

Film Presentation

Topic: Childhood Memories

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Masters in Design, Animation

By

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Animation and Film Design

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Declaration

I solemnly declare that the project report titled Childhood Memories is based on my own work carried out during the course of my study under the supervision of Prof. Mazhar Kamran. I assert the statements made and conclusions drawn are an outcome of my research work. I further certify that the work contained in the report is original and has been done by me under the general supervision of my project guide. The work has not been submitted to any other Institution for any other degree/diploma/certificate in this university or any other University of India or abroad. I have followed the guidelines provided by the university in writing the report. Whenever I have used materials (data, theoretical analysis, and text) from other sources, I have given due credit to them in the text of the report and giving their details in the references.



Abhilash Saxena

May, 2019

Approval

The Report Committee for Animation Design, Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay certifies that this is the approved version of the following report on: Childhood Memories by Abhilash Saxena, 176340009.

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Date: 18-6-19

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Abstract

I have been brought up in a joint family, there were around 25 members in my family and 15 of them were us kids. As most of us were of the same age, we shared a lot of memories together. I belong to a small town and it has its own perks. There are a lot of people who know each other, neighbours were like family only so the whole locality becomes like one. It is the one thing that I miss the most now. However, my childhood is full of stories, there are a lot of stories that I wanted to tell, and there is humor in almost all of them no matter how serious they appear then. I like making humorous films and I wanted to work on such a film. This story shows the love for Kulfi (Ice cream) of two brothers. Both are willing to do anything to get kulfi, they ask their parents, they threaten each other, they fight and they steal too. But there is an innocence in all of their acts. I wanted to create a bit of nostalgia with the backgrounds, ambience and sounds. Basically it's a slice of life with some added humour.

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Introduction

I always try to find humour in everyday things. I like how when we see things from a bigger perspective, there is fun in almost everything and I believe if we have any skill to make the world laugh, we should do it. When I entered IDC, most of the work in my portfolio was funny animated clips.

Starting with the topic, out of all the children at our home, me and my elder cousin were closest as we were nearly the same age as well as we had same interests, we liked to play cricket, video games and other things. So most of the time it was us who were there in our backyard doing stuff. We had a huge backyard as our grandfather bought a wide area of land and our house was very small so most of the area was left empty for us to play. My cousin was around half a year older than me and was clever by nature. I was a bit innocent. So most of the time, it was him who does creates some mess and drag me with him. There were many incidents where because of him we got in trouble and he never learnt from those incidents, maybe that's why I have a lot of funny stories to remember now. So one of his bad habits were he used to steal money from my father's pocket, and after that he used to do a clever thing so that he could not get caught (according to him it was clever). He used to dig a hole in our backyard and bury the money in it. Then after some days, he would take me to the spot, acting like he is getting a feeling that if he dig a hole here, he will get something, I usually don't believe him, so he dug a hole and showed me. Two one rupee coins came out of the hole and I was like how the hell did it happen. He told me a story about it that he

gets this intuitions that earlier there was a treasure buried on the land of our house and that's why he was finding all this money. I believed him. It happened a lot of times. One day I decided to find money for myself as I wanted to eat kulfi. I started digging a hole and found nothing. So I dug another one and then another one. After some time, the backyard was full of holes and I was not stopping, I wanted to find the money, at evening when father returned from office, he saw the condition of backyard and as obvious, I got a beating. I was very angry at that time on my cousin, later I got to know about how the money goes there. I still laugh when I think about this incident and reminds me of golden days of my life.

Research

Phase I

Since I was about to choose an incident from my childhood, I had to depict the time of late 90s', so I studied about the backgrounds and themes that were popular in the 90s. I did a detailed study of the household items, colors in houses, appliances used and overall ambience. I found a lot of interesting ideas from the study itself.



At that time, not many houses had borings, so people were dependent on municipal water supply. Sometimes when the water supply was out, water tankers used to come for water supply, and

there was always one or two aunties who used to fight over who will fill it first.

Also, a kulfi wala used to come during summer with a bell tied to his cart, whenever we heard sound of the bell, we instantly recognize that he had come, and he always warn us about checking the road before crossing.

I studied the appliances used during the time of 90s', the televisions, kitchen, living rooms, sofas, chairs and other stuff, also the wirings of the house that were not underground but over the walls. These studies helped a lot in building the world.



I also looked at the house designs also, usually government servants used to live in quarters so I checked the images of quarters online, which had small houses but there is always an open space inside the house.

At that time, mostly blue color was the most common for households, and lime color was used, so most of my indoor backgrounds have blue color to the walls.

Then I went to my home and studied the ambience there, there is a neem tree inside my house, which is very old, I have involved it in my backgrounds.

Story Ideas

Based on the studies, I developed some story ideas.

Story Idea I

My cousin and me used to roam around the city to find new ways, as our fathers told us that they knew each and every alley of the city when they were of our age. So we daily went out and enter somewhere new and try to find our road back home. We used to experience new things daily and we found a lot about our city during that time. We felt like adventurers. One time when we were passing from an alley, we were surrounded by dogs, my cousin ran away and was looking at me from a distance, and I was so afraid, all the dogs were barking at me and i was not even able to move.

Story Idea 2

I used to live in a joint family, we were 15 cousins and in all 25 family members. We had a huge house, but most of it was open and the living space was small. So we had a good playground in our house. In a joint family, it's always a cheerful environment, but being in a middle class joint family has its drawbacks too, and some funny incidents happened back in my childhood because of this.

So, as I stated there were 25 family members in total at my house, but there was only one toilet. So it was a big problem in the morning, everyone is waiting for the person inside to come out, adults can hold it for some time, and they could not do anything except waiting, so they had to wait. But there were like 15 children also, some of which were in the age group of 8-9. They could not wait for so long so they used to go outside the house where a drainage passes from just below my house. I was one of them. Doing this from childhood, I had generated it as a habit and never thought about how others will think when they see me doing this. When I was grown up, I continued doing the same. My mother used to tell me to start going inside because it doesn't look good as I am not a child anymore, but I always ignored her. I used to say that it's already full inside and I can't wait for that long.

In my neighbourhood, I used to go for tuitions, asha aunty, who was a teacher in a school, used to take tuitions for the kids in our locality, her house was in the alley just next to our house. She had a daughter almost of my age, and I used to like her, she was always wandering in her house and sometimes comes to the room in which our classes are going on. I used to look at her and get

amazed. I always used to think about how to talk to her and fantasize about how our first conversation be like. Even at the time when I was pooping, I used to think about our first meet. One fine day, when I was doing the same, I was thinking of her. Suddenly I realized that she was passing form the road in front of my house, she looked at me and we had an eye contact and just at that time I shot poop in the drain. It was hell lot of embarrassing for me. From the next day, I started going for toilet inside my house, my mother was shocked to see this change in me, to which I just replied that she only wants me to behave like grown ups.

Story Idea 3

Back in my childhood, we had a hand pump in front of my house from where most of the people used to fill water from our locality. There was a rumor that at night it starts operating itself, some people also claimed that they have seen a lady in white clothes coming and operating the hand pump. We as children used to believe that and many a times we stayed awake to listen to the sound of hand pump. Once we heard the sound of the hand pump at night but were not able to gather the courage to go out and see. One day we decided that we will see what actually happens there. In our summer vacations, we used to sleep on our terrace, from where we could clearly see the hand pump. For many days we stayed awake till late night and one night our plan became successful, we heard the sound of the hand pump, we both were very scared to see but somehow we gathered courage to go and

see what is happening, we were frightened to see a lady actually in white clothes filling a bucket from hand pump.

We later get to know that her face was burnt by her husband in domestic violence and because of the bad behaviour she got from everyone, she used to go and fill her bucket at night.

My brother had a habit of stealing money from father's pocket and to save himself from getting caught, he used to bury it in our backyard. He then used to call me and tell me that I have a feeling if we dig here we will find something. We then dug and we used to find money. This happened around four to five times, I was so amazed that we can get infinite money like this, but this used to work only when my brother gets that feeling.

I later decided to do that on my own. I dug in my backyard, but didn't get anything. Soon, the whole backyard was all dug up in almost no time. When my father returned in the evening, he was furious to see that the whole backyard was full of holes. He asked me what is this and slapped me, I innocently told him that I was trying to find money. Then I told him the whole story and he got to know where his money was going. My brother got a good beating that night.

Out of these three ideas, I liked the idea of Story 3 the most and decided to develop a story based on that. I decided to change the father's arc with mother because mother would be at home all the time so I could introduce her multiple times in the story and can include interesting conversations between them.

