

UNDERSTANDING THE ELDERLY

VISUAL COMMUNICATION PROJECT III

VCDP - 360

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UNDERSTANDING THE ELDERLY

*An enquiry into why I stopped
calling my grand father and
what he expected of me.*

Project 3

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my grandad and what he expected of me.*

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Approval Sheet

This report entitled “Understanding the elderly” by Suruchi Sati (146250013) is as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of “Master of Design” in Visual Communication.

Guide: 

Chairperson: 

Internal Examiner: 

External Examiner: 

Date : 10/07/16

Declaration

I hereby declare that this project work entitled “Understanding the Elderly” submitted to IDC, IIT Bombay, is a record of an original work. I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others’ ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources.

I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any data / fact / source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources, which have thus not been properly cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.



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Date : 10/07/16

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Abstract

Through this project, I have made an effort to understand the realm of old age and how it speaks to the younger generation.

The project eventually culminates making a film which speaks of the struggles faced by the abandoned elderly and the caretakers in old age homes. The film aims at encouraging the younger generation to open their hearts to the struggles of the elderly, and take notice of the innocence that comes with old age, a quality which could eventually be a source of joy to many such people young people, who themselves are struggling through today's fast paced ways of life with a hardened heart.

At the core of this project, I have tried to re access the evolution of my relationship with my grandparents, take a closer look at similar experiences of my peers and the elderly themselves, and articulate the learnings either through personal or a third person's point of view that could speak to one's sensibilities.

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Introduction

Human experience is vast and varied. Each phase has a plethora of ideas and resulting emotions. To us, humans, questioning comes innately. As it all winds down, the idea of the whole story falling into place or the lack of it, in one's reflections on life, has been intriguing to many. How does one make sense out of a life which was, by no means, lived exactly the way it was desired to be lived? How does one justify the purpose of one's existence? People who have lived through such experiences, and are moving towards the inevitable closure, are expected to know the answers. This expectation made me savour almost all conversations I have had with the elderly and drove me to work on this project that. The first traces of this inquisitiveness, I realise, conjured up in our relationship with my grand father.

These early experiences, eventually, culminated today in the curiosity and willingness to understand what old age is all about and find out what I can learn from the whole experience, through this project, before moving on the solutions could be offered to issues faced by the elderly.

“ Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which..
The first was made.
Our times are in His hand

Who saith 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half;
trust God: see all, nor be afraid!'

- By Robert Browning
(An excerpt from the poem, Rabbi ben Ezra)

INITIATION & ASSUMPTIONS

1. Personal experiences
2. Defining project objectives

Personal experiences

As a family, we are not very expressive of the love we have for each other. We would rather show it through various convenient, passive ways. My grandfather too has his own subtle ways. He expresses his love through his support and encouragement. While some were slightly disappointed when my mother gave birth to me, a girl, my grandfather, as I was told in my later years, was so unaccountably happy upon hearing the news, he treated everyone he knew in the hospital with his own favourite delicacies. He was hence, my obvious choice when it came to picking my favorite grandparent. He even helped me walk through one of my most embarrassing experiences as a child. It was the day when my mother caught me with tons of her makeup smeared on my face after me having ransacked her wardrobe. Somewhere between my mother scolding me for having destroyed her collection and laughing at the sight of me, my grandfather told me how pretty I looked. He would beam with pride, when my brother and I would do well at studies, and encourage us to do better, when we would fail at our attempts. Having had a fulfilling career himself, he would always emphasized on the importance of education and ambition. As the idea of ambition caught upon me, I moved away from my home almost eight years back, for better education and opportunities. In the new settings and surroundings, my personal relations were

brushed aside to keep up with the demanding circumstances. My own family became irrelevant. Although through these years, feeling homeless, crawling from one city to another, for what seemed like eternity, I was reminded of my long lost priorities. I have been homesick. At around the same time, I was also told about Dadaji's health issues. I eagerly tried to reconnect with him, but I guess years of minimal contact had indeed taken a toll. I still can't really figure out what has changed in him or me, but he does seem to be more in his own shell.

Now when my father and I talk about Dadaji, and my father has a lot of stories to share. He recently told me about Dadaji's impeccable work ethics, how much he contributed to the society through social work, and how honest he was through out. He could never afford a house or any items of luxury and has still been living a simple life. He is a very generous person who has been so, so giving and loving all his life and continues to do so, while we were always on the receiving end.

Getting to know him better through my parents, now I wonder how little I know of a person who was and has been so important to me. I also wonder if I am too late reciprocate.



Chinu, Dadaji, and I

Personal experiences

My relationship with my grand mother from my mother's side, was not as close as it was with my grand father, but I always could admire her grace, her talents, and the way she would rejoice our presence. My nani, who is exceptionally skilled at knitting, would affectionately make us sit around her, unravel and wrap the wool around her knees and very elegantly yet swiftly knit the most beautiful patch of wool cloth within hours, while instructing her clumsy grandchildren with utmost patience and love. She has the best advice to offer in any matter of family concern and her opinion continues to matter the most.



I, Nani, and Chinu

Another time when a conversation with an elderly, stuck with me for years, was when I met an elderly on a train, who advised me on how to be more patient and not fidget while waiting for train's destination. He said, "For your generation, it seems that happiness and ease is the only socially acceptable state of being. One must accept problems and despair as much a part of life as happiness is. The acceptance will make it easier to deal with it all."

Such rare interactions, which to date continue to remain one of my most cherished ones, now make me wonder why have I not had more of such experiences. This thought remains the pivot point of my project and the studies conducted as a part of it.

Objectives

- To understand the realm of old age.
- To share what I see . To articulate my experiences with the elderly in a way that speaks to the sensibilities of younger people and creates further possibility of more of such interactions.
- To instil the idea of compassion towards the elderly, by putting forward an example that speaks of the importance of a life that caters to more than just one's own survival.

STUDIES

1. Research Methods
2. **Primary** : Lives and Stories
3. Old age homes
4. **Secondary** : Cultural, psychological factors
5. Issues faced by the elderly
6. Communication gap
7. The credit system

Research Methods

The chosen method of research for this project was qualitative. Qualitative Research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research.

Among the three most common qualitative methods, these two were chosen to execute the studies :

1. Participant observation is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviour in their usual contexts.
2. In-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored.
3. Focus groups are effective in eliciting data on the cultural norms of a group and in generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the cultural groups or subgroups represented.

The studies were conducted at various locations and scenarios, like old age homes, and elderly social groups, with utmost objectivity, however it was difficult to maintain the emotional distance that

was needed to accurately understand the problems associated with old age.

Pivot point

Through the process of researching, I made the effort to understand the phenomena of old age. Beyond that fundamental question, my focus and interest lied in understanding the issues associated with it and the peculiarities.

Sources

In order to explore and understand the areas of concern of this project, the following sres were referred to :

1. Real stories / real people.
2. Cultural influences and social positioning.
3. Psychology.

Lives & stories

Primary research : Interview

Ajay, 58

Ajay works at the canteen IDC. He is mostly seen on his own and has the most affectionate demeanour. In an extensive interview, he mentioned that he had lost his wife five years ago. He had no family member who could call a close one. He did have a daughter who was married, and he had minimal contact with her.

He went bankrupt after his wife's death and has been living a hand to mouth existence. He even chose to be homeless for more than a year and stayed on an overbridge with almost no belongings.

He claims to have a sufficient social base and takes pride in his journey as an individual.

However, since he is now on his own with almost no savings and no close family member, he suffers health issues and has no way to handle these expenses on his own. He ends up asking for favours from people around him, most of who do not always comply. He misses his only family member, his wife quite a lot, which he did mention quite a lot of times.

There is no doubt in the fact that he is happy despite the fact that he is now on his own and has no one to fall back upon. There are issues that he has to face on a daily basis. But such things, he says, matter less when one considers the world as a big, warm, loving family.

Lives & stories

Visits to old age home

Matrukripa : Old age home.

I visited multiple old age homes for the project but the one that had the environment that stuck with me was Matrukripa. I worked there as a helper for about 10 days to get a closer look on the matter. It was quite a pleasant experience, as even though the time to converse with the elderly was limited, it was laced with affection and intriguing traits.

The helpers in the house were very professional. They would strictly follow schedules and hence, wouldn't find the time to sit and bond with the elderly.

The elderly were all of varying moods and personalities as expected. Most of the elderly had intense mood swings and specific preferences, and hence were not very social. The atmosphere was mostly stagnant because there was hardly any communication amongst the old age residents.

However, a common look of sadness binded them in all their variations. Most of them would cry at the slightest mention of home and family. They would look forward to visits from their family members, most of which were not exactly fulfilled as family visits would be very rare and limited to special occasions. For some the situation was better though.

Ashok, 102

Ashok is one of the most vocal and vibrant personalities in the old age home, despite his physical limitations. My first encounter with him was on the first day itself in the old home. I was asked to prepare and serve tea to all the residents of the house. He was the first person I walked upto. I was a little fidgety which is why I ended up spilling a little tea on the table. Immediately after serving him, he, very lovingly, made me sit with him and told me to not fret over the minor issues. "Life is a joke, you must laugh through out. Laughter makes everything easy, because when you are happy life is easy to get through." "But you must make sure that you do not become the joke, but which is why you must ensure enough distance." he added. "He must have scooped up the advice from his own experience", I remember thinking.

It was a very precise advice which surprisingly made sense because it fitted with the contemporary scenario. I remember feeling safe and loved around him. Towards the end of the very same day, I saw the other side of him. He didn't like the food that was prepared that night and while he was serving it, he got abusive because I didn't have the right excuses for the bad food. It was then that I was told that he had amnesia, and other mood related issues that come with age and lead to aggressive behaviour. He was sent to the old age home by his family for the same reason, as he would get abusive

with his family members. He comes from a very affluent Parsi family of builders and was responsible for laying foundations of his family's affluence.

