

CONCEPT NOTE

A film by
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Title: Kaun

Target Audience: 13 years and older

Synopsis: A young, working woman gets back home after running into her ex-boyfriend, when she receives text messages from an unknown number, telling her that somebody is on the way to her house. Alone at home, she realizes that she does not know who is texting her, and that she might have an uninvited visitor.

Treatment:

Characters

1. Riya Saxena

26 year old Riya is a single, work-oriented woman. She is a lawyer at the Bretwoods law firm. She enjoys her independence, which is made obvious when she speaks to her mother, and when she refuses Karan's help. She is generally weary of strangers, and is careful around men. She does not trust anyone who is unusually friendly and helpful, and ensures that she never has to depend on someone or take favors, as she is terrified of the consequences. She has a pet dog - Ronnie.

2. Karan Malhotra

Karan, Riya's ex-boyfriend and office colleague is a friendly person, and is constantly trying to help everyone. He runs into Riya in front of her office building, and they have a small reunion conversation. He insists on dropping her home, only driving the suspicious Riya to get her cab fast and rush home. Because of Riya's reaction, he is a suspect in the thriller.

3. Taxi driver

The X cab service driver drops Riya home on her way back from office. He leers at her through the mirror and is one of the suspects in the film.

4. Room mate:

Riya's room mate works in Bretwood Marketing Co. as a Production Assistant, and has to travel frequently for work. She is away when Riya gets home.

5. Ronnie:

Ronnie is Riya's alert pet dog. He is unfriendly to strangers, and barks continuously when he senses that a stranger is outside the main door.

6. Security Guard:

The security guard is a young man who rarely wears his uniform. He sits on a plastic chair at the foot of the entrance stairway, with another plastic chair in front of him, that acts as a footrest. He looks Riya up and down as she walks into the house. When she comes back to speak to him, he is caught by surprise, as the residents generally do not speak to him. He then acts obedient. As she turns and walks away, he smiles and looks her up and down again. He, too is a suspect in the film.

Sets

1. Riya's room

Shared with a roommate, Riya's part of the room is plain but neat, with a window behind the head of her bed. Her roommate's part of the room is dressed up in fairy lights, and posters of the different Television and Film personalities she admires. Riya sees her roommates taste as childish, and makes sure that her part of the room is a stark contrast to it, with just a Renaissance replica to the right of her bed stand. This plainness is a result of her fast paced life and tendency to be absorbed in her work, often ignoring her surroundings. She wouldn't under regular circumstances be able to afford this room (since it's in the heart of the city and just 2Kms from her workplace), but lives there on a meager rent now, since the company bought the building to house their employees two years before she joined them. Her roommate works in the marketing wing of her law firm's sister company.

2. The Road

The road outside her workplace does not see heavy traffic on a regular basis. It has streetlights that do not always function, and a thick canopy of trees that line the boundary between the wall of her office compound and the street. The building itself lies at the head of a crossroad, and is in bad condition since it is the oldest building in that line of buildings. The road is taken good care of with regular tarring, and would almost resemble a highway due to the lighting, road quality and traffic conditions up till a certain point around 500 meters from the gate of her office.

3. The Building

The building is deserted on that particular day, since most people from the office had to work late that night. The balconies are lit up very dimly, except for the balcony of the man living just above the dark basement, which is lit up in a smoky green light. Riya's balcony cannot be seen, since it is on the second floor and covered with venetian blinds.

The hallways have just one light source above each stairway, leaving them mostly dark. The only other light comes trickling onto the marble floor and walls of the building passageway through the thick, black, metal grills of the lift. The door of the man living on the ground floor is completely bare, unpolished and almost chipping, while Riya's door is polished and decorated with religious symbols by her roommate who'd heard many legends about the building's haunting.

On the outside, the building is painted with a thick coat of off-white paint, and has a narrow pathway leading to darkness, to the right of the main stairway. The watchman sits at the main stairway with just one light source above his head.

