

Rising Star II - Overall assessment

Yes. *Rising Star II* retains the distinct voices established in the first film and adds several recognisable new ones. Logan and Malik remain the strongest pairing, while Peter Denton has a particularly clear, persuasive voice that separates him from both the detectives and his followers.

The new supporting ensemble is uneven: **Emily and Tilly are memorable**, Cheryl is distinguishable chiefly through her behaviour and controlled practicality, while Aiden and Terry occasionally sound more functional.

I would score the screenplay's overall character-voice differentiation at approximately **8/10**, broadly consistent with—and in some areas stronger than—the first *Rising Star*.

Logan Ford

Logan's voice carries over convincingly. He remains:

- abrasive;
- instinctive;
- cynical;
- darkly humorous;
- emotionally guarded;
- resistant to authority.

His first substantial exchange immediately sounds like him. Faced with the destruction of Denton's house, he tells Drake:

"They never told me you were planning on redesigning his house."

Then:

"And you've let Denton escape? Nice job, Larry."

Logan responds to danger through sarcasm and accusation rather than alarm.

His dialogue with Malik also shows their relationship has advanced. Logan is still provocative, but Malik can now answer him as an equal:

Logan: "Time of the month?"

Malik: "I don't know how Audrey puts up with you."

This is recognisably their established rhythm: Logan throws out an insensitive remark; Malik corrects him through dry disapproval rather than moralising.

Logan also remains the man who voices conclusions bluntly:

"Two girls. Two murders. More than coincidence."

"He'll screw you...if it'll further his career."

"That bastard nearly killed my family."

His voice becomes more personal in the sequel because Denton directly threatens his family, but the emotion still emerges as anger and determination rather than confession.

Voice distinction: 9/10

Malik Edwards

Malik remains measured, analytical and more diplomatic than Logan, but he sounds more assured than he did when first partnered with him.

In the first film, Malik frequently had to prove that he was not merely a “college boy.” Here, he openly critiques Logan’s methods:

“Sometimes you need to be more subtle.”

“You’re like a red rag to a bull.”

“It’s working with you.”

That final reply is especially characteristic: controlled, dry and quietly pointed.

Malik also maintains his more reflective and culturally grounded register. At Mitchell’s murder scene, he calls the violence “The Devil’s Watch” and explains it as something his grandmother used to say when “all hell broke loose.” That personal reference gives him more texture than purely academic dialogue.

His voice is generally:

- polite with authority;
- precise during interviews;
- emotionally observant;
- sceptical without being cynical;
- capable of quiet humour.

Where Logan says, “Hell if I know,” Malik asks the structured question. Where Logan pushes, Malik gathers information. Where Logan distrusts Drake instinctively, Malik considers whether Logan is being unfair.

The sequel also allows Malik to challenge his partner without undermining their loyalty. “We’ve unfinished business” is restrained but decisive—a very Malik-like commitment.

As in the first film, some of his procedural dialogue remains functional, but his personality survives those scenes.

Voice distinction: 8.5/10

The Logan–Malik partnership

Their voices are now more complementary than adversarial.

In the original, their dialogue often established difference. In the sequel, it shows familiarity:

- Malik anticipates Logan’s misconduct.
- Logan expects Malik to support him.
- Malik knows when to restrain him.
- Logan increasingly trusts Malik’s judgement.

Their rhythm is particularly good around Hanley. Logan whispers “Captain Chuckles is calling,” while Malik simply warns: “Say nothing.”

That tells us Malik knows exactly how Logan behaves and sees the approaching disaster before it unfolds.

They still do not sound interchangeable. Logan uses insults, shorthand and instinct. Malik uses reasoning, irony and composure. Their voices have grown closer emotionally without becoming identical.

Peter Denton

Denton has one of the screenplay’s most distinctive voices.

He speaks like a recruiter, preacher and conspiracy theorist. His sentences are often:

- broken into deliberate fragments;

- rhetorical;
- ideological;
- aphoristic;
- designed for repetition.

Examples include:

“We act as one.”

“Trust no one.”

“Tell no one.”

“Revolution isn’t rage. It’s rhythm. Precision. Commitment.”

His language turns violence into philosophy. He rarely says, “We are going to attack.” Instead, he reframes action as revolution, freedom or historical necessity.

He also asks leading questions:

“Is there real freedom?”

“Can we trust our leaders?”

“What keeps you up at night?”

These are not genuine requests for discussion. They are mechanisms for drawing followers into his worldview.

His use of historical references and quotations distinguishes him from the younger radicals. Around the campfire, he invokes Patrick Henry and speaks in grand historical terms, while Terry responds with sceptical modern slang.

Denton’s occasional dry humour also humanises him:

“Oh, I’ve a smorgasbord of them.”

“You must be the one with no friends.”

That wit makes him more charismatic and dangerous. He is not merely ranting; he can charm, tease and manipulate.

One minor danger is that nearly all his lines are highly deliberate. A few more moments of ordinary, unguarded speech could expose the man beneath the ideology. Nevertheless, his voice is unmistakable.

