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Dabba Carte GAUTAMAN BHASKA The Statesman

Dabba Cartel: Where women unshackle from men

GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN

lims and food, well this sounds yummy. The two most memorable movies hinged on food were "Lunch Box" and "Cheeni Kum". The latest to join the wagon is the Netflix series - "Dabba Cartel" which though headlined by Shabana Azmi and Jyothika, was a tad disappointing.

Directed by Hitesh Bhatia, "Dabba Cartel" unfolds in Thane, Mumbai, where five ordinary housewives bond over something unimaginably sinister. They pack into their 'dabbas' not food, but substance-drugs. The spin from food to poison is not convincing. It is a little too quick and bizarre, but the women find a way to cosy themselves into a sense of serenity. In a world of guns, they find a meaning to exist independently. With a pan-Indian cast, the series has its twists but fails to keep us riveted. A power-packed story of kinship and betrayal, it tells us how in a world of crime, these women form a dubious friendship that fetches them rewards. But more importantly, it gives them the freedom to choose and lead a life without male dominance. They feel unshackled.

The series has top moments but struggles to maintain an even pace. Maybe fewer episodes or just a film could have engaged us in a way not to let our minds wander.

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The writer is an author and a senior film critic



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