

THE ROOFTOP WITNESS — VISUAL STORYBOARD GUIDE

DIRECTOR'S VISUAL APPROACH (Mystery/Crime): This storyboard is designed as an easy, creative guide to help you shoot the film. Each scene beat below describes what the audience sees on screen, character movement/staging, the lighting vibe, and the dramatic purpose.

SCENE 01: THE ROOFTOP MAZE

Camera Vibe: Wide establishing shot

- **What We See on Screen:** A cluttered apartment rooftop at night under a single floodlight, with distant city glow behind it. Laundry lines sway, potted plants create visual corridors, dangling bulbs hang near the water tank, and the locked gate sits like a silent boundary.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Nidhi enters the space with notebook and flashlight, scanning corners. Sanjay stands tense near one side, while Bina is not yet fully revealed, hidden among the plants.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Cold, isolated night lighting with a hard central pool of light and soft urban glow around the edges.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Introduce the rooftop as a maze of secrets and establish the investigation's claustrophobic atmosphere.

SCENE 02: THE ACCIDENT STORY

Camera Vibe: Medium two-shot with Nidhi and Sanjay

- **What We See on Screen:** Nidhi faces Sanjay in the open rooftop space, with the water tank and plants behind them. The flashlight beam catches Sanjay's bruised knuckle as he tries to hide it.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Nidhi questions him directly. Sanjay answers too carefully, shifting his gaze and keeping his injured hand out of sight.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Flashlight-driven contrast with sharp highlights on the hand and face, deep shadows around the body.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Make the audience feel the first crack in Sanjay's story and see Nidhi's suspicion sharpen.

SCENE 03: BINA ENTERS THE FRAME

Camera Vibe: Slow reveal from plants into medium shot

- **What We See on Screen:** Bina emerges from between the potted plants, faded house dress blending into the rooftop clutter. She feels like part of the set until she speaks.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** She answers Nidhi casually, first denying she saw anything, then delivering the line that she hears everything. Sanjay reacts with irritation.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Soft edge light on Bina with the floodlight still dominant, giving her a quietly authoritative presence.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Turn the underestimated neighbor into an active force and shift the scene from routine questioning to something more dangerous.

STORYBOARD: THE DRAMATIC BUILDUP & CLIMAX

SCENE 04: THE THREE FOOTSTEPS

Camera Vibe: Insert-heavy investigative close-ups

- **What We See on Screen:** Nidhi's flashlight sweeps the rooftop corners, the planter area, and the key ring near the water tank. The laundry line and clothespins frame Bina as she describes the footsteps.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Bina explains the three different footsteps with calm certainty. Nidhi writes in her notebook. Sanjay stiffens and loses composure.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Hard, directional flashlight beams with pockets of darkness around the edges, creating a forensic feel.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Convert the rooftop into a crime scene through sound-based testimony and physical clues.

SCENE 05: THE LIE BREAKS

Camera Vibe: Tight confrontation close-up

- **What We See on Screen:** Nidhi steps closer to Sanjay, then switches the flashlight off and on, pinning him in a harsh beam. Bina stands nearby, calm and unshaken.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Nidhi presses him about the fall and the knuckle. Sanjay falters. Bina reveals that the injured hand happened when he grabbed the victim's arm.
- **Lighting & Mood:** High-contrast interrogation lighting with the flashlight acting like a spotlight of guilt.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Force the emotional and narrative climax by making the truth feel unavoidable.

SCENE 06: THE WITNESS WINS

Camera Vibe: Final three-shot with gate in background

- **What We See on Screen:** Nidhi shuts her notebook, flashlight still trained on Sanjay. Bina delivers her final line with dry confidence. The locked gate and rooftop bulbs sit behind them as the scene settles into silence.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Nidhi takes control, Sanjay swallows hard, and Bina ends with a wry reminder that she is not invisible.
- **Lighting & Mood:** The bulbs flicker subtly, the floodlight remains stark, and the city glow keeps the rooftop suspended in night.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** End on the power reversal: the ignored witness becomes the most reliable voice in the room.

CREATIVE SHOOTING CHEAT-SHEET FOR THE DIRECTOR:

- **Keep Camera at Eye-Level:** In small rooms or single locations, eye-level framing makes the audience feel trapped in the room with the characters.
- **Reaction Shots are Gold:** When a secret or punchline lands, hold the camera on the character *listening* to capture their silent shock.
- **Audio Drives Emotion:** Whispers, deep sighs, and awkward silences carry 60% of the dramatic tension.