His family claims to love him dearly to have taken the decision to put him in the old age home, in exchange for better health care services. However, considering their affluence, and the fact that they could have afforded to provide him with the same facilities at the comfort of his own home, the real issue, seemingly lied in the lack of acceptance from his family towards his behavioural issues. His behaviour was not seen as one of the aspects of getting older, and was treated as an exception or out of place factor, for them to have had taken the decision. However, the fact remains that it isn't easy to be around him when he is aggressive. This experience also made me question what is considered normal and how accommodating the society is to the nuances of various phases in the human condition, and how easy it is to have reasons to get rid of what is not comfortable to be around.

He misses his son very much each day, and enquires about his next visit every now and then. His son visits him once almost every two weeks.

Old age homes : Necessary evil ?

In today's demanding times, when time is a priced commodity, how much of it can we really offer to the loved ones who do not assertively ask for it, or, on the other hand, need too much of it? Or is it that love and acceptance, follow a qualifying criteria that decides who deserves affection a place in a close one's life and schedule. In context of how the elderly, the former category comprises of people who do not have enough time and acceptance to offer to an elderly family member.

"I love my mother. But my work does not allow me to stay at home 24x7 to take care of her in her fragile old state. I have put her in one of the best old age homes in the city so that she can be taken care of well. It comforts me to know she is safe and well there. I visit her every weekend. She too have grown to like the place she is in now. "

This statement was made by a guy I interviewed, who had to send his mother away to an old age home due to lack of enough time to take care of her well. Although there was a glimpse of guilt in the decision he had taken, the pride that lied in having taken of the situation well and seeing his mother in her best of health was comforting to him.

"I have kids in house, and my father-in-law is old and diseased. I worry about my kids and wonder if it's the right environment for my kids to be in. We are considering sending him away, however I doubt if he'll easily accept the change if we do."

Considering the latter category, that comprise of people who fail to accept the changes that comes with having a family member who is getting older, there are many instances wherein the elderly family members are abused, exploited and in some cases completely abandoned. In such cases, wherein the elderly members have nowhere else to go, an old age home could be a better option, considering the old age homes are well to take of the elderly, both emotionally and physically.

Reasons for elderly being sent to old age homes :

Most of the elderly in the old age homes were admitted by their family members due to the following vocalised reasons :

- Better health care services.
- Better social exposure.
- Freedom from abuse from family members.
- More attention to most needs and better, more accepting surroundings.

However, there are many appropriate reasons to send one's elderly members to old age homes, in some cases it is also done for the wrong reasons.

- Elderly seen as a financial burden.

- To acquire property in illegal ways by abandoning them in old age homes.
- Seen as a health risk to children.
- Lack of tolerance towards special needs and turmoils of old age.

Reflections:

In India, out of every 10 elderly couples, 6 are either forced to leave home or willingly invest in a retirement / old age home. The concept of nuclear families has become a prominent way of existence as individuals have become more centralized and concerned towards the well-being of their immediate families. Even though, elderly moving to old age homes has become a frequent practise in India, it is still frowned upon in the society, as there are major cultural and religious influences that advice the contrary. However, old age homes is a need of these times, there is no guarentee of a good treatment and enough facilities in such homes for the elderly. In such a case, does the best solution lie in the younger generation reviewing their own patterns and being more accepting to the elderly? Or does it lie in making the infrastrucutre stronger to accomodate situations wherein the family members, willingly or unwillingly fail to take care of their elderly members.

Cultural Influences

Secondary research

This chapter explores outlook of the current Indian society towards the elderly and how deeply the philosophies followed by us affect the conditions the elderly population survive in.

We have grown up in a society, the Indian society, that claims to respect its elderly. Many Indians live in joint family units, with the elders acting as the head of the household. The elders are supported by the younger members of the family and they in turn play a key role in raising their grandchildren. The elderly are often considered the most religious and charitable members of the family. Disrespecting the elders of the family or sending them to an old-age home has a social stigma in India. However, in common practise, we are moving to the system of nuclear families.

The Indian model of the society atleast started out with having excellent concepts regarding the all round development of an individual with proper stress on the importance of caring for the ageing members of the family. According to the Vedas, old age deserves the recognition and attention they have been deprived of. And going back to our Indian roots is the only way, which goes down deep enough to tackle every single issue regarding elderly.

न सा सभा यत्स् न सन्तवृद्धाः
वृद्धा न ते ये न वदन्तधर्मम् ।
धर्मो न वै यत्र च नास्तिसत्यम्
सत्यं न तद्यच्छलनानुवदिधम् ॥

This shloka, from one of the vedas, means; It is not an assembly where there are no elders. They are not elders if they do not teach Dharma. It is not Dharma if it does not contain truth. It is not truth at all if it is charged with deceit.

In Bhagvatgeeta, old age is more related to intellectual activities in the Indian ashram system. The elderly have had a secure and highly respected place in the Indian society through out history. After the advent of Mughals, the conditions in the society remained more or less the same. It was during the British-Raj when the structure of society changed in a noted way. The concept of nuclear families came into existence. In the long run, this culture became widespread and elderly were ignored to a great extent. They were left to fend for themselves and their needs were overlooked. The trend is still prevalent in large masses, but awareness is now slowly seeping in to motivate individuals in the society to look after the elderly.

Psychological changes

Secondary research

Old age brings about a plethora of emotional and physical implications. In order to understand the idea of getting older in its entirety, I made the effort to understand the standard observations made on the topic under the field of psychology.

According to Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, old age is the stage in which individuals assess the quality of their lives. In reflecting on their lives, people in this age group develop a feeling of integrity if deciding that their lives were successful or a feeling of despair if evaluation of one's life indicates a failure to achieve goals.

Ego Integrity vs. Despair

Of all seven stages of psychosocial stages of development, this is the last stage. It has several implications. As we grow older (65+ yrs) and become senior citizens, we tend to slow down our productivity, and explore life as a retired person. It is during this time that we contemplate our accomplishments and are able to develop integrity if we see ourselves as leading a successful life.

Erik Erikson believed if we see our lives as unproductive, feel guilt about our past, or feel that we did not accomplish our life goals, we become dissatisfied with life and develop despair, often leading to depression and hopelessness.

Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of wisdom. Wisdom enables a person to look back on their life with a sense of closure and completeness, and also accept death without fear.

Social :

Diminished social grip due to loss of spouse, peers, etc.

Taboo associated with elderly with health issues.

Lack of visible or quantifiable contribution to the society, leading to diminished social worth.

Psychological :

Trust issues, dementia and other mental illnesses in some cases.

Issues associated with old age

Among many things within that old age brings, there are four major class of challenges that they have to face.

Financial :

Loss of income, seen as a financial liability.

Existing / earned assets, in some instance, taken away.

Physical :

Diminished participation in surrounding activities.

Across generations

At this point, it was also important to understand why there is a lack of understanding and acceptance, in some cases, on part of the younger family members towards the elderly. Or more importantly why is there a gap in communication across varying age groups which leads to such instances of lack of understanding and consideration, at times from both sides.

The enquiry started with exploring one side of the story; the younger generation that the elderly seek love and assurance from, and the reasons for their willingness or unwillingness to provide the elderly with the love and support that they seek.

The project started at the point of trying to understand how relationships form across generations. The question of defining old age and why this particular age group, seemingly suffers, in the society was also one of the focus points.

In order to get a better understanding of the ideas that play a major part in determining the quality of relationships and interactions that happen across generations, a few of my peers were asked questions about their own relationship with the elderly they have known or are related to. Most comments indicate their origin in the idea of finding value in every experience or indulgence.

Peer Thoughts

"A vegetable is called a vegetable for a reason."

"They don't do much. Mostly useless. One must have engagements of one's own."

"I love my grandparents but I don't discuss my issues with them because I don't want them to get worried. I also think they won't understand."

"I loved my grand mom and I was always there for her. But, you know life goes on, other things take over."

"Their presence becomes irrelevant after a point. I have my own issues to deal with."

"I love my grandma and hence I want her to know how to entertain her own self. That's just how the world functions."

Observations

It was observed that the quality of relationships between people from different or within generations was heavily dependent on a credit system that the society follows in its dealings within sectors and across age groups. What functional value does a person Hence, it was crucial to access and understand the criteria against which the value system functions.

The credit system

Sensing the idea of a value system functioning on a subconscious level, research further delved into what is considered of value in today's society and what factors determine such value systems. Factors that seemingly determine such credit systems are as follows :

- Contributions : People who are in the state to make monetary or intellectual contributions are generally taken care of by the society.
- Sense : People who offer anything that is aesthetically pleasing, in the sense of what we are genetically coded to prefer, is a major criteria in what is valued in the society.
- Emotion : If one has had any emotional connection with someone, the value derived from such setups is immense. Our culture accommodates such ideas.

Under such a credit system, it's easy to forget the elderly, who do not make as much tangible or obvious contributions to the society.

Children- Future Contributors

Adults-Active Contributors

Elderly- Minimum or no material contributors.
(in some cases lack of emotional contributions due to; limitations due to aging or, lack of communication across generations that leads to bonding)

DEFINING OLD AGE

1. What is old age?
2. Contributions needed

What is old age?

Based on the learnings made in the above mentioned areas of study, I stumbled across many ways to define old age.

The World Health Organization finds “no general agreement on the age at which a person becomes old.” Most developed countries set the age as 60 or 65. However, in developing countries inability to make “active contribution” to society, not chronological age, marks the beginning of old age. According to Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, old age is the stage in which individuals assess the quality of their lives.

There are multiple ways to define old age. It's the definition, the immediate societal setup or an individual chooses to go along with, that reflects the nuances and fundamental ethics of the society. Old age truly is just a state of mind and if one could be more understanding of the intricacies of each phase that life brings about with itself, it would be easier to be objective and fair on the matter of what is to be valued about old age.

Contributions

Beyond suitable infrastructure, what else is there to offer to the abandoned elderly sector was the eventual question.

