Written by Sharad Vatss Sunday, 23 June 2013 05:37



The photography seems to be the only thing going for the movie.

The name 'Shortcut Romeo' might seem a little puzzling, but we are witnessing a trend of offbeat titles in Bollywood these days. Here as per the title it could be best understood as the story of a modern day lover (read Romeo), attempting Shortcuts in life. And that it is!

It's a debut movie for the South Indian movie director, producer, story writer and at times actor - Susi Ganeshan. Susi, an engineering graduate, assisted Mani Ratnam in movies Bombay, Dil Se, and gave three blockbuster and two super hits out of total five movies he made for Tamil Cinema.

Shortcut Romeo is a remake of his Tamil blockbuster Thiruttu Payale (2006). It's a thriller with some unexpected turns, something close to what we have seen in Race and Race 2. Thiruttu Payale was named the third Best Film of the year by the Tamil Nadu State Governmentt and gave major breaks to the leading actors. Though, history is not repeating in its Hindi avtaar.

**Story:** Suraj (Neil Nitin Mukesh) is a street fighter who is shrewd, daring and short tempered unemployed version of today's 'sadak chhap' Romeo. He catches a multi millionaire Monica (Ameesha Patel) doing something wrong. Grasping the moment, he starts blackmailing her to live a royal life himself. During this time he also comes across Sherry (Puja Gupta), who changes his life forever. He wants to turn back his life, but it becomes too late.

There's nothing new in the story. Although, one or two twists add some surprise element. First half is a bit boring, characters engage in cacophony and everything seems very easy. Story moves better in second half, and you can relate to scenes.

Producer, director, story and screenplay writer, Susi, has tried to jump on the current trend of South-Indian remakes, but somehow forgot to adapt the story to current times. It seems as if we are watching an old dubbed South-Indian movie, with better camera work and action.

**Performance:** Neil Nitin Mukesh fails to repeat the performance of Johny Gaddar. Having a different personality in Bollywood, he prefers to work in offbeat yet commercial cinema. His performances in Johny Gaddar, Aa dekhe Zara, Jail, Tera kya hoga Johny, 3G, David, etc., has been far better. Even in his most comfortable avtaar of a Baddy, it's not working out for him here. It is painful is to see the talented actor ruining his reputation with such an inane movie. Probably, he thought thumping Kenyans, badmouthing all and sundry, and playing a ruffian will

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come out as sure shot 'shortcut' to winning an audience. Only, this time he has miscalculated terribly.

Ameesha Patel is a wrong choice as a bad wife. With her acting background, she was hardly trying to do anything.

Neil and Ameesha look like acting in Har Har Mahadev, as Shiva and Parvati, talking in such broken and low voice, seems as if passing updeshas.

Puja Gupta is a new comer. You have seen her in Go Goa Gone, and she has equalled those skills here. No expectations and no surprise either.

Rajesh Shringarpure, as Monica's husband, is the best of the lot.

The rest, Ashutosh Kaushik, Mumaith Khan, Vrijesh Hirji are not worth a mention. They just add to the boredom of the entire atmosphere.

**Direction, photography and music:** Susi, as mentioned, has not been able to capture the mood of Hindi cinema viewers. He has just delivered a could be thriller.

Action in the film seems to be influenced from down South. After Salman Khan's Dabangg, most Bollywood heroes can punch and kick so hard that they can shatter car windshields and send the baddies flying away. Suraj of 'Shortcut Romeo' also possess such incredible powers. He snatches the tyre of a SUV, digs out a cement pole with his bare hands, and what not. Only his physique defies these superman stunts.

The photography of N.K. Ekambaram is the only think working for the movie and is a treat to eyes. He has shot Kenya so beautifully that it somehow becomes the only reason to sit through the 147 minutes.

**Music:** Himesh Reshammiya has given two songs - 'Khaali salaam dua', sung by Mohit Chauhan, and 'Ishq gangster' two songs, which stay with you.

Over all, the film has a body of 2013, with a soul of 2006.

Suggest to have a long cut skipping this Shortcut Romeo. Otherwise, can be considered at least a one time, time pass.

(Rating: \*\*1/2)

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