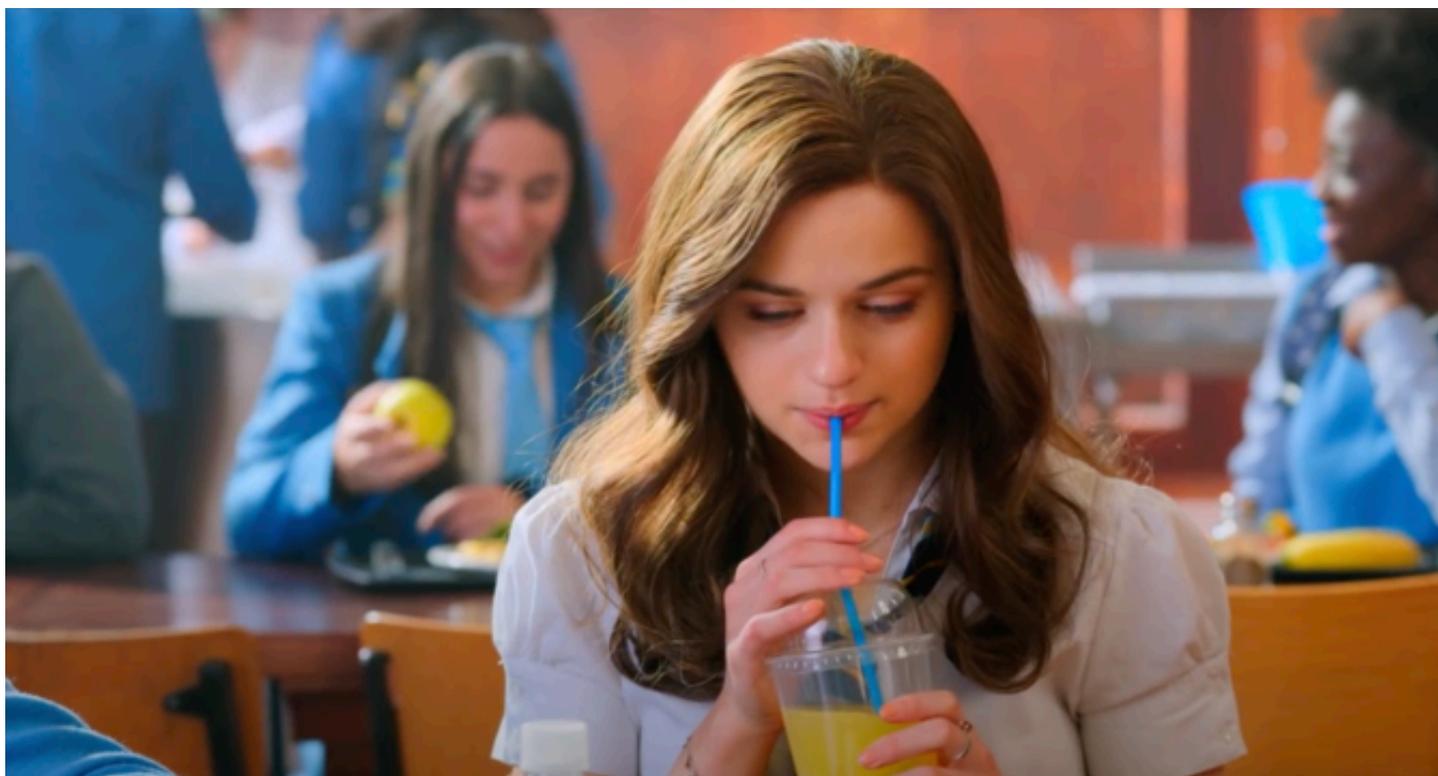


‘Kissing Booth 2’: A rom-com with unresolved issues



CHENNAI: With cinema now a huge pastime with teens and young adults, rom-coms playing on streaming sites may be a relief for a section thirsting to walk into a theater with a tub of popcorn and a drink. Netflix’s latest campus adventure “The Kissing Booth 2” fits this bill to a T.



[For the latest updates, follow us on Instagram @arabnews.lifestyle \(https://www.instagram.com/arabnews.lifestyle\)](https://www.instagram.com/arabnews.lifestyle)

“The Kissing Booth” was adapted from a novel written by then-15-year-old Beth Reekles, and when it debuted on Netflix it was a huge hit. The movie narrated the dilemma of a girl torn between a friend who lived away from her city and his more attractive older brother.

The sequel, written and directed by Vince Marcello, examines more or less the same kind of anxiety in a girl – who tries a long-distance relationship while coming close to being attracted to another boy in her own school.

Elle Evans (Joey King) is in high school and is all set to go to university. She has been in love with her handsome boyfriend Noah (Jacob Elordi). They have had a good summer in California, but when he goes away to Harvard, the 3,000-mile distance between the lovers threatens to disrupt their idyllic existence.



Actor Jacob Elordi plays Noah. (YouTube)

Evans tries hard to manage her packed last season at school — tough classroom schedules, making new friends, and trying hard to bridge the distance and refrain from getting attracted to other boys. She spends a lot of time with Noah's younger brother Lee (Joel Courtney), and this leads to understandable misunderstanding and heartbreak between him and his girlfriend Rachel (Meganne Young).

At the other end, sheer loneliness drives Noah to inch closer toward Chloe (Maisie Richardson-Sellers). And Evans finds it hard to stay away from her new classmate Marco (Taylor Zakhar Perez). Things seem to get a bit complicated when Noah urges Evans to apply to Harvard. But she does not have the money to go to such an expensive university.

The film grapples with too many issues. The thin line between friendship and romantic inclination is woven into a dance competition (which helps Evans win the tuition fee), the kissing booth (in which boys and girls are blindfolded), and finally the homecoming of Noah. Added to this is an LGBT angle.

Although “The Kissing Booth 2” ends on a happy note, there is a tingling suspicion that the issues have not been resolved, not quite. We may see Evans, Noah, Lee and Rachel once more, but the new plot, when or if it arrives, must be tighter and confine itself to fewer issues. Resolutions are important. Otherwise the third part could meander somewhat like “The Kissing Booth 2.”
