

THE LAST TRAIN HOME — VISUAL STORYBOARD GUIDE

DIRECTOR'S VISUAL APPROACH (Slice of Life/Family): 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: EMPTY COMPARTMENT, THREE SEPARATE ISLANDS

Camera Vibe: Wide Room View

- **What We See on Screen:** A nearly empty suburban train compartment at night under cool fluorescent light. Madhavi sits straight with her cloth bag, Anu slumps with her ID lanyard visible, and Kriti sits apart in school uniform with earbuds around her neck. The windows hold darkness broken by occasional station flashes.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Each woman occupies her own bench and emotional territory. Madhavi's posture is rigid and watchful, Anu looks exhausted and closed off, and Kriti projects teenage defiance with a guarded stare.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Cold, clinical overhead light with brief white flashes from outside. Shadows are soft but emotionally distancing.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Establish the family as physically together but emotionally separated, and let the train's motion suggest a journey toward connection.

SCENE 02: THE FIRST NUDGE OF FRICTION

Camera Vibe: Medium Two-Shot and Cut-In Close-Ups

- **What We See on Screen:** Madhavi correcting Kriti's posture, Anu trying to rest, and Kriti firing back with sarcasm. The compartment feels tighter as the camera moves closer to faces and reactions.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Madhavi speaks like a principal, Anu intervenes with tired restraint, and Kriti rolls her eyes and answers sharply. Small smiles flicker and disappear.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Fluorescent light remains dominant, with a passing station flash briefly sharpening facial contours and making the tension pop.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Play the scene as lightly comic but emotionally loaded, showing how family correction can feel like love and attack at the same time.

SCENE 03: LUNCH BOX REVEAL

Camera Vibe: Insert Close-Up into Medium Shot

- **What We See on Screen:** Anu opens her lunch box and simple home food is revealed under a bright station flash. The food becomes a small but powerful image of care and routine.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Kriti first teases, then notices the effort behind the packed meal. Anu remains practical, while Madhavi's attention shifts toward the deeper meaning of the moment.
- **Lighting & Mood:** A strong white flash from the window catches the lunch box and hands, then falls back into cool interior light.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Turn an ordinary object into an emotional pivot, revealing that exhaustion and care can coexist in the same gesture.

STORYBOARD: THE DRAMATIC BUILDUP & CLIMAX

Camera Vibe: Close-Up on Hands, Then Reaction Shots

SCENE 04: THE TICKET AND THE TRUTH

- **What We See on Screen:** Madhavi pulls out the folded train ticket from her cloth bag. The camera lingers on the ticket, then cuts to Anu's stunned face and Kriti's softened expression.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Madhavi explains she came to the next station because Kriti would be waiting alone. Anu absorbs the guilt and love in silence. Kriti realizes the correction was concern all along.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Cool light with a brief bright window flash that makes the ticket and hands feel almost ceremonial.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Reveal the hidden emotional engine of the scene: what looked like control was actually care, and what looked like distance was protection.

Camera Vibe: Intimate Medium Close-Ups

SCENE 05: SHARED EXHAUSTION

- **What We See on Screen:** Kriti admits her presentation failed and that the earbuds were a shield. Anu confesses she feels invisible. Madhavi admits motherhood was the hardest exam. Their faces soften in the same frame.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Each woman speaks with less defense and more honesty. Their bodies relax slightly, shoulders drop, and eye contact becomes steadier.
- **Lighting & Mood:** The fluorescent light feels less harsh now, with station flashes briefly warming the skin and revealing tears, fatigue, and relief without melodrama.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** Let the emotional climax be verbal but restrained, grounded in shared tiredness rather than a big confrontation.

Camera Vibe: Reflection Shot into Final Two-Shot

SCENE 06: THE SEAT CHANGE, THE FAMILY REFORMS

- **What We See on Screen:** The train curves and all three reflections appear together in the window. Kriti stands, then sits beside Anu instead of staying apart. Madhavi places the lunch box in the center as the compartment settles into a new balance.
- **Actor Movement & Staging:** Kriti chooses closeness. Anu reacts with surprise and relief. Madhavi smiles quietly, then watches the two of them with calm acceptance. Kriti finally leans lightly toward her mother.
- **Lighting & Mood:** Cool fluorescent base with soft, passing station flashes that now feel gentle rather than isolating. The final image carries a subtle warmth.
- **Why This Shot Works (Director Note):** End on a small physical choice that says everything: the family is still tired, but now they are together, and that is enough.

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.