Support Systems

Importance of the presence of a support system is crucial for the emotional and physical wellbeing of the elderly.

- Family or other close social / support systems.
- Old age homes, retirement homes or other minimal socially fulfilling and loving environment.

What's needed

Apart from the obvious, that is, better health care facilities & social environment :

- Emotional support from their immediate surroundings.
- Easy communication across age groups is crucial to change the mindset.
- Challenging value systems of the society.

Solutions

Focus area

There are major issues that the elderly in India deal with, especially the ones that are abused or abandoned by their families. Lack of willingness to communicate across generations only adds to the level of ignorance that exists on the matter. Lack of sensitivity and acceptance when dealing with an elderly too is important, a need that is usually ignored as long as the minimal basic is being done. Especially when it comes to dealing with sensitivity with elderly, most work professionals in the elderly health care industry as well as most youngsters generation believe in just doing the job right and not really catering to their emotional needs. It's not always just about getting the job done, it is also about accepting an elderly as one's own family member, a need most abandoned elderly in old age homes covet, which is one one needs to understand if they are willing to contribute to the matter.

Proposed solution

In order to make my own contribution to the issue, I realised that I had to make an effort to appeal to people to contribute to the cause by commenting on their ideas on what is to be valued in life. To do the above said, I concluded that a film on my own subjective experiences would be the best medium

to opt for, to articulate a solution that intends to speak of such abstract criteria and ideas. Through the film I want to make my own personal ideas of what about the elderly has appealed to me and bring more visibility to the what value they offer to the society.

The decision to make a fiction film instead of a documentary was because, I wanted to capture the journey we make as individuals in the privacy of our minds, which shows in our conduct and choices. Making a documentary instead would have only highlighted the issues that we are already unwilling to notice or acknowledge. The context of the old age home too is kept minimal so as to avoid a preachy tone for the film and convey the idea of acceptance towards the imperfections of the human condition.

Key points

The key points that I intended to highlight in the film on the matter are mentioned below :

A sensitivity with which the character deals with the elderly.

Events leading up to the character accepting an elderly as one's own.

Films studied

Tokyo Story (1953)

Japanese drama film.

The film tells the story of an aging couple who travel to Tokyo to visit their grown children. The film contrasts the behavior of their children, who are too busy to pay them much attention, and their widowed daughter-in-law, who treats them with kindness.

Amour (2012)

French romantic film.

The film is about two retired music teachers Georges and Anne have spent their lives devoted to their careers and to each other. As they grow older together and face physical limitations that come with old age, their love and lives together get morphed accordingly.

36 Chowringhee Lane (1981)

Bengali / English drama film.

This film by Aparna Sen is a melancholy tale about a lonely woman facing her the very reality of having to lead a lonely life in her older years, the opportunities that give her the hope to escape such a fate.

Wild Strawberries (1957)

Swedish drama film.

This film is about an old man recalling his past through a visit to his childhood home and the journey that follows.

FINAL OUTCOME

1. Narrative style
2. Characters
3. Challenges faced
4. Story
5. Script
6. Scheduling

Pre production

Narrative

To narrate the story in a more factual tone, I chose to write the story from a third person's point of view. A first person point of view was considered at an early stage but was rejected later due to not being sufficient enough to serve the cause of the film. Some of the other features are:

- Character-based narrative
- Partially-fiction
- 15-20 minutes

Story : Major points

- The caretaker new at the job
- Struggling with the elderly
- Is sensitive yet, doesn't open up to the elderly
- Major rift between the caretaker and Ashok
- Leads to confrontation with the owner
- Is humiliated over her past
- Is reminded of her infant
- Equates Ashok with her infant
- Finds solace in her surroundings

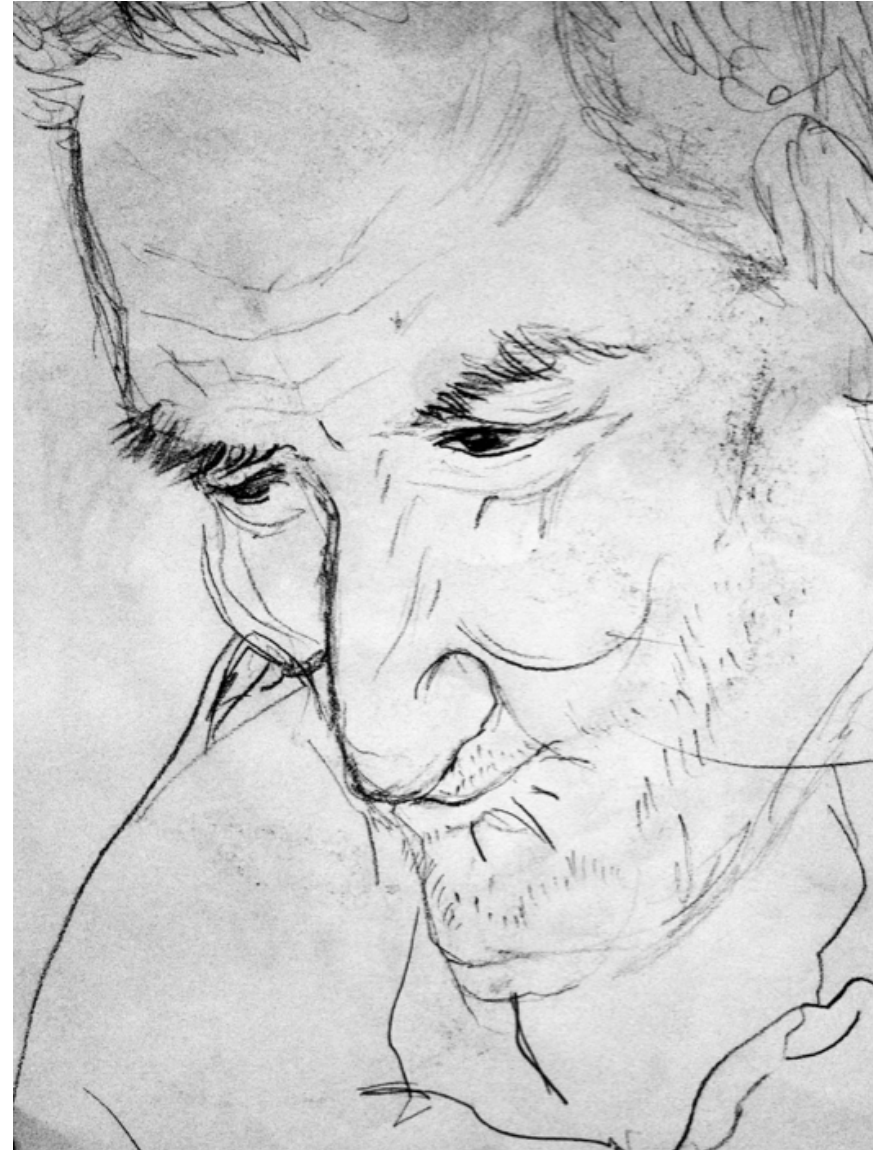
Key points

- The moment of discovery when a job becomes a source of joy to the caretaker.
- The inner journey that leads to compassion, vulnerability and genuine connections.

Characters

Ashok Uncle

- In his late 80-90s
- Loving
- Wise
- Stubborn
- Inconsistent



The Caretaker

- Late 35 - 40s
- Professional
- Strict / unsocial
- Good managerial skills
- A traumatic past
- Survival-oriented
- Insecure
- Mildly alcoholic



The Owner

- Telephonic presence through out the film.
- Early 40s
- Professional
- Business Oriented
- Survival-oriented
- Has had friendly-ties with the caretaker from many years back

Other Characters

- Other elderly housemates
- Other staff members



Story

A young looking woman, stood in the balcony staring at the dark sky against the sparkling city skyline. The half empty glass of whiskey that she held in her hand sparkled too, out of envy. She shifted her gaze to the glass that coveted her perpetual attention. After looking vacantly at her drink for a while, she followed it up with a quick sip. The tingly bitterness of cheap alcohol on her tongue playfully demanded a reaction. Her chapped lips complied with a smile. Things escalated quickly after that. The smile turned into giggles, and giggles turned into a laughter fit. She soon lost herself in the bizarreness of the moment.

Suddenly a piercing sound of whistle jolted her out of her thoughts. She found herself standing in the balcony, soaked in the sun, with an almost empty glass in her hand. The balcony offered no breeze to compensate for the heat. Her gut still felt ruffled from the maddening laughter she had probably dreamt of. She wasn't sure of anything in the moment. She looked back into the brightly lit hall behind her for directions. The huge clock on the wall in the hallway at the opposite end faced her now. It was almost 7 am. Despite everything glossing in the morning sun, she could only feel dull and tired. She hated the place. She could see, it was recently refurbished to mimic the appearance of a legit old age home. Mostly, photographs of smiling old men and women that adorned the walls, took care of the desired look. Everything else was just

like the previous place of her job at the nursing home. She had been serving at such places, for almost all adult 20 years of her life. This scenario too felt identical to the ones that preceded it. It wasn't anyway the case that she had expected much out of the new job role she had undertaken as the caretaker of the old age home.

The sound of whistle ruffled through the still hallway again, this time only more eager. 'Bed 3 is apparent awake, asking for his breakfast', she thought to herself as she prepared herself to cater to the summon. She was yet to get used to occupants' names. It had only been a little more than two weeks there after all. Besides, numbering seemed much more comfortable to recall.

