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'There are no Komolikas now

says Iqbal Khan, who returns to TV with a love story Tumhari Paakhi

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You have been in news more for turning down shows than doing them...

I have only turned down roles that were not good or those for which I could not give enough time. Having done several serials, I know the amount of time a daily requires — minimum of 12 hours for 25 days. If I can't devote that much time then it will be like cheating. I didn't take up Karan's role in Mahabharat because they were shooting out of town.


What appealed to you about Tumhari Paakhi?

Several things. Primarily it's the storyline and the treatment. Secondly, it's the character that I am essaying. I have played a rich guy many times, but what's different about this businessman Anshuman is that he is real, which I always crave to be. Anshuman is neither all good nor completely bad. He can be nice as well as mean — isn't that how we are in real life?

Have you read the book Navabidhan on which your serial is based?

No, I am not much into books. I read newspapers and I love politics. I am more of a visual person. You get a brief for your character and in terms of homework, I see what I can bring, in terms of mannersims, body language, etc. In any case, we will not be following the novel like the Bible. There will be some changes.

What kind of changes do you see in the TV industry since you started over a decade ago?

 Enlarge Image I think the basic structure and the treatment has changed. There's no kitchen politics, there are no Komolikas anymore. I remember every hero then sported a stubble. The brief was: he is a man of few words, intense, like Amitabh Bachchan of Zanjeer and with a sense of humour like Jai in Sholay — *tera naam kya hai Basanti*'. The lead girl was so sweet and positive that she could give you diabetes. She was like a doormat and you felt like shaking her up and saying 'get real'. Today, the scene has changed and not all families are rich. The heroes have a sense of humour and possess various shades to their character, ditto with the girls. Technically, bullet zooms and switch pans that were routinely used in that era have been done away with. I remember I used to tell the directors, 'don't let the camera act, it's my job'!

You came from films to TV and now TV actors are switching to films...

I did my first TV show *Kaisa Yeh Pyaar Hai* as my films didn't do well. I did that show because I needed money to pay my house rent. I played a rockstar at a time when saas-bahu sagas were ruling, but my show clicked big time. I did several serials including *Choon Hai Aasmaan*, *Waaris*, *Sanjog Se Bani Sangini* and *Yahaan Mein Ghar Ghar Kheli*. I am happy doing TV. I don't want to waste my time on films and lose good opportunities that TV provides. Sushant (Singh Rajput) got a great opportunity because of his director Abhishek Kapoor. Unless a reputed director/producer backs you, people rarely support good scripts by random filmmakers.

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