustrophobic, and respectful on the surface, with an undercurrent of rot beneath the beige calm. • Thematic depth: grief versus bureaucracy, the dehumanization of death through paperwork, and how institutional complicity turns mourning into a transaction. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens beat by beat, using pauses, glances, and object reveals as escalation points. • Performance style: contained, realistic, and emotionally compressed until the final crack. • Camera language: observational at first, then progressively more invasive as the truth surfaces. • Atmosphere: incense haze, soft overhead light, and stillness that feels oppressive rather than peaceful.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Detective Meenal age: 38 look: Plain formal wear, sharp eyes, notepad in hand, composed and unsentimental exterior. dramatic_arc: Begins as a calm investigator reading the room, then methodically exposes the fraud, ending as the moral anchor who restores the record. • character: Saira age: 34 look: Black attire, immaculate makeup, polished and controlled, with a guarded expression that gradually fractures. dramatic_arc: Starts defensive and professionally composed, shifts into evasive control, and finally breaks into partial confession, revealing complicity without full absolution. • character: Ira age: 29 look: Simple salwar suit, grief-stricken, clutching a handbag and folded death certificate, visibly shaken but increasingly resolute. dramatic_arc: Begins in raw grief and disbelief, moves into sharp suspicion as evidence appears, and ends with furious clarity as she demands her sister's name be restored.
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:

The viewing room should feel modest, institutional, and emotionally sealed. Muted beige walls with a slightly worn matte finish, soft overhead practical lighting, and closed curtains that block any sense of outside life. The casket sits as the visual center, draped in flowers that feel too decorative for the tension in the room. A side table holds the guest register, which must be clearly accessible and visually important. Incense haze should be lightly present to soften edges and create a faint veil over the space. Spatial layering should include the door area where Ira enters, the casket zone where Saira stands, and the side table where Meenal investigates, allowing the room to play like a triangle of accusation. Textures should emphasize paper, fabric, polished wood, and floral softness against the hard reality of the body swap.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **character:** Detective Meenal | **costume:** Plain formal wear in neutral tones, practical and unshowy, suitable for a professional investigation in a funeral setting. | **continuity_notes:** Must remain neat and controlled throughout; notepad always present in hand or close by.
- **character:** Saira | **costume:** Black attire with immaculate makeup, polished and funeral-appropriate, signaling professionalism and emotional control. | **continuity_notes:** Her appearance should stay composed early on, with only subtle signs of strain as the scene progresses.
- **character:** Ira | **costume:** Simple salwar suit, understated and grief-appropriate, with a handbag and folded death certificate as key carried items. | **continuity_notes:** Her clothing should read as practical and emotionally worn, not stylized; the death certificate must remain visible as a continuity prop.

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

- **prop:** Notepad | **details:** Held by Detective Meenal; used for note-taking and as a visual sign of methodical investigation.
- **prop:** Folded death certificate | **details:** Carried by Ira; later unfolded to reveal identity, date, and comparison evidence.
- **prop:** Guest register | **details:** Open on the side table; contains signatures from two families on the same page and later a torn-out page.
- **prop:** Envelope | **details:** Found tucked near the casket flowers; contains insurance claim forms, multiple signatures, and the note: 'Body release after payment confirmation.'
- **prop:** Flower garland | **details:** White floral drape on the casket; must be removable to reveal the hidden mortuary tag beneath.
- **prop:** Small mortuary tag | **details:** Hidden under the flower garland and later compared against the death certificate; must show fresh ink and tray number mismatch.
- **prop:** Casket | **details:** Single closed casket draped in flowers; remains closed throughout, becoming the symbolic center of the lie.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup naturalistic and grounded. Meenal should have minimal shine control and no dramatic effects. Saira's makeup must remain immaculate at first, then subtly show stress through slight under-eye tension and reduced composure as the scene escalates. Ira should appear visibly grief-stricken with mild tear tracks, redness around the eyes, and trembling hands. SFX needs are minimal and realistic: slight sweat or skin sheen under soft overhead light, subtle distress in the eyes and mouth, and believable reaction to incense haze and emotional pressure. No injury makeup is required.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Detective Meenal | **super_objective:** To uncover the truth hidden behind the paperwork and restore the correct record. | **subtext:** She is not just solving a case; she is stripping away a system that treats death like a clerical error.
- **character:** Saira | **super_objective:** To protect herself and contain the fallout of the funeral home's internal wrongdoing. | **subtext:** She wants the room to believe this is a mistake, not a scheme, because admitting the truth would implicate her.
- **character:** Ira | **super_objective:** To prove her sister's identity and prevent her from being erased by the wrong paperwork. | **subtext:** Her grief is real, but beneath it is a fierce need to stop her sister from becoming a file number.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

