

# ‘Like Father’ is a fun, if predictable, cruise full of characters



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CHENNAI: Netflix’s latest offering, “Like Father,” by Lauren Miller Rogen, deals with a father-daughter relationship — an estranged one that gets tossed up on a luxury cruise liner which the two take after a grand ditch at the altar.

Somewhat melodramatic, “Like Father” stars two very pleasing actors, Kristen Bell as Rachel Hamilton and Kelsey Grammer as Harry Hamilton. Harry had abandoned his daughter, Rachel, when she was just five. We first meet them at Rachel’s marriage — where the father makes an announced appearance after 26 years — but the bride gets stood up. Incredible as it may sound, the father and daughter get drunk and find themselves on the luxury ship that Rachel had planned for her honeymoon. Her journey becomes a trifle more engaging after she meets and spends a night with Jeff (Seth Rogen, who happens to be the director’s husband).

The daughter is angry and unforgiving about the old man's callousness at never having tried to see her. But over several days on board the ship and among a motley crew of men and women (who at first think that the two are husband and wife), Rachel and Harry begin to enjoy the pleasures of the Caribbean, including a walk through Jamaica.

It takes a lot of effort for work-obsessed Rachel, forever on the phone, to drag herself into the excitement. She is anxiously waiting for a big-time promotion at her ad firm, while Harry is hoping to find that one tiny gap to worm his way into her heart.

“Like Father” is often predictable and may have a thin plot. But the cruise, which takes up much of the 98 minutes, offers a glimpse of thrilling activities, ranging from karaoke to scuba diving. And the movie introduces us to a fascinating variety of characters, including an elderly husband and wife enjoying their long years of togetherness and Jeff, who gets to grab Rachel's attention, albeit briefly. More important, the gradual thawing of the father-daughter relationship is told with haunting sensitivity.

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