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Pop Culture

June 11, 2023

Crime Series Scoop On Netflix, Is A Delicious Watch

Scoop, on Netflix, tells the story of a crime journalist who is accused of murder when she is investigating a promising lead, and one of the subjects gets murdered.



Nivedita Ramesh

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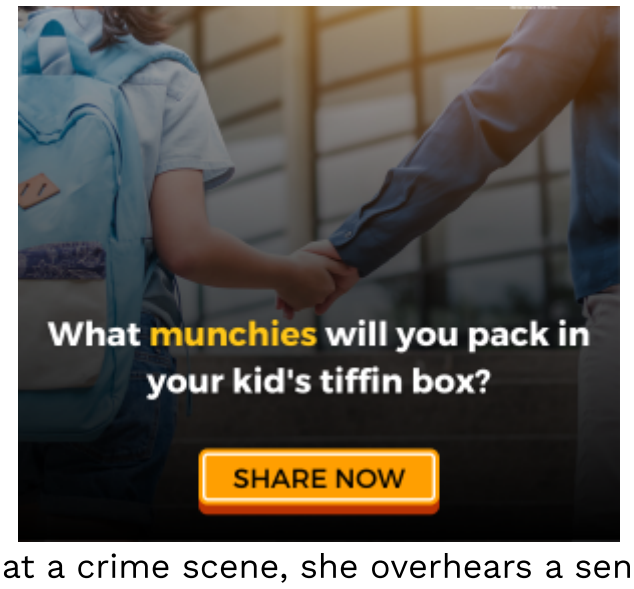
TAGS: WOMEN AT WORK

My thirst for a delicious, binge worthy show was finally quenched by *Scoop*, a Hindi series on Netflix. Directed by Hansal Mehta (who also directed Scam 1992, about Harshad Mehta), *Scoop* is inspired by crime journalist Jigna Vora's memoir 'Behind Bars in Byculla: My Time in Prison'.

***Spoilers Alert**

Set in 2011, the story follows single mother Jagruti Pathak (Karishma Tanna), one of the few successful female crime journalists in Mumbai, hustling her way to 'exclusives' (stories exclusive to her paper) that will lead her to a 'Page One' (a byline in the front page) again and again. She works hard and makes no bones about it. She says more than once, "Do you think it was easy for a female crime reporter like me to become Deputy Bureau Chief in seven years? It is because of my ability to deliver big stories consistently." Imran Siddiqui (Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub), the editor of Eastern Age, the paper she works for, loves her work. Her colleagues and peers are scathingly jealous of her meteoric rise. Her sources, both criminal and police, are ever ready to cooperate. She seems to be living as charmed a life as it can get for a crime reporter on the beat.

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Fifteen minutes into the first episode, at a crime scene, she overhears a senior crime journalist, Jaideb Sen (Prosenjit Chatterjee) discussing his theory about a police-underworld nexus with a colleague. Always sniffing around for a good story, the bigger the better, she pursues this trail in her trademark focussed fashion, jostling people and pieces to make them fall in place. Anything to get her biggest scoop yet. Then Sen is murdered, and pandemonium ensues.

Fabulous storytelling

This series felt near-perfect in its storytelling. It is filled to the brim with interesting characters, each with their own agendas. But what makes it so engaging is the incisive dialogue and the frenetic pace. When Jagruti is made to take the fall – she is a co-accused in Sen's murder – we know she is innocent. From then onwards our questions mirror hers. What happened? Why her? Why now?

Jagruti's time in prison was particularly heart-rending. With each hearing her remand in custody extends, crossing days, weeks, and spanning into months. Living conditions are appalling. (There is a shower scene that I will probably never forget for the rest of my life.) Jagruti had written less than flattering pieces about a powerful inmate, so all the women there turned against her, making her already miserable life a living hell. In a scene where she finally starts eating prison food, an inmate asks her bent head, "You know why we abuse and cuss each other so much? With time, one can become accustomed to anything, even this shithole."

Her nana (maternal grandfather), till then her most vocal supporter, loses hope and wallows in shame. Her son, taunted by classmates and ordered to stay in his residential school, acts up and tries to run away home. The media makes her the ultimate 'Page One', pronouncing verdicts and mining her past for 'exclusives', all with undisguised glee.

When Imran meets ACP Crime Harshvardhan Shroff (Harman Baweja) in an effort to garner support for her release, he lectures the police officer, "This is about a living breathing person, stripped of her dignity and her freedom." Later he says, "She has not been proven guilty [in court] but we have all decided that she is. They [the media] threw her to the wolves the minute it was profitable to them, their papers and their careers." It made me wonder, did Jagruti ever view the police officers, her criminal sources (living a dangerous double life) or the subjects of her scathing articles, as people? Weren't they too just a means for her, to the next crowning success, the next page one, the next breaking piece of news?



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A nuanced handling of themes

The show talks about hubris and ambition, but gently, much like how its realisation creeps up on us in real life. It shows misogyny but without labelling, finger pointing or victimising. The on-screen debates about what was more important to journalism, truth or business, were particularly enjoyable. How did our mainstream news become the bland, biased and downright useless sludge it is today? *Scoop* offers a glimpse into what led to the muzzling of our once fiercely independent media.

This series differs from most Indian content out there in that it does not judge its characters for their actions. They do what they are driven to do and things happen to them, or around them. As viewers we are invited to judge, connect the dots, or simply watch.

Through six packed episodes, a dense and intriguing landscape is laid out. It's a great view, but each of us might have our own reasons for thinking so. And that is what makes *Scoop* a must-watch for everyone.

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women at work

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About the Author

Nivedita Ramesh

I asked so many questions that I stopped getting answers. Then I started writing. **read more...**

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Crime & Law

June 9, 2023

Mother Wants Teen To Become An Actor, Forces Her To Take Hormone Pills To Look Older!

a 16-year-old girl was forcefully fed hormone pills by her mother so that she could act in films. She had been taking the medicines for the past four years.

Ramya V

A stardom life is always fantasy filled. The attention from people, the riches, the name, and fame is something many women dream of. The reality is only a few could reach the goal.

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pretty smile, there would have been many struggles, pain, and rejection in the past. She would have crossed many hurdles to reach such a position today. An opportunity does not knock on everyone's door. A few are lucky to reach the stage. There are many who have failed in the process and given up.

To reach that end to what extent one can go?

A shocking incident in Andhra Pradesh reveals a 16-year-old girl was forcefully fed hormone pills by her mother so that she could act in films. She had been taking the medicines for the past four years. Every time she consumed the pills she becomes unconscious and the next day her body swells with pain because of which she couldn't concentrate on her studies.

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LGBTQ

June 10, 2023

Let's Not Lose Good Teachers Over Our Bigotry About Their Sexuality!

"Madam, my son says there's a homosexual teacher here. In that case, I demand that this professor is dismissed with immediate effect. I wouldn't want my son to be associated with such a person. Nor do I think the institution should be."

Preethi Warrier

Trigger Warning: This deals with homophobia and may be triggering for survivors.

The auditorium reverberated with applause when the 'Fishpond' game was announced. It happened to be the most entertaining filler in between the main events of the college festival. As a teaching staff, I wasn't particularly fond of this particular section of the program. Because the students more than often vented out their personal vendetta on fellow classmates and at times, teachers.

Well, I am a professor at an engineering college and the incident I am narrating happened some fourteen years back, in a college situated in interior Maharashtra. The students were predominantly hostelites, and we teachers were provided with accommodation within the campus.

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