



Film Review

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Captivating Feminist Realities of Media Unveiled: review of the film *Scoop*

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INTRODUCTION

Certain journalists are driven by the pursuit of exclusive stories and breaking news, thriving in the exhilarating atmosphere accompanying such endeavours. There exist individuals, akin to us, who prefer engaging in television consumption and then providing recommendations to readers on their viewing choices. However, it should be noted that journalists of this nature are more comprehensive than in the United States or Europe, as exemplified by a recent series originating from India. *Sen Dada*, a well-known journalist who is based on renowned crime reporter J Dey (played by Prosenjit Chatterjee), is involved in a gruesome murder case in the Mehta (2023) film *Scoop*. This narrative explores the intricate dynamics between the media, the underworld, and the Mumbai police. In the fervent pursuit of achieving a prominent position, Jagriti Pathak (portrayed by Karishma Tanna) sacrifices various aspects of her life, such as her social interactions, familial commitments, and quality time with her ten-year-old child, ultimately immersing herself in the clandestine realm of Mumbai's underworld. While cultivating a relationship with danger, she establishes

acquaintances with the upper echelons of the Mumbai police, legal professionals, and organised crime syndicates.

The television series *Scoop* depicts the Mumbai Police designating Pathak (Karishma Tanna) as the primary suspect in the homicide case involving the esteemed journalist Sen Dada. The film draws inspiration from the real-life account of Jigna Vora (Jagriti Pathak) and serves as a compelling narrative that holds significant value for journalists. It underscores the importance of exercising caution while interacting with subordinates, as they can betray one's trust in pursuit of immediate recognition and prominent media coverage.

Mehta (2023), the man behind one of the critically acclaimed web series, *Scam (1992)*, has come up with another called *Scoop*. Just like that, *Scoop* is also based on real-life incidents involving prominent journalist Jigna Vora. Jigna Vora's book "Behind Bars in Byculla: My Days in Prison" served as inspiration for Mehta (2023) to produce this web series. Karishma Tanna played Jigna Vora in the series.

Netflix's Scoop first shot was taken at a crowded Mumbai train station. On page six, a grandfather buys

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a newspaper and discovers his granddaughter's first byline, which fills him with pride. The front page is all that matters," she irritably said, dragging him away from the newspaper. So, even if you misspell something, no one will mind. The grandfather then responds, "Even a spelling mistake by his granddaughter will be noticed by a retired grandfather."

Remembering this occurrence brings you back to your internship and trainee days, when you lived and breathed bylines. Jagruthi Pathak (Karishma Tanna) is a Senior Crime Journalist and Deputy Bureau Chief at the Eastern Age newspaper. She reaches new heights in her career because she has a solid network. Jagruthi has a good rapport with JCP Harshavardhan Shroff (Harman Baweja), who often advises her about many crimes. Jagruthi also has the support of her Editor-In-Chief, Imran (Mohammed et al.), due to which her colleagues envy her. Jaideb Sen, aka Dada (Prosenjit Chatterjee), a renowned journalist working at News Day, gets murdered in daylight. Gangster Chhota Rajan claims he killed him, and a phone call conversation makes the police believe that Jagruthi instigated Chhota Rajan to murder Jaideb Sen. Who killed Jaideb?

Dhamaka, directed and produced by *Madhvani (2021)*, is an official remake of *The Terror Live (2013)*. In the film, the character of Arjun Pathak (portrayed by Kartik Aaryan) assumes the role of a journalist who encounters a menacing situation after doing an exclusive interview with a terrorist responsible for the detonation of a bridge. *Dhamaka* also has prominent performances by Mrunal Thakur and Amruta Subhash, which are available for streaming on the Netflix platform. *The Broken News* drama series directed by *Waikul (2022)* is an authorised adaptation of the widely acclaimed British series known as "Press." BBC India produces a television programme titled *The Broken News*. The television series revolves around the dynamic between two rival news networks, each characterised by divergent ideologies and incompatible ethical frameworks. This observation highlights the underlying truth in everyday news, encompassing business and politics.