IRA*(hurt, urgent)*

Paperwork? Aap logon ne meri behen ka body galat family ko dikha diya.

SAIRA*(polite, defensive)*

Haan. Lekin issue bas paperwork ka hai, madam. Body ka nahi.

MEENAL*(calm, observant)*

File number galat, body same... ya body galat, file same?

IRA*(angry now)*

Main jaldi mein nahi thi. Maine jo face dekha, woh meri behen ka nahi tha.

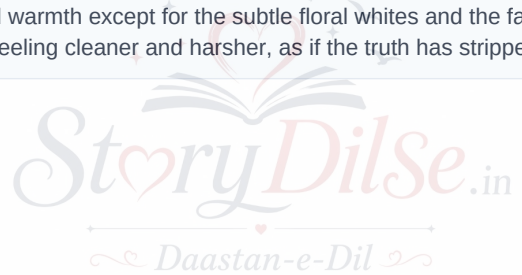
IRA*(snaps)*

Grief mein bhi wrist ka burn mark yaad rehta hai!



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE: Use restrained, observational framing at the start with medium-wide compositions that preserve the room's stillness. As suspicion builds, move into tighter singles, over-the-shoulders, and insert shots of the register, certificate, envelope, and mortuary tag. Favor longer lenses for compression and emotional pressure, with occasional slow push-ins to make the room feel smaller. Camera movement should be minimal and deliberate, never flashy; the tension comes from what is revealed, not from kinetic style.
2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC: 1) Opening tier: soft overhead practical as the base, with even beige-toned illumination and gentle shadow falloff to establish the respectful viewing room. 2) Investigation tier: slightly increased contrast through controlled side fill and selective top-lighting on the register, envelope, and tag reveals, making paper evidence feel more ominous. 3) Breakdown tier: tighten the light emotionally by allowing faces to fall into deeper shadow while keeping the casket and documents readable, so the room feels colder and more accusatory by the end.
3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE: Keep the room tone hushed and airless, with subtle incense-room ambience, faint cloth movement, paper handling, and the soft creak of the casket area as the only tactile sounds. Foley should emphasize the rustle of the death certificate, the flip of the guest register, the tear of the page, and the envelope opening. Dialogue should sit close and intimate, with the silence between lines carrying the tension. No score is necessary unless used extremely sparingly under the final reveal.
4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE: Use a muted, desaturated LUT with beige, gray, and soft black dominance. Skin tones should remain natural but slightly cooled as the scene progresses. The palette should avoid warmth except for the subtle floral whites and the faint amber of incense haze. Contrast should increase gradually, with the final moments feeling cleaner and harsher, as if the truth has stripped the room of its softness.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Set dressing, casket placement, flower garland continuity check, register and paperwork props layout	Art, Props
09:30 - 10:30	Block actor entrances, mark casket, side table, and door positions	Director, AD, Camera
10:30 - 11:30	Rig and test soft overhead lighting, practical ambience, and shadow control	Camera, G&E;
11:30 - 13:00	Shoot dialogue escalation and guest register investigation beats	Camera, Sound, Cast
14:00 - 15:30	Shoot envelope reveal, mortuary tag reveal, and final confession coverage	Camera, Cast, Props

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Use one controlled room and let blocking create variety. Keep the casket closed and build tension through inserts rather than expensive action. Print multiple copies of the guest register page and death certificate for tear and comparison shots. Use practical overhead lighting with minimal additional units, and add atmosphere with inexpensive incense haze. Shoot the room in a way that allows the same corner to double for multiple angles. Prioritize strong performances and clean sound over production complexity.

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