She quickly hid her whiskey glass in the kitchen shelf and rushed to room no. 2. She wanted to make sure the noise doesn't wake up the other occupants of the room. It was too late, however. All the other old men in the room had already woken up, grumpy and tired. She swiftly walked up to bed no. 3, and took a moment to recall the occupant's name. "Ashok uncle, can you not use your whistle so early in the morning to summon me? Look, other's are up too now. It's inconvenient for everyone in the house." She gently removed the whistle from his mouth which he wore around his neck to call for assistance when he needed. In response, bed no. 3, stared back at her with quivering lips. She could

see that the old man was struggling to begin his sentence, so she leaned in for reassurance. "What do you want? Breakfast, right? It's only 7, remember. Now, how many times do I have to tell you that breakfast is served at 9!" Bed no. 3 finally collected his words and pushed them out "Get me breakfast." he repeated the same words twice. She realised that there wasn't much point in indulging further, so she decided to leave it at that. As she tried to straighten her back to step away, she realised the old man had one set of his fingers wrapped around her forearm. She found him staring at her bruise mark on her forearm. Even though she knew that this man was almost blind without his glasses, his blank yet consistent gaze made her feel very uncomfortable. He then lightly slid his fingers across and over the huge stitch mark on her arm as if trying to feel the embossed patch on her skin. She immediately pulled her hand away, and walked back to the door. "How inappropriate" she thought to herself. Bed no. 2 mumbled in anger, making his displeasure over the morning chaos apparent. Before marching back to the kitchen to prepare breakfast, she spoke out, in a voice louder than her usual, "Everybody quiet down, this is not a restaurant. Food will be served according to the schedule."

It was a small capacity old age home which resided 9 elderly, five of which were women and the rest were men. Men and women was placed in separate rooms, which they hardly left. They were

all admitted there by their close family members, siblings and in some cases, loved ones. Most of them were in their late 80s. Ashok was the oldest, a hundred and two, and needed constant assistance. She found him the hardest to deal with. Collectively, they all were very demanding. She countered the exasperation to have to deal with them all, with authority and of course, a little bit of affection and attention, as and when needed.

She walked back into the hall to find that Hari, up and giggling over Katerina Kaif, dancing the shimmy on television screen. He was the youngest, 15, and would be distracted from work easily. "Get off the TV, you lunatic! It's 7! There is so much to do!" she violently hurled the softest pillow at him as she shouted out "I'll break the remote if I see you watch tv during work hours." Hari sprang off the sofa, jolted, and switched off the TV. "Go fill up the buckets" she told Hari. He obeyed almost immediately. "Whosoever wants to sit idle in this house can do that at home, you don't need this job for that." she said it even louder, to make sure, the other staff members scattered in the house also heard it. She rushed back into the kitchen, and eagerly gulped down the remaining few drops of whiskey from the glass she hid in the shelf. She saw it as the only way she could stand the mundaneness of the house. She, then, poured milk in pan and lit up the stove, the stove that would now stay lit up for most part of the day.

All staff in the house was, now, up and occupied with the daily chores. There were a total of five people in the house for assistance. The lead caretaker, her, was in charge of the rest of the staff. Hari was a young boy from Nepal sent away by his family for better money and work opportunities. Geeta and Mala who took care of the elderly women in the house were quite the gossipers, both in their late 20s. They both resided in the old age home and with her and Hari in their own separate quarters. Anil, the only adult male staff member, who took care of the elderly men, travelled to work from elsewhere, and left post breakfast everyday after bathing and cleaning up the elderly men. He was the sanest in the house and kept away from most house matters. Together they worked well as a team.

It was ten minutes past nine. She handed over the last breakfast tray to Geeta, who looked uninterested, "Hurry up now! And where is Mala? Send her to me, she has to help me with the laundry" "She is changing amma's diaper." "Tell madam to hurry up! Breakfast is yet to be served and it's already eight!" "Tell her yourself when she is here" "You are talking too much. I don't want excuses. If you two don't work properly, I'll make sure Pramod sir hears about it. Now do you want that?" At that, as Geeta looked away with an annoyed expression on her face and left, the caretaker's phone rang. The screen lit up with

Pramod's name. She picked the phone with a smile on her face. "You'll live a hundred years. I was just speaking about you." "Who wants to live till a hundred." responded Pramod with a chuckle "How're things going there?" "Well, it's just alright so far. It's quite a task to manage this place. Infact I wanted to discuss more on...." "Listen, I called to inform that there is a new admission, who'll arrive there by tomorrow. So prepare the vacant bed. It's for an old lady, being dropped off by her son." "Another admission?" she said in a worried tone. "Yes, and since they will reach there in a few hours, get the vacant bed cleaned up for them." "I will do that Pramod but why did you take in a new admission without discussing it with me?" "What is there to discuss? This is a business eventually, there was a vacant bed that I had to get an occupant." "But the current number of people here is already quite a lot to deal with. How will I manage?..." "We'll discuss the rest some other time. For now, you please make sure everything is ready for tomorrow. I will visit tomorrow ." He disconnected immediately. She continued cleaning the kitchen, with a heavy headed and a spoilt mood. She was getting more and more disappointed in Pramod. He never really listened to her anymore, especially since the time she accepted this job.

Pramod was a close friend of hers from around 20 years back who had been gradually reduced to a mere acquaintance. They hadn't been in touch

for years. Last month, when he offered her the job at the new old age home he had just started, she thought of it as a pleasant surprise. She felt nostalgic over the memories of their past as good friends who shared the dream of serving those in need. She remembered from their past, their close bond, his support during her worst times, their conversations, his young face, and his ambitious claims over correcting all that he could, that was wrong with the world. He now owned a number of NGOs and care centres, he certainly had made it big, it seemed. Although, she concluded, it was at the cost of his revised ambitions or was it? "It's a business after all." She mulled over his words from the phone call again. Did he really mean it? She shrugged off the thought by realising "It's not my place to judge. He is at least doing well in life" The job didn't have much to offer, monetarily or otherwise. It was certainly no different than the menial jobs in nursing homes, she had been doing to ensure her own survival as a single woman in a society like ours. She had no savings or ambitions otherwise. However the joy of experiencing emotional intimacy after years in isolation, tempted her. All he eventually had to say was "I really need some who I can trust with this work. I know you from before, and I know you will be able to handle this new establishment. Do it for old times sake." Now that she was here, "Whatever happened to all that consideration" she thought. "This job is the problem. May be it was never really a good idea to

let work interfere with friendship." she mumbled, lost in her thoughts.

It was almost 10 now. In a loud voice, she called out for Mala who was supposed to help her with the laundry. Instead she heard her call for help. "Didi please come here, will you. Kaki is throwing tantrums again." "Handle it yourself" she yelled back. "She just won't have it today! I have given up now." "Kids these days" She threw the clothes in the washing machine, and rushed to the other room. "Kaki why don't you just eat the freaking medicine. None of us have the time for this bullshit, we have other things to do" Mala yelled. "Mala, Wait. Let me handle it. You go wash the utensils for now." Mala threw the medicines on bed, and left, muttering. "Kaki, why aren't you eating your medicines." She sat next to bed no. 9 that Kaki had occupied. She got no response from kaki who kept staring out of the window. "Kaki, are you going to tell me?" "Will you at least look at me?" "Kaki, the medicines are for you, for your health and well being. Next time when your son visits you, will he not be happy to find you in the best of your health?" Kaki turned her face to her "Why don't you feed me the medicines with your own hands? Mala just throws the medicine on the table" She stared into kaki's moist eyes. She didn't respond however. She quietly picked up the medicines off the bed and gently placed it on kaki's tongue. She then picked up the juice glass, and brought them close to kaki's

face and watched her gulp it down. The task was done. She was about to stand up to leave when kaki muttered "Sit here with me for a while, will you?" "Kaki, you need to take a nap now please. Yes sometime we'll sit and talk. For now please comply" she manipulated her way out of it. She had a thousand things on her mind. "I am not taking a nap. You leave, go" Kaki said in a very stern voice. As she was leaving, Amma who was lying on the other bed called out. "Beta, today the porridge was really good in taste. Just a little bit of sugar would have made it better. You prepare really good food. Just like my daughter used to make for me before she was married off to that lunatic." "Yes amma, now you also take your afternoon nap now and I'll go work" "Yes beta. Although, I was thinking of having a little bit of sugar before sleeping. It really helps me sleep." "Amma how many times do I tell you. You can't have sugar, you are diabetic!" Amma twitched her face in disappointment and closed her eyes. "And everybody sleep now, or else no one gets pickle with lunch." The caretaker then hurried back to the kitchen to start preparing for lunch.

It was afternoon TV time. Hari quietly mopped the floor with his eyes stuck to the tv screen. Mala, Geeta, and her sat on the floor peeling peas and cutting off sleek slices of Lobiya with quick hand movements. The Tv had a particularly intense episode of everyone's favourite show on. The bride had been abandoned by the her groom and the

bride was lecturing the groom's parents. All eyes were on the screen through out until there was a commercial break. It was then, when Mala for the first time enquired into her life. "Didi, where did you work at before here?" "At a nursing home in Surat" "Where did you stay there?" "In the workers quarters of the nursing home." "What about your family?" "It's just me" "What about marriage" She hesitated upon that question. "No." she answered with a single word. Mala and Geeta gave each other looks and smirked. She noticed that and responded "You have cut the vegetables. Go to the kitchen and wash the cut vegetables. Don't sit here idle now" The show was back again, nobody spoke through out.

It was the last scene of the show that was playing, when she saw, bed no. 3 , Ashok slowly emerge from the room on a walking stick and walk towards the hall. She immediately got up and yelled, "Ashok uncle, why didn't you use your whistle to indicate that you needed assistance. What are you doing here anyway. You are supposed to take rest." He threw his hands up in the air in an attempt to make a reassuring gesture. "I just wanted to take a walk." "Hari go assist him and take him back to the room" Hari obeyed as usual. "uncle you need to go back to the room. You might break a bone or two if you walk around like that." Hari stood next to him, with him arm out for uncle to hold on to. Instead he resisted his assistance. "I dont need your help" Hari

insisted with his body language while he continued to resist. "Leave me alone you fucker" the old man shouted out loud. Hari who was a little stunned stepped back "Uncle you are our responsibility. We will be held responsible if u fall or get hurt. How will your son feel when he comes here next sunday and finds you hurt. Hari take him back right now. This behaviour will not be tolerated here." she stood up and, said in a stern voice. "My son, is he here?" He quietened down. "Are you my son?" He asked looking lost. Hari then got hold of him telling him about when his son's next visit was due, and directed him back to his room. She gently tied her hair up now, feeling more tired than ever. She sighed "Geeta come to the kitchen, after yo cut the remaining vegetables". She walked into the kitchen growing less and less intolerant to the whole situation. She then quickly snuck out the whiskey glass, poured herself a quick drink and gulped it down. It was noon already.