Script

SCENE 1 EXT

The time is mid 90s, it's a small town in Madhya Pradesh, there is a small house, with roofs of GC sheets. The house is a bit old and reinforcements are being done on it. There is a drawing room, one kitchen and a small room in the house. There is a small backyard in the house with flower pots and a washing area at the end of it. The window of the drawing room open towards the backyard and the door is towards the main gate. From the drawing room one can enter the bedroom through a narrow hallway. There are two gates in the bedroom, one from the drawing room and one opens in the backyard. Outside the house there is a road with moderate traffic, mostly there are cycle and motorcycles that pass through the road. Cars are a rarity. There are electric poles on the other side of the road.

EXT. BACKYARD UNDER THE TREE

ESTABLISHING SHOT - THE CAMERA PANS DOWNWARDS FROM SKY TO THE HOUSE, A BOY IS SEEN TO BE DOING SOMETHING IN THE BACKYARD WHILE WE CAN HEAR A KULFI WALA RINGING HIS BELL IN THE BACKGROUND.

CLOSE UP: SONU HAS JUST BURIED SOMETHING AND COVERED IT WITH MUD WHILE HE SEES THAT MONU (HIS YOUNGER BROTHER) RAN FROM OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AND ENTERS THE KITCHEN FROM THE BACKYARD DOOR. HE IS CONTINUOUSLY SHOUTING "MUMMY MUMMY".

SCENE 2 INT KITCHEN

Monu's mother is preparing roti in the kitchen, she is drenched in sweat. In the background kulfiwala's bell can still be heard, while one more sound of the radio can be heard coming from the drawing room. Monu stands at the door looking at his mother.

While wiping her sweat, mother looks at him and asks

MOTHER:(IN AN IRRITATED VOICE) Kya hai? MONU:(HESITATING)
Ummm... mummy wo.. kulfi khani thi..

MOTHER: (looks at him angrily) Brush kia tha aj?

MONU: (lying) Haan haan.. kia tha na

MOTHER:(ORDERING) Daant dikha

MONU:(SMILES WITH ALL THE TEETH SHOWING) eeeeeeeeeeee

Monu has one teeth broken and he doesn't brush regularly so his teeth are a bit yellow.

EXT. BACKYARD IN FRONT OF THE KITCHEN DOOR

We see a karchi flies from inside the kitchen and hits the boundary wall of the house. Then monu jumps out of the kitchen in fear while his mother's shouting can be heard in the background

MOTHER:(SCREAMING IN ANGER) aisa brush kia hai? haye raam itne peelee daant ho rahe, koi kufi wulfi nai milegi.. bhaag yha se..

MONU:(RUNS AWAY IN FEAR) in the background we can still hear the shouting of mother, "itne bade bade ho gaye fir bhi brush nai karte, main to pagal ho jaungi is parivar me, inke papa to subah subah chale jate hai office, mere upar sab chodh k, aur upar se garmi ki chutti alag lag gyi hai, dinbhar matar gasti karte rehte, chain se beth bhi nai pati main....

He comes out in the backyard and looks at his brother Sonu having kulfi while standing beside the wall of the house

MONU: tujhe kulfi kisne dilayi?

SONU:(ACTING SMART) Tujhe kyon batau?

MONU:(GIVES A BLAND EXPRESSION AND THEN SHOUTS)
Mummmmyyyyyy...

SONU:(TERRIFIED WITH THE SUDDEN ACT, GRABS MONU AND PUTS HAND ON HIS MOUTH TO STOP HIM FROM SHOUTING) ruk ruk batata hu...

Monu gets himself out of his hold and stands there to listen to Sonu

EXT. BACKYARD UNDER THE TREE

Sonu and Monu are sitting under the tree, Sonu starts explaining to him while Monu listens carefully.

SONU: Papa ne mujhe ye baat batayi thi...

MONU:

(Listening carefully) SONU: (Explaining) Jab dharti par insaan nahi

the, tab is jagah ek dinasour rehta tha, wo dinasour jab bhi potty karta tha, usme se sikke nikalte the, uske liye un sikko ka kuch kaam nahi tha, kyuki tab kulfi nahi milti thi, isliye wo unhe wahi chod deta tha. Isliye humare aangan me kuch kuch jagah khodne par pese nikalte hai, par wo jagah sirf mujhe pata hai.

MONU: (looks at him in an unbelieving manner) SONU: Arey main sach keh raha hu, chahe to yaha khod ke dekh, paise niklenge.

Sonu hands him a spade.

Monu starts digging and after sometime, two coins of 10 paise appears, Monu gets amazed looking at that and starts jumping in joy. Sonu looks at him for some time and then starts walking towards the gate and says,

SONU: Chal ab kulfi khat hai...

EXT. BACKYARD

Monu is lying on the grass and sonu is sitting by the support of the wall, both are enjoying their kulfi. Their mother comes out of the kitchen for washing the utensils, she has a tokra of utensils in hand, she sees Sonu and Monu eating kulfi.

MOTHER: (Suspiciously asking) Tumko kulfi ke paise kaha se mile?

Both kids suddenly stand up in fear, Monu innocently starts explaining

MONU: Are ye to hum ko dinasour ki potty deke mili hai.

MOTHER: (Confused and angry) Kyaa??

Sonu suddenly slaps Monu from behind, Monu looks at him angrily while his kulfi is thrown at the floor. Sonu gives an excuse

SONU:

3

Are wo pichle mahine ka pocket money bacha tha na, usse kharidi hai.

Mom does not say anything but looks at them in suspicion.

(Dip to black)

INT. BEDROOM

The shot is of the inner door of the bedroom, suddenly Sonu sneaks in the room, he looks here and there and then enters the rooms while whistling. Sonu gets out of the frame, the frame is empty for some time and then his mother also appears from the same door, she is spying on Sonu. Sonu enters the room and takes off his mother's purse from the hook on the wall, he opens the purse and takes out some money from it. He then hangs it back and goes out of the room from the door which opens in backyard.

Mother follows, he then goes to the backyard and under the tree he starts digging, he puts the money in the hole and buries it.

Mother now gets where her money was going.

EXT. ON THE MAIN GATE OF THE HOUSE

Monu is standing at the main gate, he sees the silhouette of kulfi wala in the horizon where sun is setting behind him. Monu turns back and runs inside the house.

EXT. BACKYARD UNDER THE TREE

We see a video game in the hands of Sonu, he is playing it sitting under the tree. Monu runs towards him and requests him happily,

MONU: (happily) Sonu Sonu, mujhe kulfi khani hai, paise dhundh ke de na...

SONU: (busy in playing game) Bore mat kar...

MONU: (Suddenly his facial expression change from happy to passive aggressive state) Sonu is still busy playing video game while suddenly Monu slaps his hand and video game is thrown away. Sonu is shocked and looks at Monu in anger

SONU: (angrily) Kya hai??

MONU: (calmly) Kulfi...

SONU: (stares at monu for a while and then says) Urrghhh...Thik hai...

Monu's expression changes from resting bitch face to happy

EXT. BACKYARD UNDER THE TREE

Monu and sonu have dug so many holes and still looking for the

money, they both are searching for money in the holes, the camera pans from the ground showing the holes to the monu and then it pans towards sonu, who is on his knees and in a confused state searching for the money. He is searching while suddenly a pair of legs comes near his face, he sees up, its his mom standing looking with a devilish smile at him. She brings her hand in front of Sonu and opens her fist and says

MOTHER: (Devilish smile) Ye wale paise dhundh raha hai beta?