Voice distinction: 9/10

Emily Wishaw

Emily’s voice is aggressive, impulsive and emotionally combustible.

Her recurring verbal mode is immediate endorsement:

“Fuckin’ right.”

“Damn right!”

“That showed them!”

“One less pig to worry about.”

Where Denton theorises violence, Emily celebrates it. She uses blunt, energetic phrases and dehumanising labels such as “pig.” Her language has the excitement of someone who has discovered permission to release her anger.

After the attack, she describes the result as:

“We kicked those cops’ ass. That’s what happened.”

Cheryl, by contrast, immediately says:

“We need to leave.”

That exchange clearly separates Emily’s adrenaline-driven voice from Cheryl’s survival-focused practicality.

Emily’s voice also contains possessiveness and insecurity around Denton. Her speech becomes softer and more watchful when she suspects intimacy between him and Cheryl or Tilly. That contrast helps her feel more dimensional.

She is not particularly sophisticated verbally, but that is not the same as lacking a voice. Her short, forceful expressions suit her volatility.

Voice distinction: 8/10

Tilly Foster

Tilly has a recognisable mixture of youthful idealism, sexuality and disturbing eagerness.

She can sound almost innocent:

“All those stars. It’s magical.”

Then later, after repeatedly stabbing Drake, she asks Denton:

“Did I do well?”

That line is chilling because it sounds childlike and approval-seeking rather than hardened.

Her early “Kick some ass” establishes her as more playful and irreverent than Cheryl. She is attracted to rebellion partly as excitement and identity, whereas Cheryl generally approaches it as a task.

Tilly’s voice is not as fully developed as Logan’s, Malik’s or Denton’s, but the combination of:

- enthusiasm;
- romantic idealism;
- sexual confidence;
- eagerness for Denton’s approval;
- casual violence

makes her memorable.

Her strongest dialogue is often extremely short. “Come in,” “You sure?” and “Did I do well?” acquire meaning through context. That works, although a few more character-specific lines earlier in the film would make her progression even stronger.

Voice distinction: 7.5–8/10

Cheryl Underwood

Cheryl is quieter and more controlled than Emily and Tilly.

Her voice is:

- practical;
- guarded;
- concise;
- observant;
- less openly ideological.

She asks:

“You got a plan?”

“What happened?”

“We need to leave.”

“That’ll stop the bleeding.”

Cheryl tends to speak about the immediate task. Emily celebrates; Tilly seeks approval; Cheryl evaluates the situation.

Her confrontation with Mitchell also shows a colder, more calculating quality. She deliberately repeats Terry’s exact wording to expose Mitchell’s lie:

“His exact words were—‘He’s got them dazzled with talk of revolution.’”

Then:

“Who’s screwing who, Mitch?”

This is one of her strongest scenes because her language becomes strategic rather than merely functional.

However, Cheryl’s uniqueness comes partly from what she does and how calmly she does it. On the page, some of her shorter lines could be reassigned to another member of the group. She would benefit from one stronger verbal signature—perhaps greater precision, suspicion or understated sarcasm.

Voice distinction: 7/10

Aiden Rourke

Aiden sounds younger, politically excitable and less informed than the others.

He uses slogans:

“People power.”

“Come the revolution.”

His “Who?” after Terry compares him with Che Guevara effectively reveals the gap between his revolutionary self-image and actual political knowledge.

That gives him a recognisable role: he has absorbed the language and romance of revolution without fully understanding its history or consequences.

His later fear and moral collapse distinguish his arc, but he has less dialogue than the major characters. He is identifiable primarily through naivety rather than a fully developed verbal style.

Voice distinction: 6.5–7/10

Terry Bridges

Terry has a sceptical, ordinary-man voice. He is less intoxicated by Denton’s rhetoric and keeps dragging the conversation back toward real life.

When Denton asks what keeps him awake, Terry answers:

“Debt. Bills.”

When the others discuss revolution, he questions whether they will really act. He also recognises Patrick Henry’s quotation, which gives him more awareness than Aiden.

Terry’s dialogue is colloquial and apprehensive:

“The guy’s dangerous. Something’s loose in his head.”

“He’s got them dazzled with talk of revolution.”

He sounds like someone who entered a protest movement but has realised it is becoming something else.

That is a clear perspective, although his syntax and slang are not radically distinctive. His voice is defined more by scepticism and common sense than by unusual phrasing.

Voice distinction: 7/10

Mitchell Hemmings

Mitchell's voice is measured, community-minded and institutionally focused.

He speaks in collective, procedural terms:

"We're initiating a petition for Congress."

"It is time our voices are really heard."

"We're non-violent, Aiden."

Unlike Denton, Mitchell believes in process. Denton asks rhetorical questions and speaks in absolutes; Mitchell outlines concrete political action. Their ideological disagreement is reflected in how they speak.

Mitchell becomes more colloquial when threatened or deceived:

"You screwing with me, Cheryl?"

That prevents him from sounding purely like a spokesman. He is recognisable, although his voice is primarily shaped by his leadership function.