The kitchen was usually a busy place at noon. Food was prepared in great quantity and needed equal attention and care to be laid out on the plate. They were already behind schedule and she needed to hurry up, she realised. The very moment, the sound of whistle filled up the hall and reached her ears. Annoyed, she quickly arranged the food on the plate for Ashok. She handed the food tray to Hari. "Go serve him first, before he gets here again." The sound of whistling was non-stop which made

Hari hurry too. He walked away swiftly. She then arranged another plate of food and handed it to Geeta to serve it to women in the other room. "Send Mala to the kitchen immediately, we are late at lunch today" Hari who had returned to the kitchen informed her "Ashok uncle is asking for you" The sound of whistles filled up the room again. "You didnt give him his plate yet?" "No i did. I was serving others when he asked me who had made the food and told me to call you." "Okay, you go pour every one water until then." Mala arrived in the kitchen then. She immediately handed her the plate she was holding and told her to follow her "Come with me." Amma who was downstairs, watching television while eating, "Beta food is very delicious! Just get me some pickle to go with it" She made a reassuring gesture while continuing to walk towards the Bed no. 3's room. As she entered the room she found him angrily blow at the whistle. "What happened uncle, why are you so angry? put the whistle down I am here" she immediately pushed the whistle out of his mouth. "I don't like my food. My food is cold" he said angrily. "Uncle but you have to eat it for now. I will make better food tomorrow" "As she leaned in and sat on his bed to explain the situation further, he suddenly threw the bowl of dal he had in his hand at her face. "You fuckers don't feed me just anything good" Her face was smeared in her own cooked food. She had had it. She sat there not knowing what to do next trying to hold on to the anger she felt in her. The room

was awfully quiet. She then heard Mala giggle. She looked up at her with eyes filled with anger and humiliation. Mala immediately quietened down and ducked to pick up the utensils scattered on the floor. She stared down at the food scattered on the floor. Sounds from laughter from her morning dream grew louder in her head. She felt her gut feel restless again due to the laughter fit. It was sheer discomfort. She then gently wiped bits and pieces of the food that was smeared on her face. Without looking at anyone, she slowly got up and walked out of the room. Ashok continued to mumble in anger and Mala followed her exit with her gaze.

She immediately walked up to the kitchen and poured herself a large drink which she gulped down in seconds. Mala soon walked into the kitchen with the utensils, but this time she didn't care to hide it. She had made up her mind. Mala stared at her gulping down the drink, but she didn't dare utter a single word. Right after the last sip, she walked up to her cupboard in the hall, and threw her clothes in a bag kept next to the cupboard. She hadn't gotten the time to fully unpack her stuff which seemed useful to her now. She was sure she wanted to leave. After throwing most of her stuff in the bag, she chained it up and picked up the phone. She looked up Pramod's number in the phone with frantic finger movements and dialled immediately. "Yes you please sign up the form soon, give me a minute. Hello." "I have decided to quit." "Quit what? The job?"

"Ashok threw food at my face today because he didn't like the food. This place is insane. Everybody here is a child. And I can't deal with it anymore. I am leaving. You please come over now. I want to meet you." "I can't come there of course, I have another meeting in a while. How can you say you'll leave! There are new people arriving tomorrow. I already have their advance money. Who'll manage everything?" "Did you not hear me? My heart is not in this place, I can't do this kinda work." "Then why did you take up this job. Who do you think you are? You have just been here for two weeks and all you do is complain. Stop feeling sorry for yourself all the time. You can't just leave when all the responsibilities are on you. This is a business after all." "I took up this job because of you. For old times sake. For the fact that we meant something to each other. You come over right now and talk to me here" "Look I know Ashok is too old and suffers from amnesia. He doesn't remember half of the things he says. You are supposed to put up with things because it's your job. I am paying you for it." "You get back here and we'll talk" "You go get back to work. I have things to do here" "All you care about is to run your business. I'll tell your wife and partners what has been going on so far. You don't care about me at all do you. Go to hell" "Don't you dare raise your voice on me. You can't do one job properly, I can see now! Don't you think that I am dependent on you in anyway. If you open your mouth anywhere I'll make your life hell. If

you want to go, then fucking leave. If you want to hear the truth then here it is. I will replace you in a week for all that matters and I'll make sure you don't get any other job elsewhere. Many useless good for nothing people roam around on the streets these days." "How dare you, you fucker" "And don't you forget here that you will be betraying me here after all that I have done for you. Remember how I rescued you when you had no where to go when your husband left you? I should have known from back then that you aren't worth it. Your husband must have seen your true colors for leaving you. He saved the baby by taking it as far from you, to save it from the bitch that you are. Alcoholic bitches like you don't deserve to be a mother or a wife. This is what you deserved. I thought if I gave you a job here, you'll be grateful. But instead you are throwing me tantrums? I'll throw you out too, now you wait and watch.." She couldn't hear another word. Her ears were ringing in pain but her heart felt numb. "My baby. Where is my baby. I should be with him." Her heart ached when she thought about where he could be, how old he must have grown, what would he look like. She always knew she didn't belong here or anywhere she had been for all the years after her baby was taken away, but where else could she have been at anyway? She had been unaware of her own steps all these years. Even today, she didn't know where else to go. All she knew very well was that her heart longed for her baby each and everyday, till she learnt how to suppress the agony. All the other

problems seems smaller now.

She let the phone slip out of her hands. She slowly walked back into the kitchen and started wiping the stains on the kitchen slab. Eventually, evening set in. The sun was less harsh now. Dinner was prepared and ready to be served. It was quieter around in the house. No one spoke much and quietly did the daily chores. Dinner was served even before time today. Everybody ate happily and did not complain. The other elderly men and women praised her cooking skills. "The food was so good today that I didn't even need pickles!" An elderly commented. Later, she went back into room no. 2 to collect the utensils herself. She wanted to wrap up sooner today and call it a night soon. She had had a tiring day after all. She walked up to Ashok uncle's bed to collect the plate when he called for her. "Beta, are you a visitor?" She didn't respond and quietly piled the plates on. He then extended his hand and put it on her head. "Beta did you eat food at least? You must be tired from all the travelling. Go eat something" She looked up at him in his eyes. He was smiling. He apparently did not remember anything from the afternoon. "I have to tell you a secret." She continued to stare. "Life is a series of jokes. You must laugh through out! It get's easier that way." She kept her gaze at him for a while, and then slowly looked away into oblivion. "Go beta, you must go eat now." She slowly walked away and left the room. Hari, who was in the room helped him

slip into his bed. The day was done. Everybody was sound asleep. She poured herself another drink, a small peg this time. She slowly sipped on the drink in dim light. Soon, haunting images from her past started surrounding her, one particular night especially.

She remembered it very clearly. It was a chilly night. She suddenly woke up from her sleep to her baby's cry. She sat up with an uneasy feeling of wetness on her chest. It was her milk that had leaked out of her breast due to delay in feeding her baby. Oh it must be time for the baby's midnight feeding. She hadn't been able to correct the sleep cycle for herself and the baby so far and had to a feeding sometimes at midnight. "I must be a bad mother", she thought to herself, as she fiddled around for the light switch. The baby had stopped crying by now which she found strange. She fumbled faster, and flicked the light on. The room was filled with bright yellow light now. She looked around to find that the room was empty. Her bed was empty. The crib was empty. A few bottles of alcohol were scattered around in the room. It was the first night she had spent by herself in the room, after she was informed that her husband had, indeed, run away with the baby. Facts poured down, like boiling water, from her head to her heart. My baby, where would my baby be right now, would he be getting enough sleep, would he feed my baby properly? She crawled over to the crib. She was in immense pain. Still visibly

drunk from a whole day of drinking, she clenched onto the crib like a mad woman and cried her heart out without a sound. Through her blurry vision, she spotted a bottle lying next to her. She almost instinctively picked up the bottle and smashed it on the floor. It wasn't her in her own body anymore. Her body, to her, felt as empty as the room. Layers of tears obscured her vision enough for her to not see her own actions. It was easier for her that way, to do what she was about to do. Gently and with a consistent pressure, she slid the largest piece of glass she could get her hands on, across her forearm. As the pain set deeper and deeper into her nerves, she sobbed louder. The sobbing noises got loud enough now to pull her back into the present. The sobbing she could hear now, sounded more like moans. Was she still lost in her memories? Or was it really happening. She looked in the direction the moaning sound was coming from. It was room no. 2. "Ashok must be awake again, he must have not gotten enough rest to sleep well it seems" She realised. She stood up and wobbled towards the room "He will be grumpy tomorrow if he doesn't sleep well". Without making a noise she reached his bedside. There he was, moaning in his sleep. His hands seemed to reach out for something. In that moment, her maternal instincts had caught up on her. She gently lowered down and slipped into the bed next to him. She then tenderly moved her fingers across his forehead with her other hand gently patting on his chest in an attempt to help

him sleep. Responding to her touch, he held on to one on her fingers. The moaning faded, as she watched him sleep soundly. Tears rolled down her eyes but her lips did the contrary. She smiled and her eyes gleamed. She didn't know where she going to be in the days that were to follow and she couldn't care less. She felt truly happy and content in the moment. It had been years since the last time she experienced happiness that emerges out of real intimacy. She then noticed the whistle that Ashok wore round his neck. Sometime during playing with the whistle, she dozed off herself in no time. Somewhere, in a different time, her younger self, gently caressed her baby that enjoyed a sound asleep lying next to her.