and the screen dips to black

INT. LIVING ROOM

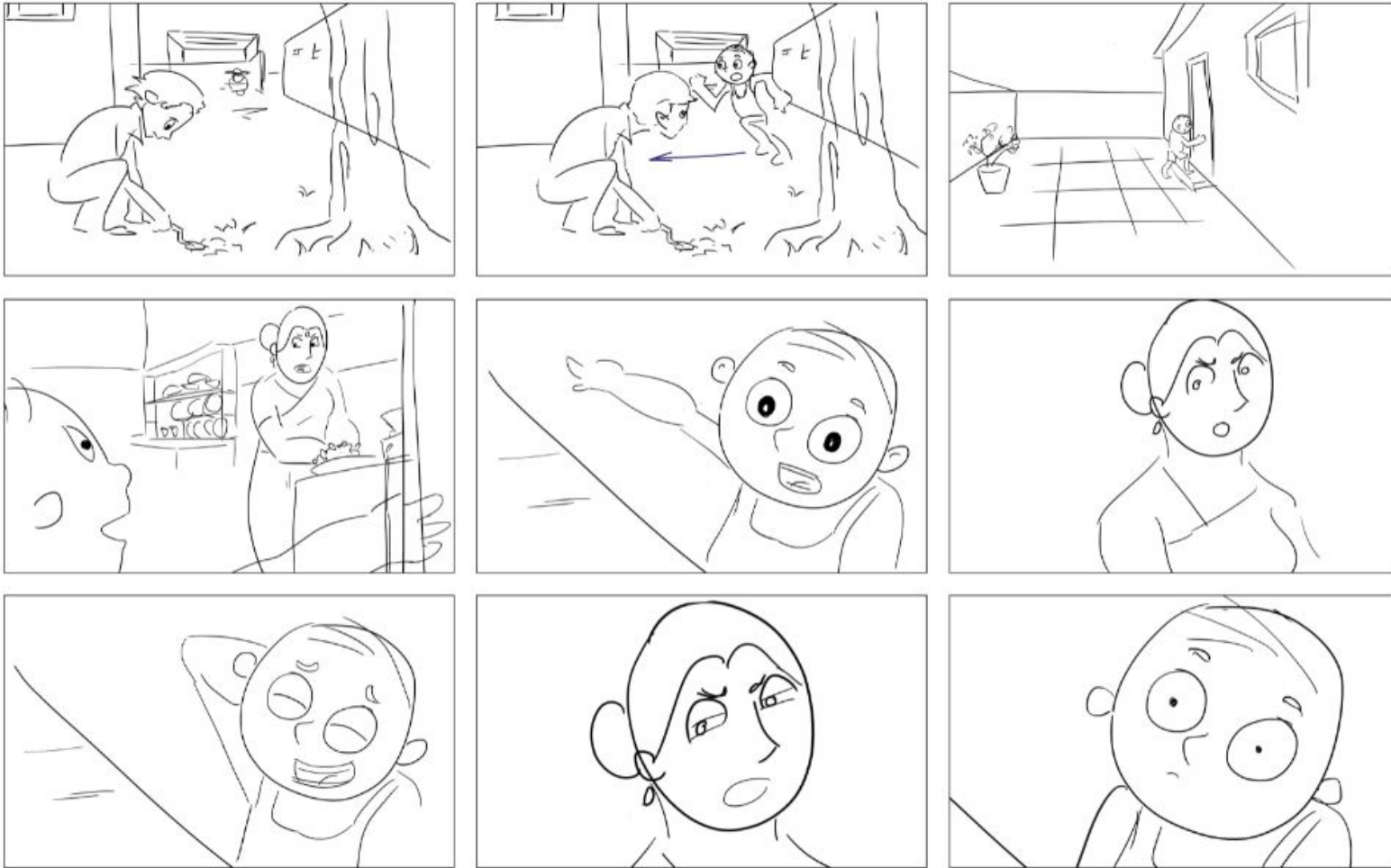
Shaktimaan is playing on the doordarshan channel and sonu and monu are watching it. They both are beaten by mom and it can be seen on their faces. On the tv, shaktimaan is saying, "Bacchon, chori karna bahut buri baat hai, in sab buri aadat se hume dur rehna chahiye. Kids say, "Sorry shaktimaan". Monu looks at sonu and says

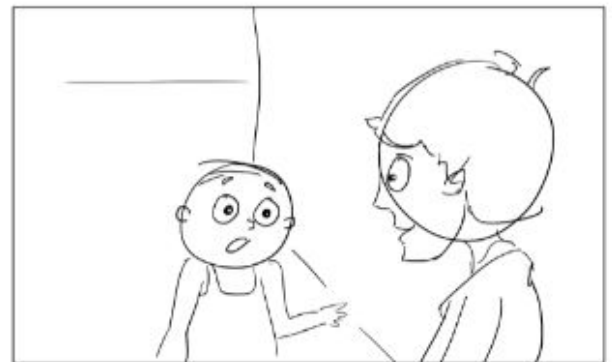
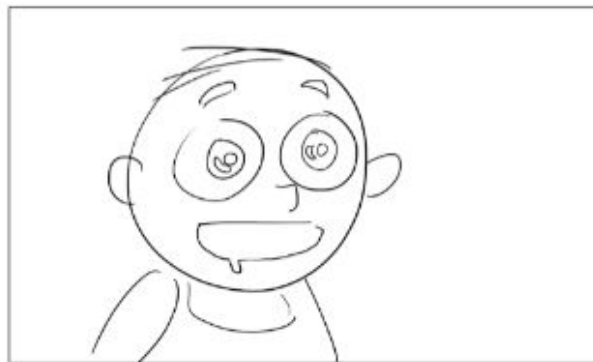
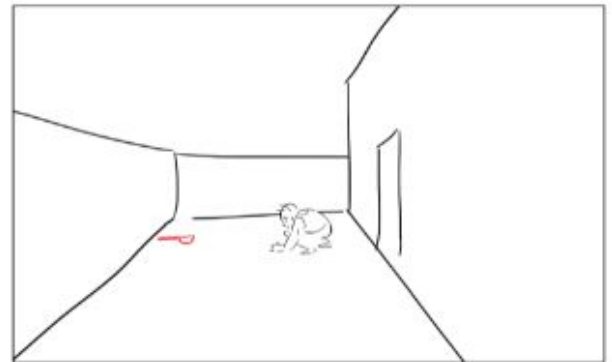
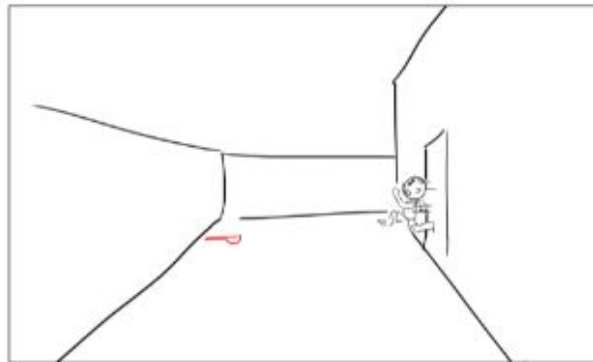
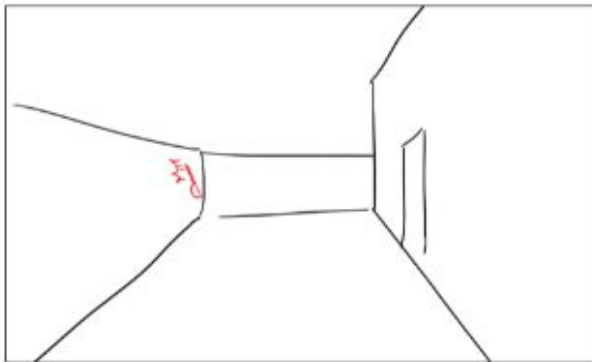
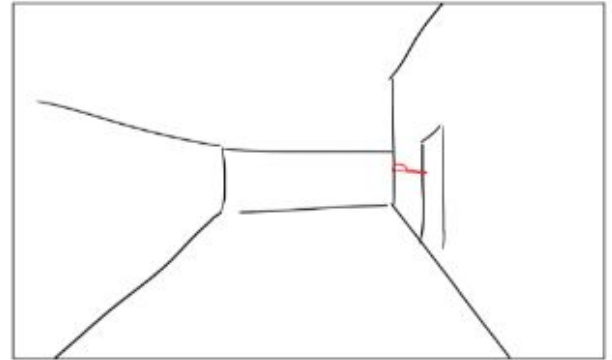
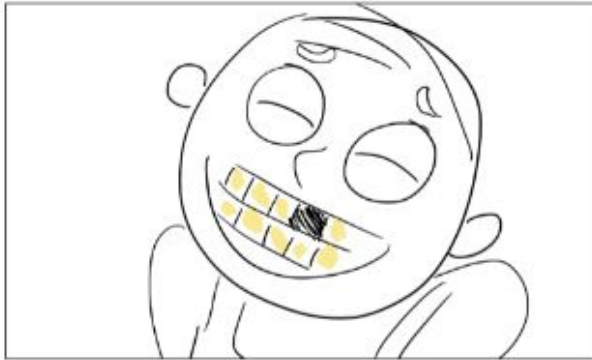
MONU: Sun na...

