

‘Saheb Biwi Aur Gangster 3’: A jaded cat-and-mouse roulette



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CHENNAI: Tigmanshu Dhulia’s latest edition in the franchise, “Saheb Biwi Aur Gangster 3,” may have a new villain in Sanjay Dutt’s Uday Pratap Singh, who gets deported out of London after a murderous assault on a British parliamentarian and loses his fancy-sounding nightclub, House of Lords, but the film flogs the same old tale of treachery and deceit. While the first two parts had Randeep Hooda and Irrfan Khan personifying evil with welcome freshness, Dutt is jaded, hardly villainous-looking and seemingly disinterested.

The plot itself — much like the movies we have seen about the debauchery and excess among India’s zamindars — talks about Saheb/master or Aditya Pratap Singh’s (Jimmy Shergill) efforts to get out of jail — an incarcerated existence that his Biwi/wife or Madhavi Devi (Mahi Gill) pushed him into in the second part of the franchise. Despite her deviously valiant efforts to keep her husband behind bars while she plays to perfection her role as a Member of India’s Parliament, punctuated by her seductive

flirtations, Saheb walks out. And he finds a new man to reckon with — Uday, whom Biwi has managed to attract, even though he has a lover in Suhani, a dancer portrayed by a ravishingly beautiful Chitrangada Singh. Hauntingly expressive, but wasted in an inane role.

Chitrangada stands in contrast to the others — Jimmy, Dutt and even Mahi — who all appear boringly wooden in a world Dhulia creates through sickening amorality and wicked scheming. There is very little nobility left out of this royalty, and a classic question is posed to Saheb: Is your blood still royal or have years being a politician turned it into water? In the vicious cat-and-mouse game that the three lead characters play, there are twists and turns. One of them comes in the form of Russian roulette, a deadly game that Uday has mastered. He comes out unscathed from every such dangerous duel. But often the surprises seem forced.

Dhulia needs to introduce new faces if he makes another addition, and the climax tells us that there will be one more. Or he has to think up a radically different storyline.