Script

One of the major challenges that I faced in writing the script was to narrow down the script to its bare essentials as the story had become too elaborate to be turned into a short film. Besides the duration, writing and re-writing the script before and after deciding on the location to shoot the film was a crucial learning that I made in this project.

Having a clear sense of space and the character performances was quite important to turn a story into a script.

In the following pages, a major part of the script has been presented in a landscape format just so that it can be a part of the report.

From story to script :

(An excerpt from the story rewritten in the script format)

Story (An excerpt)

She found herself standing in the balcony, soaked in the sun, with an empty glass in her hand. The balcony offered no breeze to compensate for the heat. Her gut still felt ruffled from the maddening laughter she had probably dreamt of. She wasn't sure of anything in the moment. She looked back into the brightly lit hall behind her for cues. The huge clock on the wall at the end of the hallway faced her now. It was almost 7 am.

Script (An excerpt)

Piercing sound of whistling

SHOT 3 - MORNING - CLOSE UP

She opens her eyes. Her face looks tired. She looks around.

SHOT 4 - MEDIUM WIDE SHOT

She finds herself standing in the balcony/lying on a chair, soaked in the sun, with an almost empty glass in her hand. The atmosphere is humid. She has a dazed expression on her face. She turns around/gets up for cues.

SHOT 5 - MEDIUM WIDE SHOT (BEHIND THE CHARACTER)

A dimly lit passage to the hallway faces her now. With the glass in her hand, she walks into the hallway.

(Latest revision until shoot)

SCENE 1 - BALCONY - NIGHT

1.1.1 A young woman, in her early 20s, stands in the balcony staring at the dark sky against the sparkling city skyline. She moves her right hand outwards to reveal a glass in her hand. The half empty glass of whiskey that she holds in her hand sparkled too. She, now, shifts her gaze to the glass. After looking vacantly at her drink for a while, she is about to take a sip when she suddenly stops upon hearing a whisper. She pauses for a few seconds and looks back with her glass hidden again. After staring back for a while, and feeling secure again, she continues to take a quick sip.

1.2.2 Her lips look stiff.

*Sounds of giggles, that escalate
into a laughter fit*

She soon looks lost, with her eyes shut and lips twitched.

CUTAWAY 1 (C 1) - ROOM - DAY

C1.1.1 Simultaneously, a old pair of hands are shown holding a whistle, which is then moved up to a quivering pair of lips and blown.

Piercing sound of whistling

SCENE 2 - BALCONY - MORNING

2.1.1 Piercing sound of whistle jolts her out of her thoughts. She opens her eyes. Her face looks tired. She looks around.

2.2.2 She finds herself standing in the balcony/lying on a chair, soaked in the sun, with an almost empty glass in her hand. The atmosphere is humid. She has a dazed expression on her face. She turns around/gets up for cues.

2.3.3 A dimly lit passage to the hallway faces her now. With the

glass in her hand, she walks into the hallway.

SCENE 3 - HALLWAY - MORNING

3.1.1 It's a newly established old age home. Mostly, photographs of smiling old men and women that adorn the walls, take care of the desired look. It's almost 7 am on the clock that is put up on the wall. She walk into the frame, struggling to tie her hair up, and walks past the wall when one of the photographs displaying the old age home's name falls onto the ground. She, visibly irritated, pauses for a Second And Looks down, then walks away.

3.2.2 The broken frame housing the photograph is left lying on the floor.

She yells.

CARETAKER

A

Wake up Hari, it's 7 already!

SCENE 4 - KITCHEN - MORNING

4.1.1 She walks into the kitchen and quickly hides the glass in the small space behind the vegetable basket.

sound of whislte

She looks back. She, quickly washes her face in the sink, turns around and exits the kitchen.

SCENE 5 - ROOM - MORNING

5.1.1 She walks into the room. Room 1 is occupied by two elderly men in the house. There are two beds each of which are occupied with two elderly men. They are awake, with grumpy faces. She swiftly walks up to his bed.

5.2.2 Ashok is constantly blowing into the whistle,that he wears

around his neck, with his eyes closed. She gently removes the whistle from his mouth. He, then opens his eyes and looks at her.

CARETAKER

A

What do you want uncle?

Ashok takes a good look at her with squinty eyes

5.2.3 She sits down on the edge of the bed. *visibility annoyed*

CARETAKER

B

Tell me???

5.2.4 He finally pushes the words out,

ASHOK

C

Beta, my head is hurting a lot! Hands are also hurting. Can you call the doctor?

CARETAKER

D

Here, let me give you a head massage.

She leans in to give him a head massage.

ASHOK

E

after a while

When I was a child, my mother used to give me sugar to ease out any pain. Sab fat se theek ho jata tha.

pause

Beta, my throat is hurting too.

pause

Beta, do one thing. Go get some sugar from the kitchen. My throat will be at ease once I taste some sugar.

5.2.5 She stops at that and gives him a sarcastic look.

CARETAKER

F

Uncle aapko shakkar mana hai...
Ek baat baar ek hi baat kyun bolni parti hai aapko....

Uncle, enough now. 9 baje nashta milega toh utha dungi. Aap so jao abhi, sir dard theek ho jayega.

5.2.6 Ashok, visibly annoyed, twitches his face. He turns his face away. He gestures her to leave. She pulls up the bedsheet on him.

5.2.7 She pulls out the bedsheet on him. She looks at him for a moment. She realizes that there isn't much point in indulging further. She decides to leave it at that, turns back, to leave the room. There is a cushion lying on the ground which she picks up. The murmuring grows as she leaves the room. She exits the frame.

SCENE 6 - HALL - MORNING

6.2.1 Hari, the youngest helper in the house, is squatting on the floor with broom in his hands. He is lost listening to some song playing on his phone. A pillow is hurled at him. (She hurls the pillow at him as she shouts out.)

CARETAKER

A

You are up finally! Poora din gaane sunta rehta hai! It's 7!
Itna kaam kaun karega!!

6.1.2 Hari falls back on the floor, jolted, and pulls the earphones out.

CARETAKER

A

Go, wake up Mala or Geeta, there is broken glass that needs to be Cleaned. And leave this work, you go fill up the buckets.

He obeys almost immediately and leaves. The very moment Anil enters

the frame looking hurried. He keeps his bag aside in a corner when she starts speaks up.

CARETAKER
B
Anil, you are late.

ANIL
C
Yes madam, actually while I was,
on the way...

CARETAKER
D
Listen, bed no. 4 doesn't need to
take shower today as he is not well.
Bath everyone else quickly.
Also, be on time tomorrow.

ANIL
E
Yes madam..

He walks out of the frame, leaving only the caretaker in the frame,
who now, yells out, at a pitch louder than her usual

CARETAKER
F
Geeta!! Mala!! Utho sabke sab.
Muft mein nahi rehte ho yaha...

Looking annoyed, she leave the hall.

SCENE 7 - KITCHEN - MORNING

7.1.1 She rushes back into the kitchen, and eagerly gulps down the
remaining few drops of whiskey from the glass she had hidden in the
corner. She, then, pours milk in Pan.

INSERTS 2 (I 1) - KITCHEN - MORNING

She lights up the stove, puts the pan, chopped vegetables, puts the
pieces into the boiling pan, wipes the slab (All thrice)

SCENE 8 - KITCHEN - MORNING

8.3.5 Geeta stands next to her doing some menial chore with half
her heart into it.

CARETAKER
A
Hurry up now! And where is Mala?
Send her to me, she has to help me
with the laundry after this.

GEETA
B
She is changing amma's diaper.

CARETAKER
C
Tell madam to hurry up! Breakfast
is yet to be served and it's
already eight!

GEETA
D
Tell her yourself when she is here

CARETAKER
E
Dekho, agar tum dono aise hi addha
ahdura kaam karoge toh nahi chalega.
Pramod sir ko batan parega mujhe ki kaam
theek se nahi ho raha. Bolu main unhe aisa?

At that, as Geeta looks away with an annoyed expression on her
face. She hands over the last breakfast tray to Geeta.

CARETAKER
F
Go call, Mala. There is more work.

the caretaker's phone rings

She looks back.

8.4.6 The screen lights up with Pramod's name.

8.2.7 She picks the phone with a smile on her face.

CARETAKER

G

You'll live a hundred years. I was just speaking about you.

PRAMOD

H

Pramod responds with a chuckle.

Who wants to live till a hundred.

8.2.8 Geeta walks into the frame and bumps into Mala.

GEETA

I

Where were you, Madam was looking for you.

MALA

J

Arey, was working upstairs. This old lady won't stop cribbing, such a headache. Where is Madam?

GEETA

K

Wait, she on the phone with Pramod sir (Ruk ja phone pe baat kar rahi hai)

Both women look at her.

GEETA

L

Just see how giggly she gets while talking to Pramod sir. While when speaking with us, she gets so bitter.

MALA

M

Haan toh hoga hi aisa, the security guard bol raha tha uss dinn me the ki Pramod sir and she ढाँढा ढाँढा ढाँढाढा. That's how she got this job.

GEETA

N

eye roll

Huh, ofcourse. Chuck this. Come upstairs with me, I gotta tell you some more gossip.

8.2.9 She is still on the phone with Pramod, seeming happy.

PRAMOD

O

So how's work going there?

CARETAKER

P

Well, it's just alright so far. It's quite a task to manage this place. Infact I wanted to discuss more on...

PRAMOD

Q

Don't worry. You'll get used to the work...Listen, I called to inform that there is a new admission, who'll arrive there by tomorrow. So prepare the vacant bed. It's for an old lady, being dropped off by her son.

CARETAKER

R

in a worried tone

Another admission?

PRAMOD

S

Yes, and since they will reach early in the mornin tomorrow, you should get the vacant bed cleaned up for them by tonight.

sounds of whistle

CARETAKER

T

She peeks back, ignores the whistle and gets back to the phone

call.