Voice distinction: 7/10

Captain Hanley

Hanley's voice is stronger and more individual than in the first film.

Previously, he primarily sounded like a senior officer issuing instructions. Here, he has:

- explosive repetition;
- exasperated rhetorical questions;
- demands for respect;
- blunt gallows humour.

His eruption over the detectives' trip to Philadelphia is very distinctive:

"What's up?! What's fuckin' up?!!"

"Typing them up...SIR!"

Logan repeating the line with a belated "sir" works because the two voices collide perfectly: Hanley demands institutional respect; Logan offers sarcastic compliance.

His hospital dialogue adds another dimension:

"It's the Muppet Show."

"But the food's shit."

"Bring chocolates!"

That gives him a recognisable humour outside the captain's office.

Voice distinction: 8/10

Larry Drake

Drake has a controlled federal-agent voice: restrained, professionally polite and faintly smug.

He often speaks in neutral professional phrases:

“We’re on the same side, Logan.”

“Just doing my job.”

“Good luck, guys.”

The apparent blandness is part of his character. Logan believes Drake uses professionalism as a mask for ambition and territoriality. Their contrast is clear: Logan accuses; Drake deflects.

When threatened by Denton, however, Drake drops the professional register:

“Just shut the fuck up and—”

That rupture shows the pressure has broken his composure.

Drake’s voice is believable but less immediately identifiable than Logan’s, Malik’s or Denton’s. It depends heavily on his FBI role and his friction with Logan. A slightly more distinctive verbal habit—bureaucratic phrasing, understated superiority or calculated friendliness—could strengthen him.

Voice distinction: 7/10

Audrey Ford

Audrey has less prominence in the available central action, but her established voice remains intact: direct, observant and able to see through Logan’s evasions.

When she asks whether Logan knew about Denton, his refusal to meet her eyes tells us the conflict; her question itself is simple and exact:

“You knew about Denton?”

She does not engage in Logan’s sarcasm. She demands emotional and factual honesty. That remains consistent with her voice in the first film.

Because the sequel’s action moves away from the Ford household, she has fewer opportunities to demonstrate a fully developed dialogue pattern.

Voice distinction: 7.5/10

The revolutionary group as an ensemble

The group is successfully differentiated by **attitude toward Denton and violence**:

Character Dominant verbal quality

Denton	Ideological, rhetorical, manipulative
Emily	Aggressive, celebratory, impulsive
Tilly	Eager, playful, approval-seeking
Cheryl	Practical, controlled, calculating
Aiden	Naive, slogan-driven, impressionable
Terry	Sceptical, ordinary, increasingly afraid
Mitchell	Measured, political, non-violent

The distinction is clearest in group scenes. Denton gives the philosophy, Emily endorses it, Tilly jokes, Cheryl asks for the plan, Aiden repeats slogans and Terry questions whether anyone understands what they are doing.

There are still moments when Emily, Cheryl and Tilly use interchangeable brief responses such as “Yeah,” “Sure,” “Yup” and “What happened?” These are natural, but a targeted pass could shape a few more of those responses around their respective personalities.

Comparison with the first film

The returning characters remain consistent:

- Logan is still blunt, suspicious and instinctive.
- Malik remains composed, educated and emotionally perceptive.
- Hanley is still institutional and exasperated, but now has more humour.
- Audrey remains practical and emotionally direct.

The sequel also develops them rather than merely repeating their original dialogue patterns:

- Malik is more confident challenging Logan.
- Logan treats Malik more like an equal.
- Hanley’s personal affection for the detectives becomes more visible.
- Logan’s obsession is more emotionally grounded because Denton threatened his family.

The new antagonist also has a more rhetorically distinctive voice than several of the villains in the original. Denton’s language is essential to understanding how he recruits and controls people.

Voice scorecard

Character	Voice distinction
Logan Ford	9/10
Peter Denton	9/10
Malik Edwards	8.5/10
Captain Hanley	8/10
Emily Wishaw	8/10
Tilly Foster	7.5–8/10
Audrey Ford	7.5/10
Cheryl Underwood	7/10
Terry Bridges	7/10
Mitchell Hemmings	7/10
Larry Drake	7/10
Aiden Rourke	6.5–7/10

Verdict

The characters in *Rising Star II* do have their own voices. The most successful are Logan, Malik, Denton, Emily and Hanley.

The screenplay’s dialogue strength comes from contrasting worldviews:

- Logan speaks through instinct and contempt.
- Malik speaks through reason and restraint.
- Denton speaks through ideology and manipulation.
- Emily speaks through anger and exhilaration.
- Tilly speaks through excitement and the need for approval.
- Cheryl speaks through control and practicality.
- Terry speaks through doubt.
- Mitchell speaks through organised political principle.

The main opportunity is not a wholesale rewrite. It is a **targeted differentiation pass for Cheryl, Aiden, Terry and Drake**, particularly in shorter functional exchanges. The core voices—and especially the returning Logan–Malik dynamic—are already strong and consistent.