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3-MIN READ

Drishyam Attracts Empathy for Georgekutty, I Care a Lot Does Not for Marla



TECH AUTO BOZZ VIDEOS PHOTOS HEALTH TRACKER NEWS18.COM LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 25, 2021, 14:14 IST FOLLOW US ON: Facebook Twitter Instagram Telegram Google News GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN

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Jeethu Joseph’s Drishyam 2 – like its prequel – has been a hit, despite what some may consider a limited showing on Amazon Prime. But the truth is, it is quite likely that many more now watch a film on a streaming platform than they used to in a theatre. But this is not what I set about to write.

I have been wondering – as a movie critic, a rather hardcore one at that – why I liked Drishyam (Part one more than the sequel) and not I Care A Lot, the American dark thriller, just out on Netflix.



Honestly, I rooted for Mohanlal’s Georgekutty rather than for Rosamund Pike’s Marla Grayson in I Care A Lot.

The reason is not hard to fathom. Georgekutty, more so in the first part, did just about everything to save and protect his family from a brutal police force in Kerala headed by the Inspector-General of Police, Geetha Prabhakar, whose son, Varun, is killed. It was an accident. During a school excursion, Georgekutty’s elder daughter, Anju, is photographed by Varun while she is bathing. He blackmails her demanding sex in return for handing over the video clip, and comes to her house one rainy night. When her mother, Rani, confronts him, he is brazen enough to say that he does not mind her in place of his daughter, who is so livid that she gets hold of an iron rod and hits him on the head. He dies, and it falls upon her father to dispose off the body and plan an elaborate escape plan.



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The sequel, Drishyam 2, shows how in the absence of Varun's body being found, the cops have not closed the case, and Georgekutty has to once again rise to keep his small family safe from the clutches of the law.

Here we want Georgekutty to win; we want the men in khaki to lose. For, the core issue here is the man's family, which was pushed into the corner, first by Varun, who refuses to heed to Rani's pleadings, and later by a woman, admittedly his mother, who uses every unlawful method to wrest a confession out of Georgekutty and his family, with the cops even booting the women! The issue here is family.

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Har Pal Aapke Saath

On the other hand, we hate Marla, who cunningly devises a way to push rich old men and women into care centres. She takes on as their legal guardian telling the court that these people are not capable of looking after themselves, and hence need to be in homes. Once they are in, she wipes their palatial bungalows clean, selling off just about everything, including the property itself.

However, when Marla takes charge of Jennifer Peterson, things begin to spin out of control. Jennifer's son is a mafia boss, and Marla has a tough time tackling him and his mother, who is also all pluck and courage.

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In I Care A Lot, we are desperate to see Marla vanquished, for the simple reason that even though what Georgekutty did is not exactly legal, we empathise with his feelings for his family and plight, whereas, she is a hardened criminal, who ruthlessly executes her plans.

There is a scene right at the beginning of I Care A Lot where a young man whose mother has been pushed into a care centre, much against her will, pleads with Marla he be allowed to meet the old lady just once. But Marla remains adamant, making sure that all the people whom "she cares for" are virtually incarcerated with no contact even with their own sons daughters. Marla breaks up a family, Georgekutty keeps it together.

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In the end, when Marla falls, we feel like clapping. On the other hand, when the cops fail in Drishyam, we are gleefully happy.

So, I suppose that despite Georgekutty's cat-and-mouse game with the police, we know that he is doing all this merely to keep his innocent family out of harm's way. But Marla in her vicious greed destroys families. In the last shot, the young man accosts Marla and tells her that her mother, whom he loved dearly, died a lonely death in the care home. And Marla did not give him that once chance to see his mother!

(Gautaman Bhaskaran is a movie critic and author of a biography of Adoor Gopalakrishnan)

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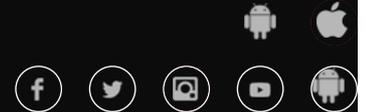
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