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Aranyak Review: Raveena Tandon and Parambrata Chatterjee are Saddled with a Sloppy Script in Netflix Series



Netflix's new series Aranyak is too convoluted to make any kind of impression, and both Raveena Tandon and Parambrata Chatterjee are disappointing,

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GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN

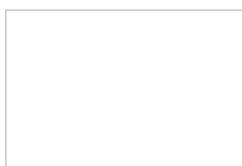
Aranyak review: Raveena Tandon starrer Netflix series' script seems too clumsy and crowded -- and may be confusing for a viewer.

Aranyak
Director: Vinay Waikul

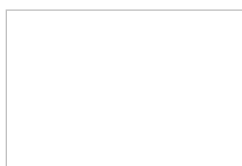
Cast: Raveena Tandon, Parambrata Chatterjee, Ashutosh Rana, Zakir Hussain, Meghna Malik

Raveena Tandon and Parambrata Chatterjee lead a large cast in Vinay Waikul's [Netflix](#) series, Aranyak, out today, that is set in the small town of Sironah, infested with wild animals and wilder men. Critics have been given only six episodes out of the eight, and I found the script way too clumsy and crowded — and may be confusing for a viewer.

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Said to be Raveena's first television series, she plays Inspector Kasturi Dogra, with a husband and two children. When the narrative begins, she is just about to go on a long sabbatical, handing over charge to Angad Mallik,

played with considerable discomfort by Parambrata. I have no idea why he should look so glum and go through episode after episode with just about a single expression: unsmiling and stiff.

If Sironah comes with its own tale of gruesome murders of girls, Angad has his own dark baggage to handle, having lost his kid son during a school concert – a terrible incident which separates him from his wife.

Sironah folks believe that the killings are the handiwork of a supernatural being, half man and half leopard, a story that Angad refuses to believe. But there are takers like Kasturi's father-in-law, retired Head Constable, Mahadev Dogra (played with a touch of excellence by Ashutosh Rana).

Interestingly, there has been no such gory incident for 19 years, and the latest happens when Kasturi is about to step down. She is angry and disappointed that a major case should come when she is ready to leave. In all the years she headed the police station nothing big had happened, and she, much to Angad's displeasure, begins to butt in.

And what is this case all about? A French girl has been murdered and hung from a tree. Her mother is inconsolable. Their idyllic holiday in the town nestled in the Himalayan range has turned dark and demonic, for the murder is being attributed to the man-leopard.

The crowd in the canvas has several other players like Minister Jagadamba Dhumal (Meghna Malik) and politician Manhas (Zakir Hussain), aspiring to clinch a Rajya Sabha seat and hoping to induct his would-be son-in-law Ravi Prashar (Indraneil Sengupta wasted in an insignificant role) into politics. And then there are several young boys like Hari, Gagan and Kanti, each weaving his own story in this muddled maze.

Aranyak, literally meaning Of the Forest, is also the title of a celebrated Bengali novel penned by Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay between 1937 and 1939. It came after his long and arduous research in the remote areas of Bhagalpur and Purnea in which he talks about the relationship between urban and jungle lives. In fact, the Netflix series has a sequence in which Kasturi stops Mahadev from shooting down a panther which has strayed into their compound frightening the very life out of her daughter, Nutan. Beyond this, I do not think there is any of link between the literary work and the TV series.

Aranyak fits into the thriller genre, but is too convoluted to make any kind of impression, and both Raveena and Parambrata are disappointing, more so him, because I know he can be compelling.

Aranyak is okay if you have nothing better to do.

(Gautaman Bhaskaran is an author, commentator and movie critic who has been covering major film festivals like Cannes, Venice and Tokyo.)

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