The Broken News unveils the intricacies of the lives, deceptions, romantic relationships, and challenges a diverse ensemble of journalists faces. *No One Killed Jessica* is a Bollywood film directed by and written by *Gupta (2011)*. The central focus of the narrative revolves around a barmaid who meets her demise because of a gunshot inflicted by the offspring of a political figure. Subsequently, her sister undertakes a determined quest to attain retribution for her untimely demise. Subsequently, the protagonist enlists the aid of a journalist specialising in investigative reporting, portrayed by Rani Mukherjee, to support her in her quest for legal redress on behalf of her sibling. The film is currently accessible on the streaming platform Netflix. *Rann*, directed by *Gopal (2010)*, focuses on the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a private television

station who becomes a victim of deception orchestrated by his son and son-in-law. They manipulate him into fabricating news stories that harm the reputation of the Prime Minister. Subsequently, the individual acknowledges the situation and endeavours to rectify it, even at the expense of compromising his personal affairs. *Nayak: The Real Hero*, directed by *Shankar (2001)*, revolves around the protagonist Shivaji Rao Gaekwad (played by Anil Kapoor), who starts as a television cameraman and later becomes a television presenter. The plot unfolds when Shivaji accidentally overhears and records a conversation between the Police and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra (a state in India), Balraj Chauhan (portrayed by Amrish Puri). During a conversation with Chauhan regarding his worries, Shivaji is challenged to assume his job for a single day, leading to his successful appointment as Chief Minister of India.

It is widely acknowledged that specific journalists desire to obtain exclusive or sensational information by any means necessary. Journalists hold significant significance inside any organisation, particularly in newspaper or television journalism. The individuals in question strongly emphasise conducting first-hand investigations and hold their sources in high regard. In the context of becoming a crime reporter, particularly a female crime reporter, the level of competition is intense due to the pervasive presence of a predominantly male work environment. The individuals in question express their disapproval of your monopolisation of attention, thereby initiating a campaign to discredit your character. They insinuate that your attainment of front-page coverage is likely attributed to a preferential association with your superior, the utilisation of bribery to secure information, or the deliberate fabrication of the story for personal gain. The allegations are substantial and occasionally inevitable. Individuals must prepare themselves adequately to embark upon the challenging journey of pursuing a career as a female crime reporter.

Scoop nicely immerses us in the world of the media industry. The series successfully depicts how journalists get exclusive stories from cops and gangsters and how it might affect their lives. The makers need to be appreciated for the way they showcased the police-Dawood Ibrahim nexus without any apprehensions. The world-building has been done excellently, and within no time, we get involved in the series and with the characters. The casting was superb, and everyone did a phenomenal job. Karishma Tanna has given a spectacular performance in *Scoop*. Rarely do actors get roles like Jagruthi, and the talented actress grabbed this opportunity with both hands. The series will speak volumes about her acting prowess, as she emoted beautifully in many sequences.

Imran Siddiqui (Mohammed et al.) was too good as the Editor-In-Chief, and he lent friendly support to Jagruthi Pathak (Karishma Tanna). He brings the required depth to

Scoop with his masterful performance, leaving us wanting to see more of him. The cherry on the cake was Jamini Pathak, who played lawyer Chintan Vashist. Just when the show is getting slow, he makes a remarkable impression with his fantastic and captivating performance. All the courtroom scenes involving him in the final episode are powerful and entertaining.

While the series has many favourable aspects, the pacing decreases in the fifth and sixth episodes. The editing in the last two episodes could have been much better, as the impact gets weakened here due to excessive length. The bar (jail) scenes portray how the female reporter faced many struggles, but a specific section of the audience might find these sequences tough to watch. Sometimes the show is filled with too much information and technical jargon that would be difficult to process for regular audiences. The Pushkar character's family angle could have been avoided, as it does not add much to the narrative.

Mehta (2023) has done an impressive job, and how he fearlessly portrayed some astonishing facts and the functioning of the media industry is commendable. The fifth episode, however, could have been better. Overall, *Scoop* is a compelling portrayal of a real-life crime. The

series has many things going its way. The story behind a story can sometimes be as interesting as the story itself. There is a long history of films that tell the real and made-up stories of journalists looking for stories they think should be told. These films have entertained us for years by looking into power imbalances, how newsrooms can create tense relationships, and how cynical writers can learn to see the world differently by romanticising their subject. Journalist's stories are always full of dramatic tension and exciting people.

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