

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE TENANT ON THE TOP FLOOR

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

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: Ek purani apartment building ke top floor par ek locked room se aane wali crying complaint investigate karne aayi Inspector Tara ko Mrs. Khan aur Leena ke beech aisa sach milta hai jo practical logic ko tod deta hai. Jab room khulta hai, tenant ka chehra, reflection, aur building ka record sab ek hi haunting truth ki taraf point karte hain: jo tenant gayi thi, woh abhi bhi building mein hai.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: claustrophobic, minimal, and eerie; one corridor, one tube light, one locked door, maximum dread. • Thematic depth: denial vs. belief, memory trapped in architecture, and the fear of being physically present but spiritually unresolved. • Pacing: slow-burn investigation that tightens into a sudden supernatural reveal, then ends on a sharp, unsettling freeze. • Camera language: restrained observational framing at first, then subtle perspective distortion as reality destabilizes. • Horror style: no gore, no spectacle—fear comes from stillness, silence, and impossible spatial behavior. • Performance direction: Tara stays controlled until the final beat; Mrs. Khan oscillates between irritation and panic; Leena remains unnervingly calm throughout.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character_name: Inspector Tara age: 37 look: Plain clothes, practical presence, torch and police notebook in hand, alert eyes, grounded body language. dramatic_arc: Starts as a skeptical, methodical investigator who believes the complaint can be explained logically; by the end, her certainty fractures when the room, the register, and the notebook all confirm the impossible. • character_name: Mrs. Khan age: 59 look: Housecoat, keys tightly clenched, tense shoulders, expressive face that carries both fear and stubbornness. dramatic_arc: Begins defensive and irritated, trying to control the narrative; gradually reveals genuine fear and guilt, ending in full terror when the haunting becomes undeniable. • character_name: Leena age: 24 look: Rain-damp kurta, pale face, quiet stillness, tired eyes, minimal movement, almost ghostlike composure. dramatic_arc: Appears as an odd but plausible tenant; her flat, detached responses and impossible presence in the reflection reveal her as the central supernatural mystery.
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 top-floor apartment corridor with compressed width and a long vanishing point to intensify isolation. Walls should feel old, slightly stained, and matte, with visible wear around door frames and the locked room. The single tube light must be practical and visibly flickering, with a faint buzz. Door peepholes should catch tiny highlights, creating the sense of watching eyes. The stairwell entrance should remain a dark void with a cold draft effect. The locked room door needs a worn surface, old chain, aged lock, faded nameplate, and subtle screw marks where a previous plate may have been removed. Inside the room, keep it sparse: dust, a window, a damp outline on the wall, and no furniture or luggage. Add a dusty ledge for the maintenance register and notebook reveal. The corridor should allow shadow separation so the characters' silhouettes can feel visually wrong during the supernatural shift.
2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY: • Inspector Tara: Plain clothes in muted, practical tones suitable for an investigator. No flashy accessories. Wardrobe should allow easy movement and read as professional but off-duty. Keep continuity clean and realistic; torch and notebook are her key visual identifiers. • Mrs. Khan: Housecoat with lived-in texture, slightly worn fabric, domestic and defensive. She should look like she has stepped into the corridor in a hurry. Keys must remain a constant prop in hand until they fall in the climax. • Leena: Rain-damp kurta with visible wetness and a subdued color palette. Fabric should cling slightly to suggest recent rain. Her look must remain consistent as pale, quiet, and unnervingly still, with no decorative styling that distracts from the eerie simplicity.
3. HERO PROPS MASTER CHECKLIST (PRACTICAL ON-SET ASSETS): • Torch for Inspector Tara with a strong practical beam and visible spill on walls and lock. • Police notebook used for notes and final supernatural reveal on the last page. • Keys held tightly by Mrs. Khan, later dropped in fear. • Locked room door with chain and old lock, visibly aged and functional. • Faded nameplate on the door with worn ink and old screw marks. • Maintenance register with a dusty, aged look and a faded photograph of Leena on the last page. • Corridor tube light practical fixture with flicker and buzz. • Peepholes on corridor doors catching small highlights. • Glass pane or reflective surface in the corridor for Leena's reflection reveal.
4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA): Tara should have minimal makeup with a natural, slightly tired investigative look; add subtle under-eye fatigue and a faint sheen from the corridor heat or tension. Mrs. Khan needs age-appropriate texture, slight under-eye stress, and a face that can shift from irritation to fear quickly. Leena requires pale complexion, subdued lips, and a still, drained appearance; her skin should react softly to the tube light with a slightly desaturated look. For the supernatural mood, use controlled sweat on Tara and Mrs. Khan, and a damp sheen on Leena's kurta and hairline. No heavy prosthetics or gore. The final fear beat should be supported by lighting-reactive makeup that makes the faces feel more hollow under flicker.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **Inspector Tara:** {'super_objective': 'To restore order by finding a rational explanation and resolving the complaint.', 'subtext': 'I will not be fooled by gossip or fear; I need facts, but I am starting to sense something is wrong.'}
- **Mrs. Khan:** {'super_objective': 'To force someone in authority to acknowledge the danger she has been carrying alone.', 'subtext': 'I know this building's secret, and I need you to believe me before it gets worse.'}
- **Leena:** {'super_objective': 'To remain present without fully revealing what she is.', 'subtext': 'I am not here to explain myself; I am here because the building has not let me go.'}

