

'No sari-sindoor www.miqbalkhan.com, soaps for me'

Iqbal Khan on *Waaris* and more

■ Janaki Viswanathan

Rockstar.. playboy.. airforce officer and now a gangster in *Waaris*. Can't you ever play a regular boy-next-door?

(Laughs) I never picked any of these roles consciously. They came along, I liked them and so I accepted them.

***Waaris* has been compared to *Deewar*, *Sarkaar*, *Sarkaar Raj*.. does that irk?**

You're forgetting *The Godfather*. The initial characterisation is quite like *The Godfather*. But the rest of the story is different. And before you ask me, Shankar is not Santino.

In the second episode, you murdered a goon who tried to harm your brother.. are you a protective big bro in real life too?

Actually I'm the youngest at home. I have two elder sisters and a brother. No one believes I'm the youngest until my whole family gets together.

When you quit *Chhoona Hai Aasmaan*, you said it was because your one-year contract ended.. recently, you admitted you had problems with how it was promoted.

Promoted? It was never

promoted. I was told *Chhoona Hai*.. was the flagship show for Star One. I was kept waiting for three months after they signed me on.

There were no hoardings and hardly any interaction with the media. The channel honchos ought to have understood that Star One doesn't have as much reach as Star Plus or Zee. And when *Chhoona*.. started getting in the TRPs, they promptly changed its time slot.

What irked me most was that every other show that came after ours — *Annu ki ho Gayee Waah Bhai Waah* and *Bol Baby Bol* — was promoted to the hilt.

Did you watch it after you quit?

Look, I don't have a problem with the team or the production house. We had a blast working on the show.

In fact, it's because of my relations with Miditech that I stayed on for a year. I'd have quit earlier if not for them.

Are you happy with how Zee has promoted *Waaris*?

(Laughs) Well after what Star One did definitely. Seriously, Zee has done a great job. I love the hoardings and the promos.



Will a male-centric drama work?

I don't see *Waaris* as a male-centric show. My role is just as important to the plot as Shilpa's (Shinde) or Indira Krishnan's.

You probably have this impression because of the promos.

Why have you constantly rejected prime-time soaps? You were offered *Maayka* too..

Those are sari-sindoor soaps. I can't do them. If the title of a show has *saas*, *bahu*, *beti*, *maayka* or *sasuraal*, I don't figure in it.

If it's called *Ladki*.. what am I doing in it? If it's called *Ladki-Ladka*, then you can count me in.

How do you react when your first film *Fun2shh* airs on TV?

I've seen it so many times, I'd rather not watch it.

Any talks of a sequel?

Are you making fun of me? I don't know about sequels, but I do know that many films on time travel have been made after *Fun2shh*.

There's *Love Story 2050*. Even Ram Gopal Varma is making one.

Apparently, you're very health conscious and eat only sugar-free sweets?

Yeah, I like to keep fit. But if I keep away from sweets for 10-15 days, I'll run to the nearest *halwai* and pig out 10 *gulab jamuns*. Better if I just stick to little portions every day then, right?

Considering you have a deep voice, were you ever approached to dub for an animation film?

Not animation, but I was called for *I Am Legend*'s Hindi version. I don't know what happened though. They never got back to me.

Doesn't your wife Sneha have a problem with the passionate scenes between Shilpa Shinde and you in *Waaris*?

(Shocked) Passionate? If you think my tickling Shilpa's neck is hot.. please!

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