Pramod, why did you take in a
new admission without discussing
it with me?

PRAMOD

U

What is there to discuss?
We are not running on full capacity,
there was a vacant bed that
I had to get an occupant for.

Additional commotion distresses her.

sounds of whistle

CARETAKER

V

But the current number of people
here is already quite a lot to deal with.
How will I manage?...

He interrupts her.

PRAMOD

W

We'll discuss the rest some other time.
For now, you please make sure everything
is ready for tomorrow.

He disconnects almost immediately. She ponders for while.

sounds of whistle

CARETAKER

X

Geeta!! Mala!!

After waiting for a while, she herself walks out of
the kitchen.

SCENE 9 - ROOM - DAY

9.2.1 With the phone in her hand, she walks up to the room and
shuts the door so that the whistles can't be heard.

SCENE 10 - KITCHEN - DAY

10.1.1 She walks into the kitchen again. She looks at the phone and
keeps it down. She approaches the corner where she had hidden the
alcohol. She looks back to assure there is no one watching. She
then pours out a small peg and takes a sip with eyes closed.

While she takes quick sips, Mala appears in the background. She
takes quieter steps to notice, and then quietly leaves.

The caretaker lets out a sigh of relief.

INSERT 2 (I 2) - KITCHEN - DAY

She then does other daily chores, which includes, washing utensils,
doing laundry and cleaning up.

SCENE 11 - HALL - DAY

11.1.1 Hari quietly dusts the room. Mala, Geeta, and her sat on the
floor peeling peas and cutting off sleek slices of vegetables with
quick hand movements. She enters the room wiping her hands on a
towel, sits on the chair, picks up the plate of grains on the chair
and takes a seat. She then notices Hari too distracted. He almost
drops something.

CARETAKER

A

Hari!! Dhakkan nikal apne kaan se, abhi,
aur dhang se kaam kar.

He obeys with an irritated expression on his face. He soon leaves
the frame.

CARETAKER

B

Mala, did you clean up the utensils
in the kitchen?

MALA

C

Haan didi, kiya sab saaf theek se.

pause

Geeta and Mala are whisper things to each other pushing each other to speak up.

MALA
D
Didi, kitchen mein basket
ke peechey itni saari kaanch ki
bottles rakhi thi.

pause

11.2.2 She looks up with a subtle surprise and disappointment on her face.

MALA
...D
Bohot gardi thi uss coney mein.
Pata nahi kaun laya ye sab
yaha, baba re. Maine toh sab fek di.

CARETAKER
E
hmm... theek hai

She takes a pause to recollect herself and looks down to continue picking the grains.

11.1.3 Geeta and Mala giggle. She responds.

CARETAKER
F
Kaise kaat rahe ho sabji.
Itne bade tukdey karogey
toh khana kachha reh jayega
phir kaun khayega.

Mala twitches her Face. Suddenly Geeta looks up. She looks up too then.

11.1.4 Ashok uncle is slowly walking out of the room using a walker.

11.3.5 Upon seeing that, she is angered. She stops working and says.

CARETAKER

F
Uncle, if you wanted something you
should have used your whistle! Why did
you come out! what do you want!

11.3.6

ASHOK

QUIET

11.1.7

CARETAKER
G
What do you want uncle?

Quiet

CARETAKER
H
Uncle you don't ever listen. If you
break a bone or two what will we tell
your son in his next visit?
Hari, go help him go back to his room!

11.2.8 While Hari gets up to help him, he starts turning back Hari ducks down again while staring at him. Ashok slowly goes back into the room. His murmur trails.

11.3.9 She sighs and looks down again. She shuffles the plate a little, gets up and walks out of the frame.

SCENE 12 - KITCHEN - DAY

12.2.1 She walks into the kitchen, keeps the plate aside, and walks up to the corner where she had hidden her alcohol, she finds nothing there. She then picks up phone on the kitchen counter.

She dials Pramod's number on the phone impatiently.

She holds the phone close to her face, waits for him to pick up. After a few rings, she realizes he wasn't going to pick up.

12.3.2 She disconnects with a blank and disappointed look on her face. She gradually closes her eyes.

INSERT 3 (I 3) - KITCHEN - DAY

She fills up the buckets, dusts the kitchen slap, washes the utensils and sprinkles spices on the food bowl.

SCENE 13 - KITCHEN - DAY

13.2.1 Mala walks past her with another plate.

After a while Hari enters the frame again.

HARI

A

Didi, wo buddha bula raha hai aapko.
Gusse mein tha.

CARETAKER

B

Why don't you take care of it.
Go ask him.

HARI

C

Didi, wo khana nahi kha rahe

CARETAKER

D

What did he say?

HARI

E

He said call whosoever made the food.

CARETAKER

F

Okay, I'll see to it. Go serve this
food in the upper room to bed no. 5

She hands him another tray and walks out.

SCENE 14 - HALLWAY - DAY

14.1.1 She passes by the hall wherein one of the old ladies is sitting.

OLD LADY 1

A

Beta, khana toh bohot achha bana hai.
Bus thoda achaar deti ja.

CARETAKER

B

Haan lati hoon

She walks past them.

SCENE 15 - ROOM - DAY

15.1.1 She enters the room. Ashok is seen sitting at the table.
Mala can be seen serving food to the other elderly.

15.2.2 Ashok is seen sitting and sulking with a frown. She walks
into the frame and sits at the edge of the bed quickly. He looks at
the food plate.

She then says impatiently.

CARETAKER

A

Kya hua!!!

ASHOK

B

I don't want to eat this food.

CARETAKER

C

Kyun nahi khana?

ASHOK

D

I don't want to eat it. I don't like it.

CARETAKER

E

Uncle I don't have time for this.
Just eat the damn food!! Otherwise
you'll fall sick again.

ASHOK
F
I don't want to eat it.

CARETAKER
G
I will get you sweets for food tomorrow
if you eat this food.

ASHOK
H
You never get me sweets.
I WON'T EAT THIS FOOD, TAKE IT AWAY!!

Upon saying that, he angrily throws the food off the table with a strong jerk of his hand.

15.3.3 She flinches, and quickly turns her face away to save herself but ends up with food smeared on his face anyway. After trying to assess the situation, she looks at him with surprised eyes.

15.2.4 She sits still staring at Ashok when Mala who can be seen in the background, giggles. She turns her head to notice Mala, who immediately stops giggling and resumes serving the food to the elderly she was catering to.

15.3.5 She stares blankly with a subtle frown as her eyes tear up. She then gently wiped off bits and piece of the food that was smeared on her face. As she does that the sounds of laughter fade in and keeps growing stronger.

sounds of laughter

15.2.6 She gets up, and exits the frame as Geeta quickly takes a peek at her walking out and follows her exit with her gaze.

16._.1 She, with quick steps, walks out of the room as she passes by Hari who also stares at her. She continues walking straight to her cupboard.
She then throws things around to look for her phone.
She picks up the phone and walks upto a safe secluded space, while dialing on it. She then pauses and let the phone ring for a while.

She slams the balcony door shut.

SCENE 17 - BALCONY - DAY

17.3.1 She is seen talking to Pramod in an effort to escape her immediate realities.

PRAMOD
A
Hello, haan jaldi bolo.
I have to rush out.

CARETAKER
B
Mujhe nahi karni ye kaam.

PRAMOD
C
Kaam nahi karna? Kaun se kaam?

CARETAKER
D
Ashok threw food at my face today
because he didn't like the food.
Kal kuch aur tamasha tha. Parso kuch aur.
This place is a madhouse. And I getting
suffocated here. I won't work here.
Tu abhi aa yaha mujhe tujhse milna hai.

PRAMOD
E
Aaram se... thoda pani pi le pehle. I can't
come there of course, I have to meet
people for work. Lekin ye baat samajh ki
Ashok is too old and suffers from amnesia.
He doesn't what or why he does things.
You are supposed to handle these things
because it's your job. I am paying
you for it. You have to be professional
here. I will talk to his son to take
care of his mood swings through
better medication.

CARETAKER
F

Main kitne hi paise leti hoon iss kaam ke jo
maine yaha kuch bhi jheloon.
I am telling you for now that
I wont stay here anymore.
You come here and we'll talk.

PRAMOD

G

Yaha nahi rahegi toh kaha jayegi.
You go get back to work,
we'll talk later.
I have things to do here.

CARETAKER

H

I don't know where I'll go but not here.
Did you not hear me? I am getting
suffocated here. Who will understand
this if not you?! Please come here
right now.

PRAMOD

I

What do you want?? Sab kaam chor ke
main waha aau ye sunney ki tujhe kaam
nahi karna? Do you want people to keep
worshiping you? Kya mazaak chal raha hai
waha kya? There are new people arriving
tomorrow. I already have their advance
money. Yaha dus aur kaam hai. Aur tere
nakhrey hai ki khatam hi nahi hotey.
Apna dhandha chalaau ki nahi main yaha.

CARETAKER

J

Saale, all you care about is to run
your business. You don't care
about me at all. Tujhe kya lagta mujhe
dikhta nahi, jab se teri biwi wapaa
aayi hai, tu dikhna band ho gaya hai?
I'll tell your wife, your partners,
everyone how you have used me.
Go to hell after that.

PRAMOD

K

hahaha Kya boli? Tu dhamki de rahi
hai mujhe? And what will you tell
everyone. You yourself have trailed me,
sabne dekha hai. Tu kya bolegi kuch kisi
ko. Main bolta hoon ab. If you want to go,
then leave. I will replace you in a
week for all that matters. Phir tu apni khud
ki soch le. Ek baar wapaa sadak pe aa gayi,
TOH KOI MU NAHI LAGANEY WALA TUJHE.

CARETAKER

L

HOW DARE YOU, YOU ...