Plot

Walking out of her office building, Riya is trying to calm her mother down, convincing her that she will visit soon. She tells her mother that she will try her best to come the next day, and that she has to go now because she has to get a cab home. Just as Riya cuts the call, she walks into Karan and almost falls back due to the impact. Karan grabs her hand and steadies her. Regaining her composure, Riya quickly pulls back her hand and smiles politely. Karan asks her how she has been, and asks her why she doesn't text him anymore. She says she will reply to his texts soon, but could not before as she was busy with the multiple cases her boss makes her do research on. He asks her if she is free the next day, and she lies about having a meeting with an important client through lunch. Before he can ask again, she says she has to get home quickly and opens her phone to book a cab. He offers to drop her home, and she lies about having booked a cab already. We can see her fidgeting with her phone nervously, trying to book a cab. He keeps insisting, and she finally manages to book her ride, which arrives just as he is about to get his car. She says bye without turning and hurriedly gets into the cab. As Karan turns to walk away, he steps on something, looks at it, and bends down to pick it up. In her hurry to leave, Riya had dropped her id card, and Karan calls her. In the car, Riya looks at Karan's phone call, and still reeling from the embarrassment of the encounter with him, she ignores his calls. He sends her a message saying that she dropped her id card and he will come drop it off at her house. She instantly calls him and tells him to

leave it at the office. He insists on coming home and giving it to her, but she tells him she will take it from office. She catches the driver staring at her through the mirror. She puts on her earphones, plays Sweet Dreams by Emily Browning, and ignores the driver. When she gets home, we see the driver still staring at her, and follow his gaze to Riya's backside. As she walks into her apartment building with the song still playing, she doesn't notice the watchman staring at her, his eyes following her into the building. Just as he turns back smiling to himself, she walks back to him and tells him not to let the 'Black gadi waala' (Karan) enter the apartment, and to lie about her not being at home. Caught by surprise, he gets up and nods at what she says. As she walks away again, he slowly sits down and looks her up and down, with a satisfied smile on his face. She runs up to her second floor apartment. Ronnie starts yelping even before she opens the door. As she enters the house, Ronnie runs up to her and she hugs and pets him. He then runs off to play, and she goes to her room. She finds a note on her bed, left by her roommate Anya, saying that her shoot got delayed and she'll be home late. Riya closes her bedroom door and changes into her pajamas. As she is changing, she gets a text message from an unknown number saying "I'm coming. I will reach soon." Assuming it is Karan, she curses him and opens her door to call Ronnie. We cut to Karan texting while driving, smiling down at his phone. He puts his phone away and continues driving. Ronnie looks at Riya and then goes back to playing with his chew toy. She sighs, closes the door and is sitting on her bed to work when she gets the second text message from the same number. We see Karan again, driving. Riya's ID card is on the passenger seat, with the address and phone number on it. The message sent to Riya says "Almost there. Will be up soon." She instantly calls Karan and asks him if he is coming. He says he isn't. He tells her that he still has the ID Card, and will leave it in the reception in the morning. After she hangs up, she is just about to put her phone away when she gets the third message saying "I'm downstairs, will be up soon." Riya opens her contacts and looks for the watchman's number. The watchman is asleep, and we see Karan climbing up a flight of well-lit stairs. Riya gets another message before she can call the watchman, and she hears Ronnie bark loudly at the door. The message says "I'm here. Open up." Karan opens the door to his house, and the place is silent. Suddenly, he hears a loud roar in unison, saying the word "SURPRISE!". The lights go on, and we see that it is his birthday, and his current girlfriend, who runs to hug him has thrown him a birthday party. Ronnie is still barking. Riya jumps as someone loudly bangs the door. Ronnie starts to whimper.

Version 1: The banging continues for about 30 seconds before stopping entirely. Riya notices that even Ronnie has stopped barking. She softly calls out to him, and is about to get up and go check on him, when she hears the sound of her message tone again, making her jump. This

message is the same as the last one, saying “I’m here. Open up.” She hears soft knocks. But this time, it is on her bedroom door which softly creaks open.

Version 2: The banging continues for about 30 seconds before stopping entirely. Ronnie begins to whimper and scrapes the bedroom door. He barks and whimpers at the bedroom door. Riya is just about to get out of bed, when she hears the knocks again. This time, they are soft, and are coming from exactly behind her. She turns to see a hand open the window.

USP:

- Due to the open ending, this film is impactful and thought provoking.
- It not only has entertainment value, but also addresses a social cause – safety of a lone woman.
- Due to the fear of the unknown in the end, the viewer of the film edges between experiencing suspense and horror, both of which are popular genres that leave the viewer scared after the film has ended.