

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

THE CONFESSION BOOTH

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

OFFICIAL STORY LOGLINE: A detective's routine missing-person inquiry turns into a hidden rescue operation inside a church confession alcove, where coded notes, buried family ties, and a concealed passage expose a long-protected secret. As the truth surfaces, the booth becomes less a place of guilt and more a fragile shelter for a woman still being hunted.
DIRECTOR'S DRAMATIC VISION & TONAL CONCEPT: • Visual tone: intimate, hushed, and claustrophobic, with sacred stillness constantly undercut by suspicion. • Thematic depth: faith as shelter, secrecy as survival, and the moral ambiguity of protection versus concealment. • Pacing: slow-burn interrogation that tightens through micro-reactions, object reveals, and one decisive emotional collapse. • Performance style: restrained, with tension carried through pauses, eye-lines, and controlled body language rather than overt shouting. • Spatial storytelling: the booth, pew, candle, and hidden passage should feel like a living map of secrets. • Emotional arc: from procedural suspicion to human understanding, ending on a quiet but powerful release.
CAST AT A GLANCE & CHARACTER ARCS: • character: Detective Shalini age: 40 look: Plain clothes, tired but sharp eyes, notebook always in hand, grounded posture, observant and controlled. dramatic_arc: Begins as a skeptical investigator reading the room as a crime scene, then gradually recognizes the church as a protective network and ends by choosing rescue over suspicion. • character: Maya age: 35 look: Office wear, guarded expression, sleeve repeatedly pulled down to hide a bruised wrist, tense shoulders, defensive stillness. dramatic_arc: Starts evasive and frightened, then cracks under pressure and reveals she has been helping Naina survive through coded communication. • character: Sister Agnes age: 62 look: Simple habit, calm face, unreadable composure, old keys in hand, minimal movement, quiet authority. dramatic_arc: Initially appears like a guarded church caretaker, then reveals herself as a mother protecting her lost daughter through a hidden system of signals and shelter.
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:

Build a small church confession alcove with layered intimacy: frosted glass panels for soft daylight diffusion, a single wooden confession booth with visible grain and age wear, and a narrow pew placed close enough to force proximity. The booth should feel slightly overused, with subtle scratches on the wood edge where notes can be tucked. Add a concealed passage behind the confession screen that can be revealed practically by shifting the panel. The prayer book should sit within easy reach, with folded slips partially hidden between pages. Sister Agnes's keys should feel heavy and old, with one brass key visually distinct. The floor should be simple stone or worn tile, allowing the key drop to read clearly. Keep the space sparse, sacred, and acoustically intimate, with no decorative clutter that distracts from the interrogation.

2. COSTUME & WARDROBE CONTINUITY:

- **Detective Shalini:** Plain, understated investigative clothing in muted tones; no flashy accessories. Wardrobe should support a tired, practical professional look. Keep continuity on notebook in hand and a slightly worn, long-shoot-friendly silhouette.
- **Maya:** Office wear that suggests she came directly from work; sleeves must be easy to pull down repeatedly to conceal the bruised wrist. Keep the bruise continuity visible only when sleeve shifts. Clothing should remain neat but increasingly tense in posture.
- **Sister Agnes:** Simple habit with clean, modest lines and no ornamentation. Wardrobe should communicate age, discipline, and authority without theatricality. Keys must remain attached or held consistently for continuity.

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

- **prop:** Notebook | **visual_details:** Held by Detective Shalini, opened and closed during questioning, used to record dates, timings, and visitor names.
- **prop:** Akeli candle | **visual_details:** Single candle with a flickering flame that reacts to slight air movement; flame steadies at the end.
- **prop:** Wooden confession booth | **visual_details:** Aged wood with a slot and edge where folded notes can be hidden; confession screen must be movable to reveal concealed space.
- **prop:** Old keys ka jhund | **visual_details:** Heavy, worn keys in Sister Agnes's hand; one brass key should be visually distinct and should jhankaar when dropped.
- **prop:** Folded note | **visual_details:** Small paper note found in the booth edge, with the line: 'Aaj candle jalana. Main aungi.' and a symbol of two circles and a cross.
- **prop:** Second folded note | **visual_details:** Hidden behind the confession screen, with the line: 'Maa, main yahin hoon. Dar mat.'
- **prop:** Prayer book | **visual_details:** Placed near the concealed passage, used as part of the hiding system for notes.

4. PRACTICAL SFX & MAKEUP (MUA):

Keep makeup naturalistic and restrained. Shalini should have subtle under-eye fatigue and a long-shift investigative look. Maya needs a visible bruised wrist, with makeup continuity that allows the bruise to be seen when the sleeve shifts and hidden when pulled down. Sister Agnes should have age-appropriate texture, soft lines, and calm skin tone under daylight. Candlelight should create warm highlights and gentle shadowing on faces; ensure skin finishes do not over-shine except for the emotional end beat where the candle steadies and the scene softens.