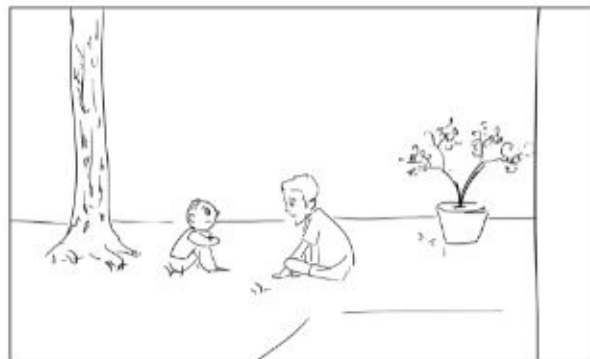
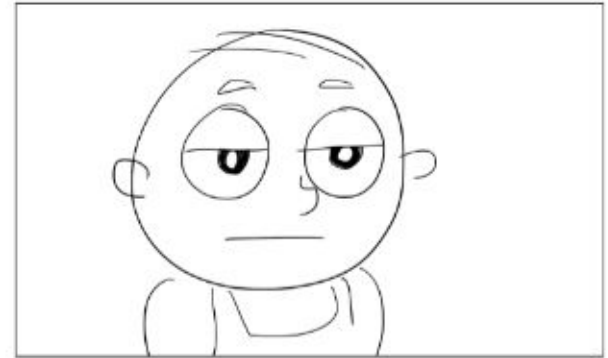
SONU: (unwillingly listening to him, responds to him by moving his eye towards him) MONU: Tune abhi tak nahi bataya hume maar kyo padhi?

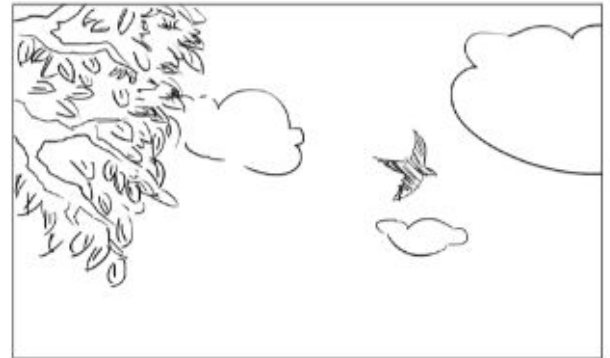
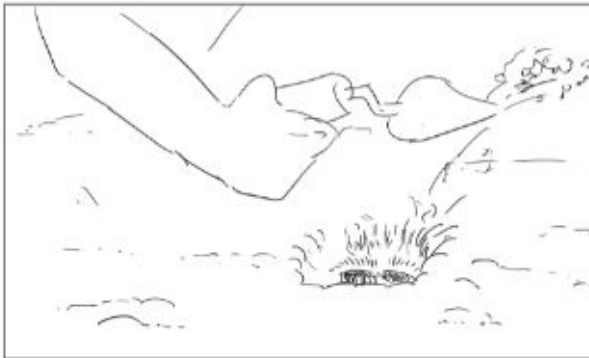
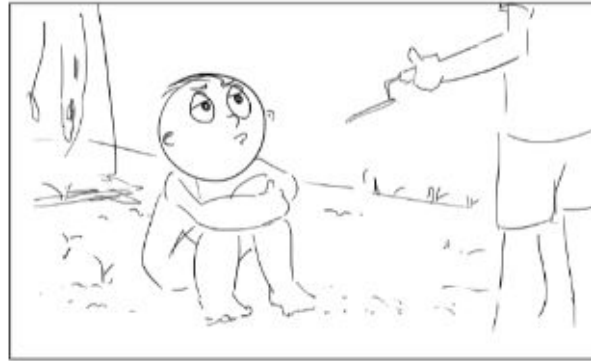
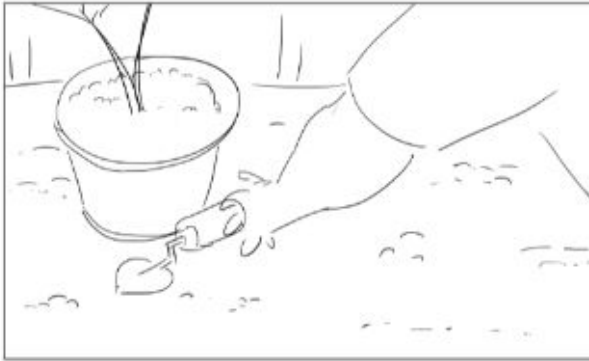
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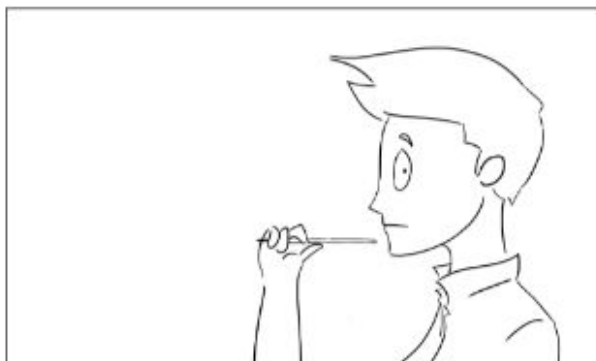
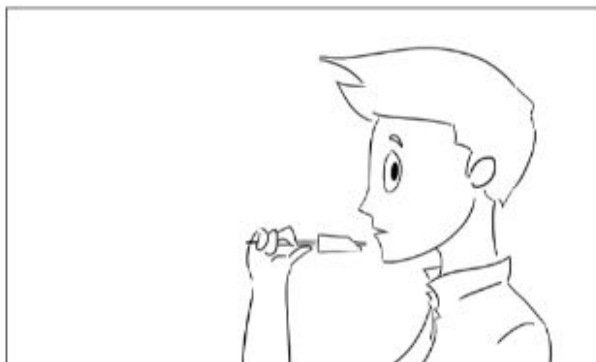
Storyboard

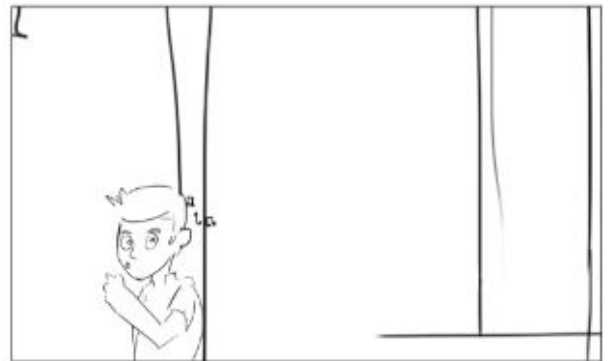
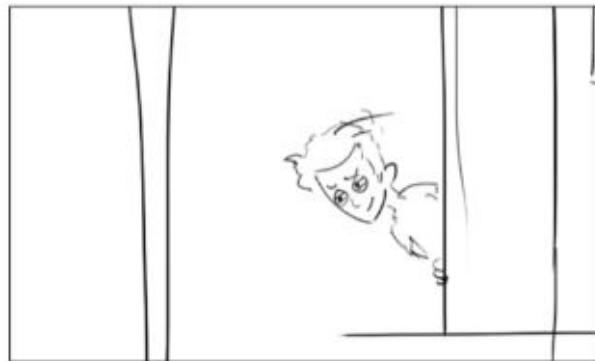