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

TARA

((dry))

Top floor ka drama yahin khatam hoga, Mrs. Khan. Crying ki complaint hai, ya building ka talent show?

MRS. KHAN

((offended, whispering))

Madam, mazaak mat kariye. Raat ko room se bachche jaisa rona aata hai. Aur yeh ladki...

LEENA

((softly))

Haan.

TARA

Aap akeli rehti ho?

LEENA

Shayad.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use restrained, intimate framing with 35mm and 50mm equivalents for most corridor coverage to preserve claustrophobia and natural perspective. Start with stable, observational medium shots and slow push-ins; as the haunting escalates, introduce subtle lens breathing, slight perspective distortion, and tighter close-ups on eyes, lock, and shadows. Favor over-the-shoulder compositions that trap characters in the corridor geometry. Movement philosophy: minimal but deliberate—small dolly pushes, controlled handheld tremor only at the reveal, and a final freeze-like stillness before cut to black.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Corridor baseline with a single flickering tube light as the primary source, supplemented by very soft negative fill to deepen shadows and isolate faces.

Tier 2: Torch practical from Tara to carve the lock, chain, nameplate, and register; use motivated bounce only when needed to keep the beam readable.

Tier 3: Supernatural escalation with timed flicker cues, slight color temperature shift toward colder green-blue, and shadow separation so the characters' silhouettes can appear misaligned. The room reveal should be lit with a dim, cold ambient spill from the corridor and a controlled window source to expose dust and the damp outline.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Dominant tube light buzz, low stairwell wind, and corridor room tone with a hollow, enclosed reverb. Footsteps should feel soft but unnaturally present, especially when Leena speaks of footsteps inside the wall. The lock click, chain loosen, and key jingle must be crisp and tactile. At the reveal, use a distant child-like cry or ambiguous air movement, followed by a hollow footstep from inside the wall. Keep the final notebook reveal almost silent except for the tube light hum and a faint breath.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Cold, desaturated horror palette with green-blue shadows and muted skin tones. Preserve a sickly fluorescent cast from the tube light while keeping the torch beam slightly warmer for contrast. The room interior should feel dust-gray and drained, with the damp outline reading as a subtle darker cyan. Final beat should reduce saturation further and emphasize contrast between the practical light and the encroaching darkness.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:30	Scout corridor, mark blocking, and test tube light flicker timing	Direction, Camera, Gaffer, Art
09:30 - 11:00	Dress corridor, place nameplate, chain, lock, peephole highlights, and maintenance register	Art, Props, Camera
11:00 - 12:30	Rehearse dialogue beats and shadow-position continuity for all three actors	Direction, Cast, Script Supervisor
12:30 - 14:00	Shoot corridor investigation coverage and key dialogue exchanges	Camera, Sound, Cast
14:00 - 15:30	Shoot door unlock, room reveal, register, reflection, and final notebook beat	Camera, Art, Props, Cast
15:30 - 16:00	Pickups for flicker reactions, keys drop, and final cut-to-black reaction	Camera, Sound, Cast

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Shoot in a real narrow corridor with minimal dressing and one controllable practical tube light. Use a single torch and one hidden bounce card instead of a full lighting package. Build the room reveal with sparse set dressing: dust, window, wall stain, register, and no furniture. Use sound design heavily to sell the haunting rather than visual effects. For the reflection shot, use a simple glass pane or reflective surface placed carefully off-camera. Keep the supernatural effect practical through performance, timing, and shadow misalignment instead of VFX.

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