ACTOR MASTERCLASS & HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES

STORYDILSE PRODUCTION BIBLE

DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: ACTORS & CASTING DIRECTOR

STANISLAVSKI SUBTEXT & CHARACTER DRIVERS:

- **character:** Detective Shalini | **super_objective:** To uncover the truth and locate Naina without being misled by appearances. | **subtext:** I do not trust this room, but I am willing to follow the evidence until it becomes human.
- **character:** Maya | **super_objective:** To protect Naina and keep the coded communication secret from the outside threat. | **subtext:** If I say too much, I may destroy the only safe system we have.
- **character:** Sister Agnes | **super_objective:** To protect her daughter and preserve the church as a shelter. | **subtext:** I have built a quiet refuge out of secrecy, and I will not let it collapse until my child is safe.

CANONICAL HINGLISH AUDITION SIDES (CLIMACTIC SCENE):

SHALINI

Maya. Naina ko last time yahin dekha gaya tha. Seedha bolo. Woh kahan hai?

SISTER AGNES

Church mein log aaraam ke liye aate hain. Crime ke liye nahi.

SHALINI

Aaraam? Phir wrist pe ye kya hua?

SISTER AGNES

Jo khoya hai, woh aksar dhoondhne wale ke saamne hota hai.

SHALINI

Naina zinda hai?



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND DEPT

1. CINEMATOGRAPHY CONCEPT & LENS PALETTE:

Use intimate close-ups, restrained medium shots, and selective inserts to turn the alcove into a pressure chamber. Favor 50mm to 85mm equivalents for emotional compression, with occasional wider framing only to establish the spatial trap of the pew, booth, and hidden passage. Camera movement should be minimal and deliberate: slow push-ins during revelations, static holds during lies, and a gentle reveal move when the confession screen shifts aside. The visual philosophy is to let objects and eye-lines do the dramatic work, keeping the audience trapped inside the same small moral space as the characters.

2. 3-TIER LIGHTING SCHEMATIC:

Tier 1: Soft daylight through frosted glass as the base layer, cool and diffused, establishing the church's calm exterior.

Tier 2: Single practical candle as the emotional key, adding warm flicker, shadow movement, and a sense of fragile secrecy.

Tier 3: Subtle negative fill and controlled bounce to shape faces during interrogation, deepening tension as notes and hidden passage are revealed. By the end, let the candle appear steadier and the daylight feel less hostile, signaling emotional release.

3. SOUND DESIGN & FOLEY ATMOSPHERE:

Keep the room tone hushed, with faint church ambience, soft air movement, and the subtle acoustic tail of a small enclosed space. Foley should emphasize candle flicker, notebook pages turning, sleeve fabric movement, key jhankaar, paper rustle, and the gentle slide of the confession screen. The concealed passage reveal should feel tactile and quiet, not explosive. The final faint woman's breath behind the screen should land as the emotional sonic reveal.

4. COLOR GRADING LUT & PALETTE:

Use a muted, desaturated church palette with cool daylight blues and soft stone grays balanced against warm amber candle tones. Keep skin tones natural but slightly subdued, with contrast increasing during the interrogation and easing at the end. A gentle filmic LUT with restrained highlights will preserve the sacred atmosphere while allowing the candle to read as the emotional anchor.



DEPARTMENT HANDOUT: PRODUCER & LINE MANAGEMENT

TIME	ACTIVITY / SCENE BLOCK	KEY DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED
08:00 - 09:00	Load-in, set dressing, candle safety check, and prop placement	Art, Props, Safety
09:00 - 10:00	Block actors in pew, booth, and standing positions; rehearse note reveal and screen move	Director, AD, Cast
10:00 - 11:30	Rig soft daylight simulation and candle practical integration	Camera, Gaffer, Grip
11:30 - 13:00	Shoot interrogation beats and close-up inserts of notes, keys, wrist, and notebook	Camera, Sound, Script Supervisor
13:00 - 14:00	Shoot concealed passage reveal and emotional confession beats	Camera, Cast, Art
14:00 - 15:00	Shoot final breath reveal, candle steadies, and end frame	Camera, Sound, Director

LOCATION HACK & BUDGET SAVING TIPS:

Use a real church alcove or a single dressed corner to avoid full set construction. Keep the cast to three performers and rely on performance, inserts, and sound design for tension. Use one practical candle plus bounced daylight from a window with frosted diffusion material. Build the concealed passage as a simple removable panel rather than a complex mechanism. Shoot all inserts in one setup to save time. Keep wardrobe minimal and sourced from existing closets. Let the bruise be a single makeup continuity element rather than a full SFX build.

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