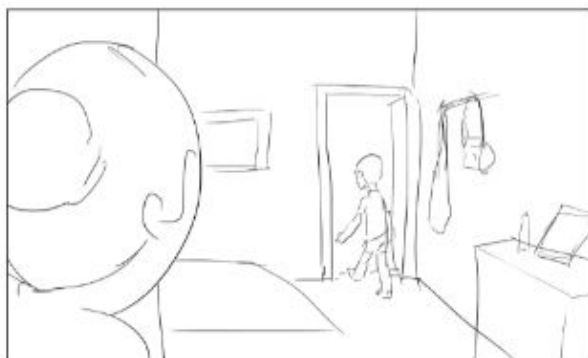
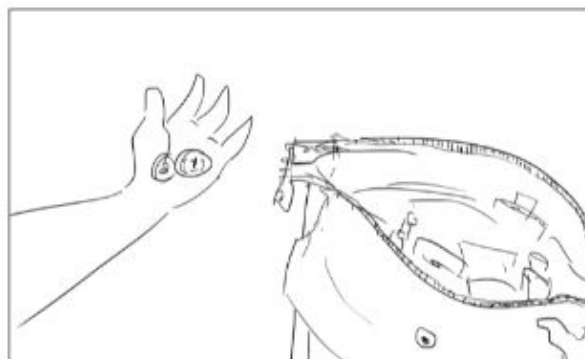
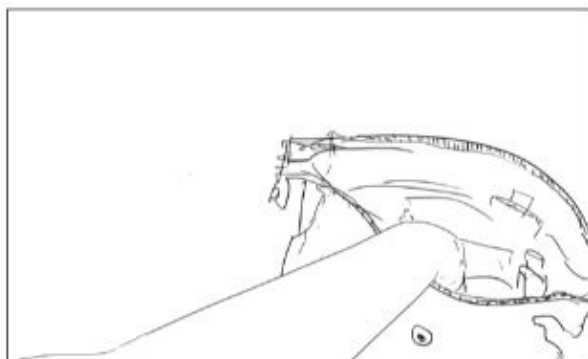
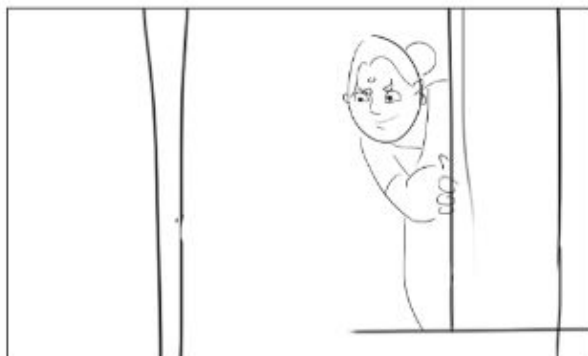
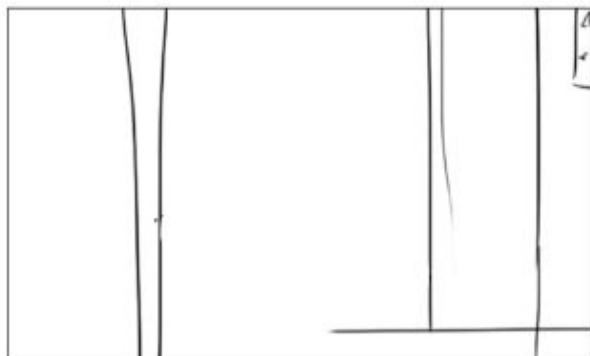


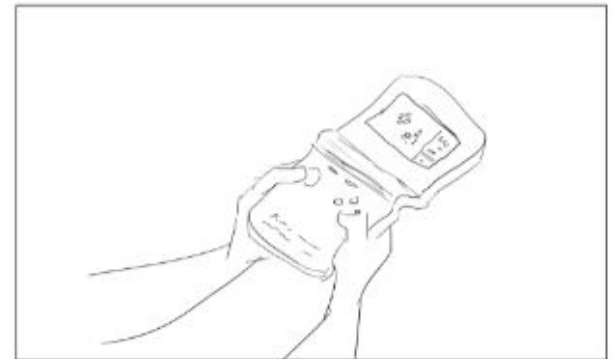
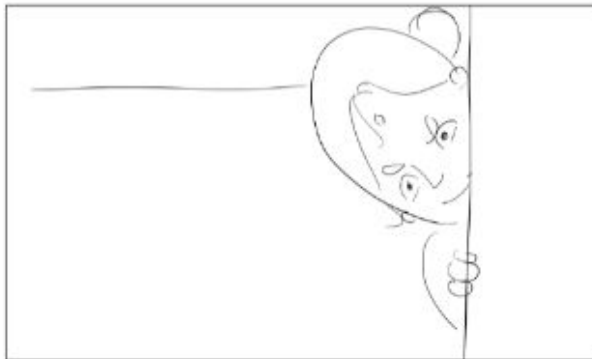
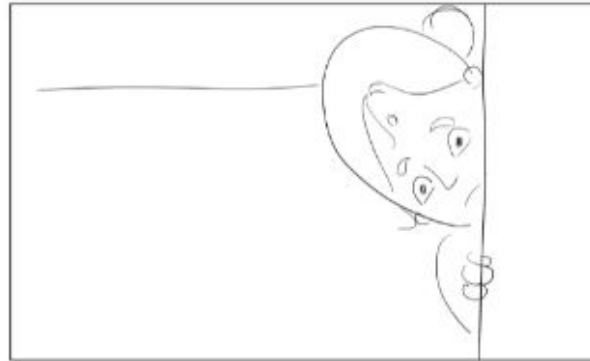
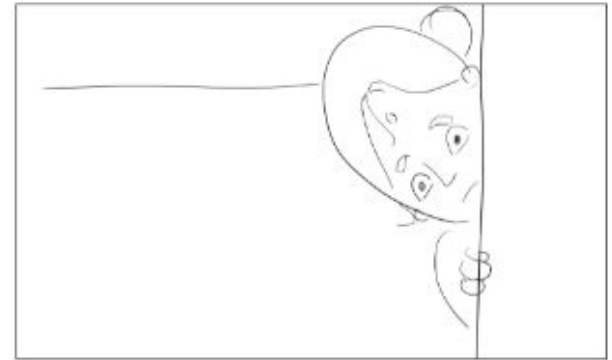


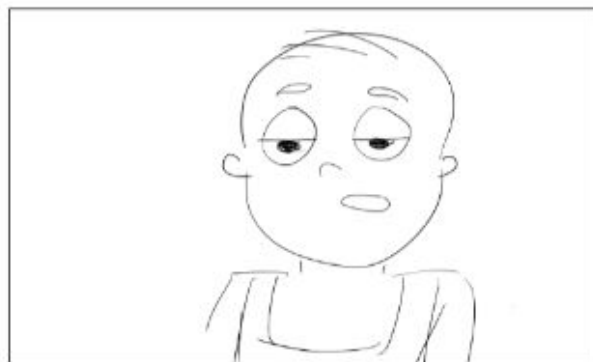
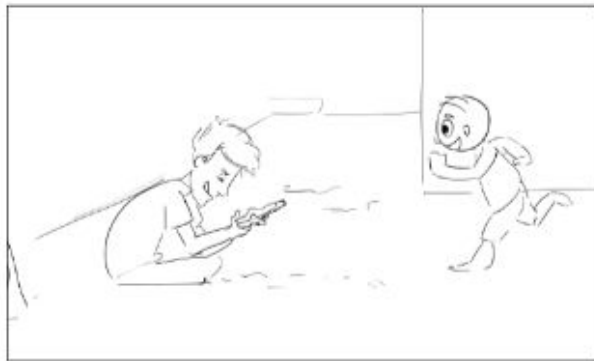


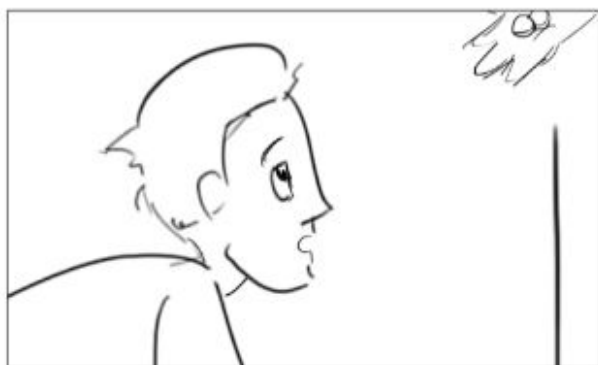
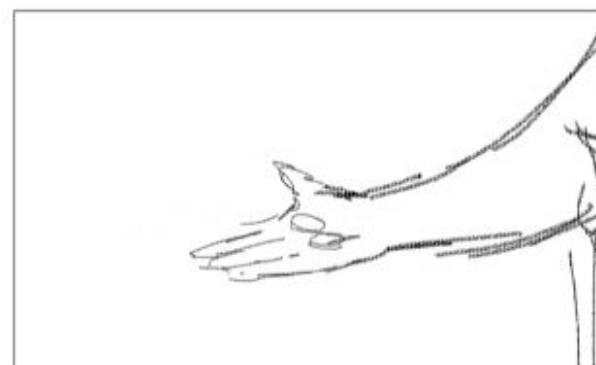
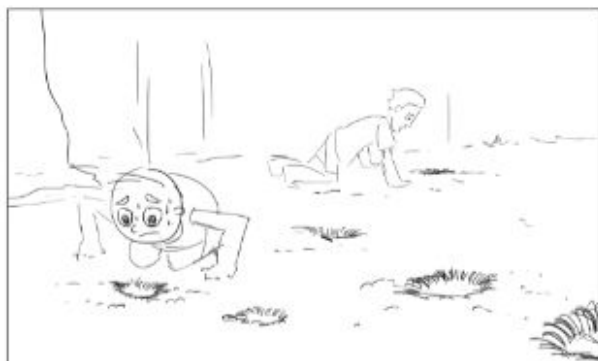












Visual Exploration

For style I wanted to give a nostalgic feel to the visuals, also I wanted to experiment with the way the story unfolds on the screen, below are some references that I took for the look and feel of the film.