PRAMOD

M

CHILLA MAT... Dekh, dimag khud laga.
Tu apni aadhi se zada kamayi toh
daru pe uda di thi. Kumse kum iss
naukari ke paise jama karkegi,
toh child custody ka case file kar payegi.
Beta nahi dekhna hai apna kabhi?
Chaar saal ka ho gaya hoga ab. Vakeel
free mein toh kaam karengey nahi tera.
Yaha waha bhatakti phiregi toh phir
kabhi nahi hone wala kuch.

Baaki zada pareshaan hai abhi
toh sunday tak ruk, achhi daru
laata hoon main, phir teri saari
pareshaani ka ilaaj kar dunga. haha
Itne dino se nahi mili hai mujhse
isiliye farfara rahi hai na itna...

She lets her hand that held the phone slide down to her side and
follows it with her gaze.

the sound of ears ringing take over

some murmuring continues to emerge from the phone

17.3.2 She disconnects the phone. She then turns it Over, opens the
phone's back cover, takes out the battery, takes out the sim. She
quickly reassembles the phone.

17.2.3 She then looks up and throws away the sim. She stands there with a stern expression. She, pulls her hair back and ties it into a bun. *fade out*

INSERT 4 (I 4) - KITCHEN / ROOM - DAY

She cooks with house mates around, covers the remaining food, she prepares the vacant bed, she gently wipes off the kitchen slab, pulls out another bottle of alcohol. (Slowest as compared to other inserts)

SCENE 18 - KITCHEN - NIGHT

18.3.1 She pours herself a small peg. She then walks up to the trash can in the background and pours out the rest of the drink and finally disposes the bottle. Comes back to pick up the glass and walks out of the frame.

SCENE 18 - KITCHEN - NIGHT

18.2.1 An empty chair sits in the room in silence. The atmosphere is dimly lit. She enters the frame and slowly sits on the chair. She takes a few sips.

CUTAWAY (C 2) - OUTDOORS

18.2.2 One year old kid's fingers, his smile, his belly button, his legs. Closeup of the kid's mouth, which is full of sugar.

faint sound of whistle

She looks to the side in the direction of the room. She gets up and walks into the room.

SCENE 19 - ROOM - NIGHT

19.2.1 She walks in and sits down. Ashok who is seen lying on bed looks at her. He then looks down and pulls out something from under the pillow, and hands it to her.

19.3.2 It's a tiny box. She gently opens it. It's full of sugar.

She looks up at Ashok.

GEETA

A

Shakkar kisne di aapko?

ASHOK

B

Pichli raat churayi thi rasoi se.
Maine tera khana nahi khaya na.
Aaj phir chini bhi nahi khayi.

pause

GEETA

C

Uncle, chini acchi nahi hai
aapki sehat ke liye, doctor ne bola
tha na aapko pichli baar..

SHOT 6 - CLOSE UP

ASHOK

D

Arey tum doctoro ko, tum padhey
likhey logo ko kuch nahi pata.
Mujhe pata hai mera ilaaj shakkar
mein hi hai.

Ja, tu bhi thoda shakkarkha, sab theek hoga

He then turns his face away and closes his eyes.

She has a faint smile on her face. She then puts
the box down.

SHOT 6 - (OVER THE SHOULDER) (TWO PEOPLE) MID SHOT

She pulls up the bedsheet on him and leaves

SHOT 6 - BALCONY - MEDIUM

She walks to the balcony. She ponders for a while. She smiles
openly. She then opens the same box of sugar and puts a pinch of
sugar in her mouth.

Scheduling

Shot division was one of the most important and tricky step in pre-production as it determined the flow of the whole shoot schedule based on the availability of resources and actors. The final shot division went through multiple revisions each time any correction in the story, script or acting schedule was made.

At the time of the shoot, shot division sheet, along with log sheet for video and sound were a major reference while compiling the film later.

X	To do	Scene . Setup . Shot	chronorder	Location / Time	Actors (Presence)		Camera			
					# People	Subject	Size (& Type)	Placemnt	Angle of camera	Movement
		1 . 1 . 1	1	Bal / Nite	1. Cartk	Caretaker	Long	Behind the subject	Straight	Static
		1 . 4 . 2	2	Bal / Nite	1. Cartk	Caretaker - Lips	Extreme close up	Front-3/4	Low	- Jerky - Tilt up
		C1 . 4 . 1	3	Room / Day	1. Cartk	Ashok - Lips	Extreme close up (Cutaway)	Front-3/4	s Low	Static - Jerky
		2 . 3 . 1	4	Bal / Dawn	1. Cartk	Caretaker	Close up	Front-3/4	s Low	Static
		2 . 1 . 2	5	Bal / Dawn	1. Cartk	Caretaker	Long	Front-3/4	v Low	Static
		2 . 2 . 3	6	Bal / Dawn	1. Cartk	Caretaker	Medium	Behind the subject	Straight	Static
		3 . 0 . 1	7	Hall / Day	1. Cartk	Caretaker	Wide	Front	Straight	Dolly Tilt down
		3 . 4 . 2	8	Hall / Day	0	Painting	Close up	Front 3/4	s Low	Static
		4 . 1 . 1	9	Kitc / Day	1. Cartk	Glass (foreground)	Long	Front	High	Static
		5 . 1 . 1	10	Room / Day	1. Cartk 2. Ashok 3. O M 2	Ashok & Caretaker	Long (Over the shoulder)	Front	Straight	Static

Sheet 1

Description				Sound	Additional notes	Time estimated (In seconds)			Takes
Action	Dialogue	Continuity	Props			Script time	Setup	Shot (x) # Takes	
She stands in the balcony staring out with alcohol.		○ -	1. Plastic glass 2. Alcohol 3. Chair						
She moves the glass away from her lips looks lost with her eyes shut.		- (1.1.1) - ○	1. Plastic glass 2. Alcohol 3. Chair	Growing sound of laughter					
Slowly picks up the whistle. Blows it.		○	1. Whistle	Piercing sound of whistling	Slow motion (High frame rate)				
Wakes up, dazed		○ - (3.2.2) -	1. Almost empty glass 2. Chair		Beads of sweat on character's forehead.				
looks, finds herself standing in the balcony/lying on a chair, soaked in the sun, stands, turns around		- (3.1.1) - ○ - (3.3.3) -	1. Almost empty glass 2. Chair						
faces hallway. With glass in hand, she walks into the hallway.		- (3.2.2) - ○	1. Almost empty glass						
Old age home wall. 7/8 am on clock. she walks in, trying to tie hair. painting falls. she is visibly irritated, pauses for a second, walks away.		○	1. Painting (framed) 2. Almost empty glass	Glass breaking					
Shattered glass	4 : A	○	1. Painting (broken)						
walks into the kitchen, hides the glass behind the vegetable basket. washes face in the sink, leaves		○	1. Plastic glass 2. Vegetable basket						
Ashok constantly blowing whistle. She walks into the room, her back twrds the cam. She leans in.			1. Whistle	Sound of door opening. Sound of whistle					

Film : Shakkar

The film aims at encouraging the younger generation to open their hearts to the struggles of the elderly, and take notice of the innocence that comes with old age, a quality which could eventually be a source of joy to many such people young people, who themselves are struggling through today's fast paced ways of life with a hardened heart.

The final film is a product of collective efforts of a small team of three people.

Story & Direction : Suruchi Sati

Camera : Rohit Pote

Sound : Suraj Jagdale

Acting :

Caretaker : Harsha

Ashok : Ajaj Singh

& Others..

Duration : 11:00 min

Medium : Hindi



Screenshots





Conclusion

Of all that I got to learn from this project, my most important learning lied in understanding the definition of old age and questioning the credit system that judges it's suitability to the society.

If I am allowed to be subjective here, according to me, old age is when one reaches one's most refined version of the inner self, after years of experiences, constantly revised priorities, setbacks, achievements and consecutive reflections, that is until, they have the physical and mental capacity to make use of such learnings. Beyond the capable years, the elderly need to be accepted and taken for what they are individually, which comes with all their accomplishments, experiences and limitations.

There may or may not be monetary or other superficial brilliance to look up to within the elderly sector based on how socially accomplished one has lead his or her life, but as long as there is acceptance and willingness to accept what the elderly sector in society has to offer, we'll only be doing our own system of society a favour by being more accepting of our own shortcomings as a human being.

This project also helped me cherish more, the beauty of having an elderly family member in my life. I, however, still don't exactly understand why I stopped calling my grand father, because the value he brought in to my growing years has been immense and he has remained a figure of

inspiration for all of us. Perhaps, it was the survival instinct in me which took the liberty rearrange my priorities, a fact I really need to revise and take charge against.

Most importantly, the issues Dadaji must have faced in his life while growing older over the years, ranging from the newly experienced physical complications and limitations, to the emotional residual post his retirement and eventually the downfall of his position as the lead in the family (He now approves of everyone's decisions without questioning, while earlier he used to put every thought through his own criteria of ethics and, advice us, or in some cases instruct us, accordingly) must have affected his willingness to connect. He could also be trying come to terms with his reduced social circle, and a sense of isolation that creeps in with old age. The fact that he is only left with fewer years with his loved ones, something I have been in denial over, is heartbreaking to us all and gets worse, when we hear his struggle to make peace with the fact in his voice, occasionally. For him, to look at old relationships through the new context of his later, more difficult years, could be extremely challenging. The idea of nearing the end of a life we all clingy to so dearly, could be disturbing and beyond what we can understand. I can only make an effort to understand it from a distance to know where I have lacked, and dare not scrutinize his life while letting him know I had the audacity to do say that he could

use any help. He still is my proud, authoritative and amazingly knowledgeable Dadaji I grew around and I would always want to remember him that way. All I can do here, is to cherish his valuable presence, as much as I can, and look forward to the following brilliant years I have with him. It is his time now for him to be on the receiving end of all the love, comfort and acceptance he deserves after having spent a vast life I can look upto.

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“

When we're young we have faith in what is seen,
but when we're old we know that what is seen is
traced in air and built on water.

”

- By Maxwell Anderson
Winterset