A typically charming children's book illustration by Priscilla Lamont



An image taken from pinterest for reference



An illustration of winnie the pooh

I really like the idea of having blurred boundaries as it creates a feeling of nostalgia. I did some concept art based on the style.

Style exploration



An illustration I did for experimenting with the look and feel of the film. I incorporated canvas painting type effect with brush strokes for giving the nostalgic feel.



Another illustration I did with the same style but connecting to the story of the film.



This was another style experiment, instead of the brush strokes I put blurred boundaries.



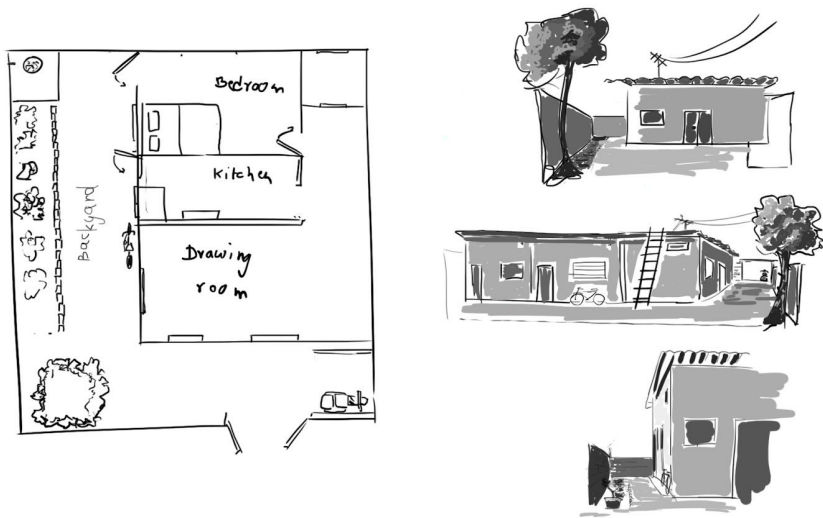
I took some specific moments from my childhood and turned them into illustrations.



Location exploration

Based on the story, I wanted a house which is a government quarter with a small house and a wide open area in the background. I did some explorations keeping these details in mind.

I made a house plan of a typical government quarter.



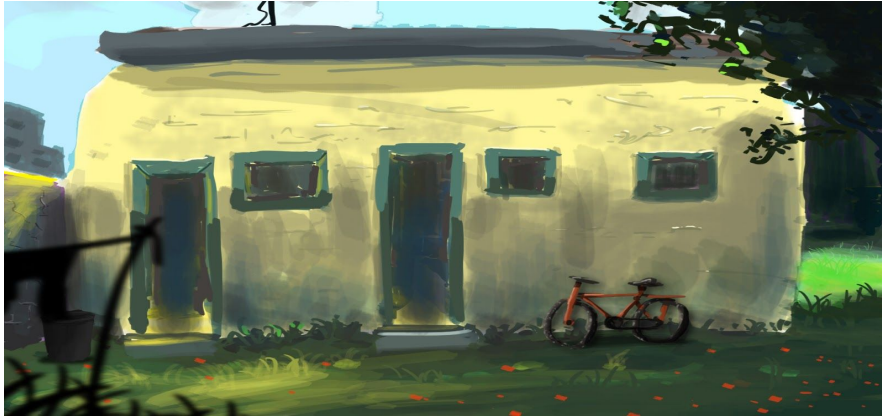
Based on the design of this house, I did some color studies for the same.

First exploration



This was the first concept art for the film, I did not like it as the colors and the overall look was not appealing, also as most of the part of the film was to take part in the backyard, the backyard needed to be big, so I again did another iteration for the concept art. I worked on the colors, the looks of the house, and the backyards elements to make them look more appealing.

Second exploration



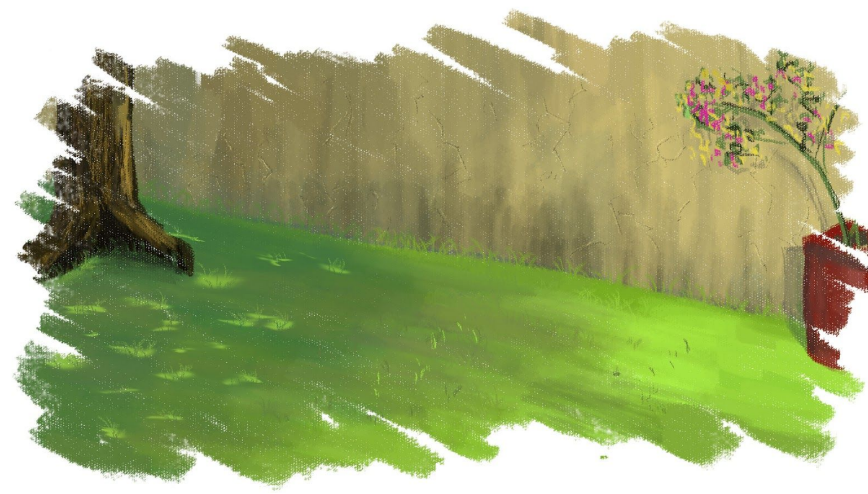
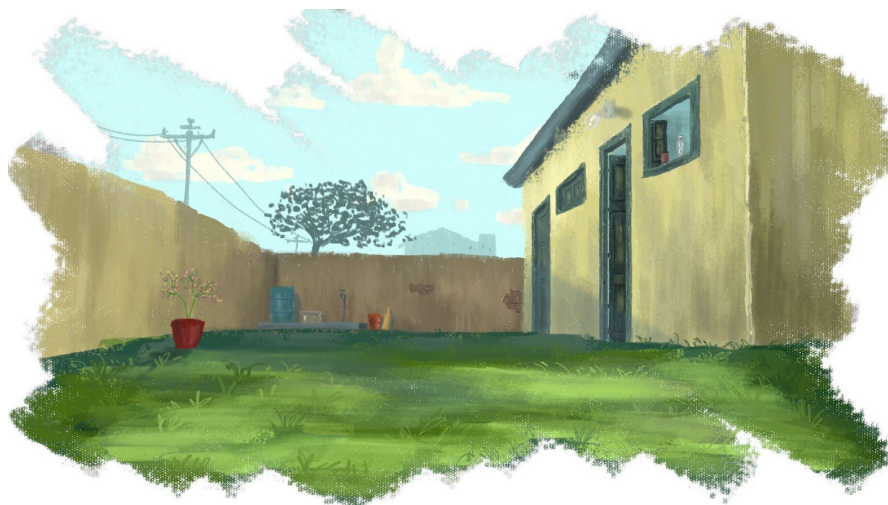
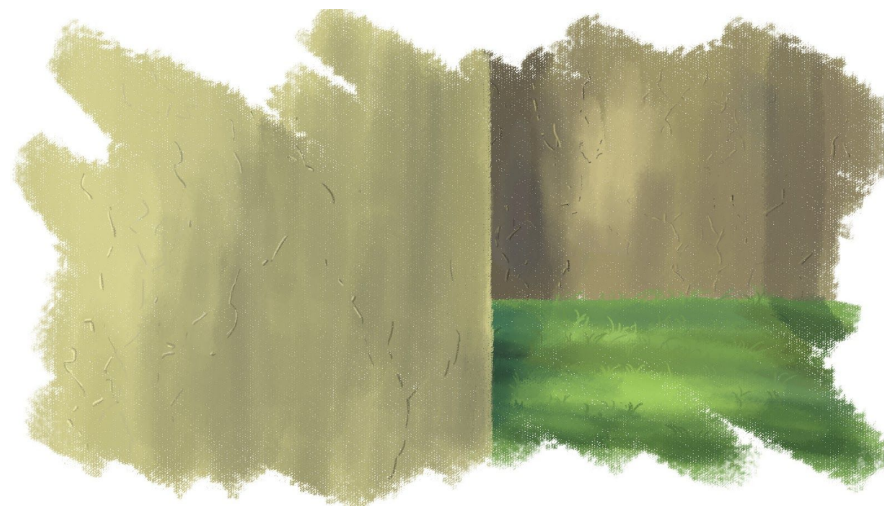
In this look, I made the backyard bigger and at that time, most of the houses had GI sheets so I kept them, I liked this look and feel and thus decided to go on with it. Neem tree is also a significant part of the backyard and adding natural elements to the frame provides a soothing look. The architecture belongs to the simple houses of 90s' particularly in the middle India. The lighting is kept according to the summer season. Other elements like cycle, bicycle add more life to the surroundings.

Stylization

The style that I wanted to adapt was based on illustration books, like a painted canvas, it should feel like the scenes are taking place on a canvas, so I tried making the backgrounds with brush strokes.



A background for the bedroom scene of the film, the drawing shows the brush strokes like on a canvas. It explains the time when the interior of the Indian houses. Unlike the modern houses, the wirings are not underground, the walls are painted with lime, the shelves are built along with the wall, door is also heavy and wide. Therefore the background depicts the simplicity of a middle class family with basic furnishings.



Character Explorations

So my story has three characters, mother and two sons. The name of the kids are Sonu and Monu.

Character write up

Mother

The mother is a homemaker and like any other typical indian homemaker, she is mostly involved in household activities. She seems to be quite irritated because her kids are quiet young to be managed and quiet notorious too. Below are some character explorations for the mother.



The second and third one are looking way too angry, I wanted the character of mother to be angry as well as concerned for the kids, so I chose with the first one. I did some more changes in the first one to make it more like the write up. Final character is shown in the next pages.

Sonu

Sonu, 11 years old is the elder brother and is very clever according to himself. Height is around 4'7". He likes to act like a hero in front of his younger brother Monu, but is scared of his mother. This fear of his doesn't stop him from being mischievous. He likes kulfi so much. He always puts his younger brother in trouble.

Monu

Monu, 7-8 years old, around 4'1" in height is the younger innocent kid less naughty than Sonu, he gets easily carried away when Sonu shows off his cleverness. Sometimes he gets beatings from his mother because of Sonu's mischieves. Same as Sonu, Monu also loves having kulfi.

I did some explorations based on the character write up.

Character exploration for Sonu and Monu



These are the character explorations for Sonu and Monu, I tried different expressions, body structure, and played with facial features to get the best character based on the write up. The first row shows explorations for Monu, the younger one and the second row shows explorations for Sonu, the elder kid.

In the first row, I chose with the second one as it felt closest to the write up. He looks energetic, innocent as well as playful.

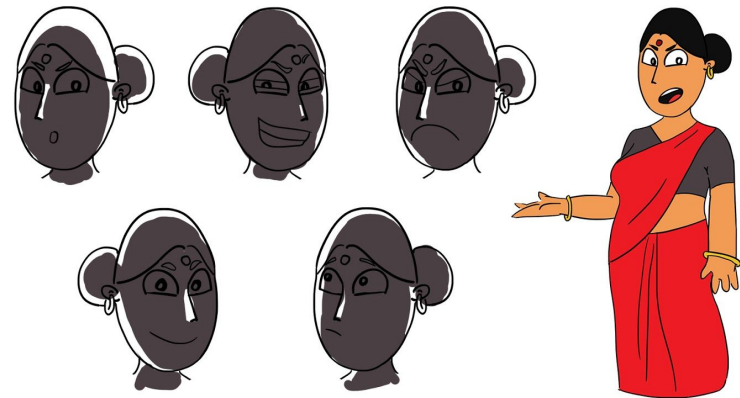
For Sonu, I chose the second one from the second row for the character of Sonu.

Final Character Design

Mother

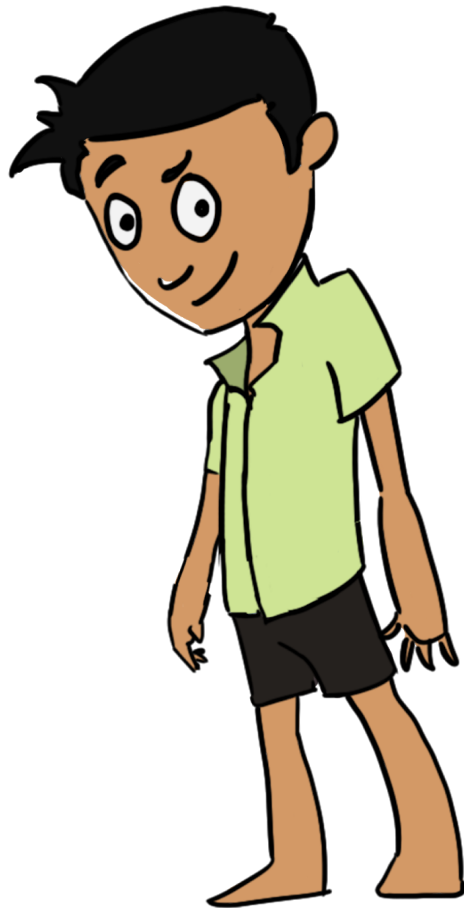


Mouth Chart

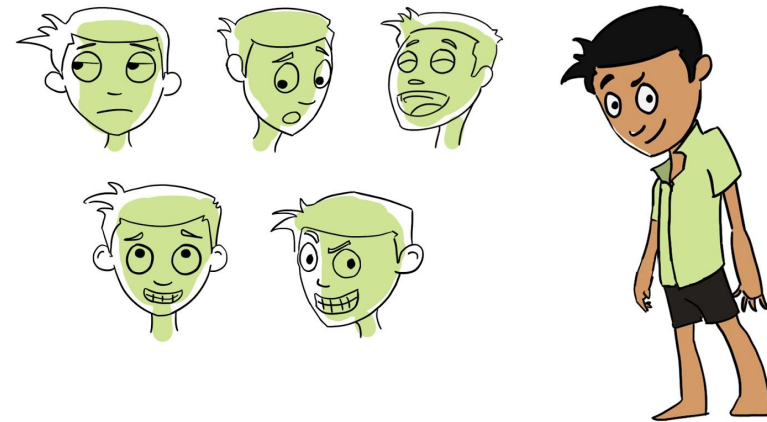


This is the final character for mother, The colors used are inspired from usual household clothing. Also the red color was providing a good contrast over the blue and green color scheme of the backgrounds.

Sonu

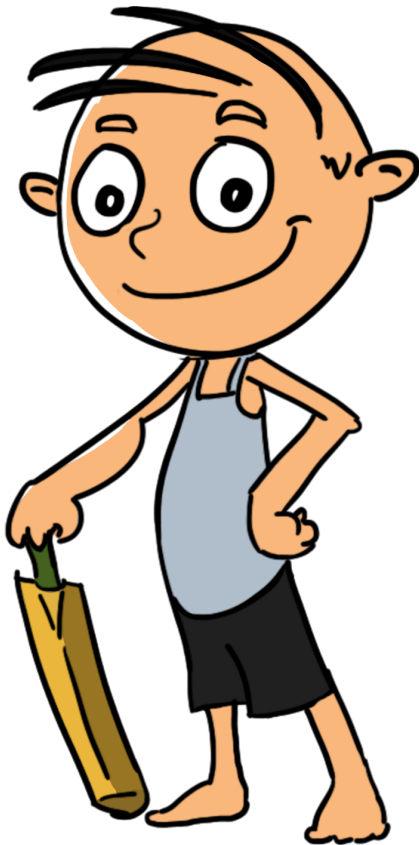


Mouth Chart

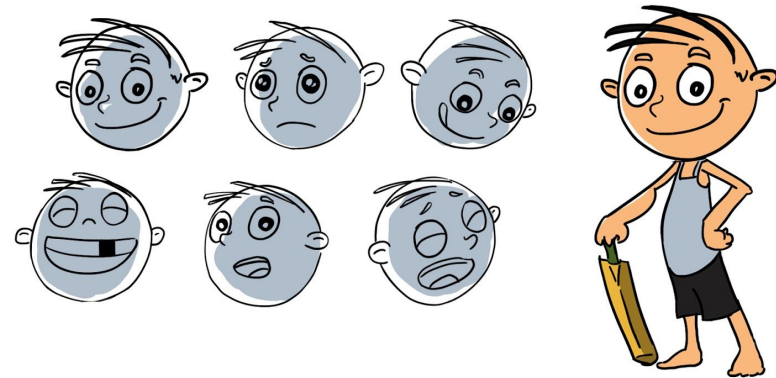


I gave him big eyes to make him part of the same character family, the broad hands were later dropped in the animation as they were not looking as appealing during animation. A sharp face represents clever and notorious character so I went with this design.

Monu



Mouth Chart



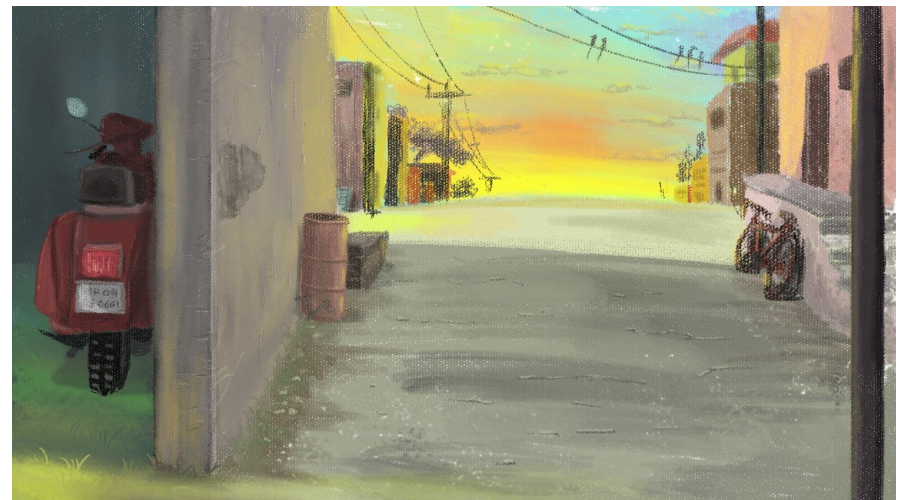
As Monu is innocent, I gave him a round face and big eyes, He is playful and curious to do new things.

Final look and feel

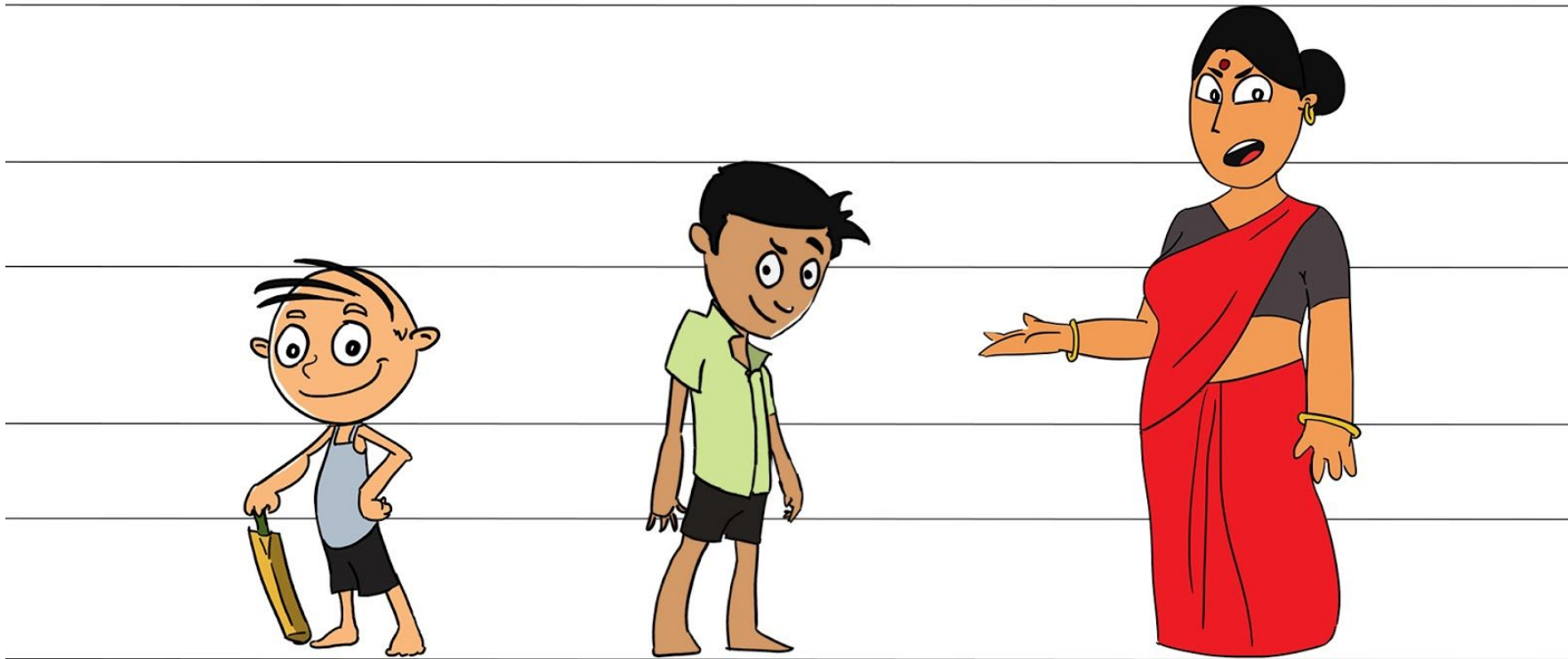
As earlier stated, I wanted to go with a canvas style painting method for the backgrounds with brush stroke boundaries, but at the time of animation, the incomplete boundaries and the white space left was creating a disturbance to the viewer and was gaining too much attention, So I decided to keep the painting style same but instead of the distorted boundaries, I filled the whole screen. Below are some of the backgrounds that I did with full screen approach.



The tulsi plant is a very common plant one can find in an Indian Household, it has high medicinal values and that's why it is also worshipped in India, it is used in most of the food items as well. I kept it as a part of the backyard.



Size Comparison



Sound

Sound played a very important character in my film. As the film is comic so timing of sound effects plays a very important role.

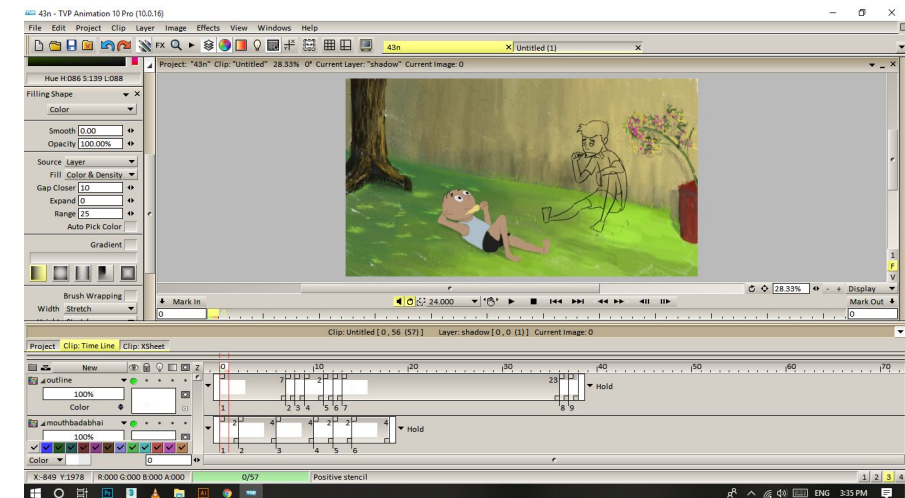
I have planned to put dialogue in the film as they were essential as the communication to what leads to the climax of the film was better delivered by the dialogue rather than visuals as its a short film and there was so much to put in a short amount of time. Although I have tried to show most of the things through visuals as I like communicating through visuals but wherever the dialogues are important, I have provided them to the characters. The dialogue given to the characters are based on the characterization I wanted to portray for the specific character.

Animatic

After settling on the sound came the animatic, where I used the frames from the storyboard, created several keyframes in between and thoroughly timed it out. The animatic came to a lot of help in setting up the mood and the pacing of the film, because I realized that in places where I kind of wanted to be a bit more hilarious, I added a lot more cuts, and it looked fast paced.

So, I had it eased out onto the part where the tension rose and I increased the beats of the sequence. After adding the soundtrack to it, I could finally visualize the story in time and how it would

appear in real time as opposed to the idea of the reel I had in my mind while just making the storyboard.



Especially for the time lapse sequence, I think having it play out in the animatic was a great help because it helped me squeeze down the time of months in a few seconds and how the changes would affect the environment, visually.

Post Production

The post production mainly saw the entire compositing of the films, down to adding atmosphere and blurs to the scenes.

Some shots required a bit more pacing edits by turning the linear a bit here and there. After this, a session of color correcting the entire film and we were good to go visually.

Finally, a bit more tweaking the Foley in the sound department, adding reverb wherever needed, especially during those scenes where it needed to look a bit funny and induce anxiety, and we were ready.

Conclusion

This story was very close to my heart, though it's not a very emotional incident but it reminds me of the great childhood that I have spent, We were a big family and there are a lot of stories that I remember, my cousin and me were very close and now we both are working and far apart, we had quite a strong relationship. So I made this as a tribute to all the memories that I have, I am the kind of person who mostly live in the past, I respect the time that passed as it turned me into what I am today. It might not have a takeaway for audience but I tried making it relatable for them to enjoy.

Thank you!

References

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The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling

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Pascal Campion

Neil Gaiman

Maurice Sendak

Films and T.V. Series

Malgudi Days

Chota Chetan

Up

The jungle book