

Rahul: I wanted to make something really different for Indian cinema. Being from London, I've seen women marrying into families and being abused mentally and physically. No one says anything or stands up for these women being abused. It's almost taken as a standard when they get married. These women are alone and can't get any help. I wanted to create something with a different spin.

Although it's a short, you manage to incorporate issues like HIV and homosexuality along with the abuse of women. Why did you decide to include all of this?

Rahul: In terms of bringing in HIV and homosexuality, it's something that naturally progressed. I wanted to create something where the audience would be siding with the woman. When they see the stills and see the trailer, a lot of people think it's about a woman who is in love with two men. I wanted to fool the audience. It wasn't my aim to target HIV and homosexuality separately, but more to help the audience understand the woman's position.

What was the production process like?

It was quite easy because I had a very good cameraman. Sound and lighting were easy because it was very minimal. The hardest thing was finding the location. Most of the film is shot in the house and the doctor's office, but the locations were actually quite good and worked out well for us.

Casting was difficult. We saw over 70 girls for the role. It's not like anyone was a bad actor, but no one was fitting the role as we wanted. When we saw Pooja who eventually got the role, she embraced the sensitivity and vulnerability of the character. Finding that match is so difficult.

My vision for the mother in law was someone who had lost her beauty and was trying to retain it by mistreating her beautiful daughter-in-law. What I liked about Shruti was that she was attractive and was this modern lady but still treated her daughter-in-law badly. It kind of worked even though it wasn't how I envisioned it.

What was it like on set? You're dealing with such sensitive topics, was it tense at all?

Most of it was pretty easy to film. By the time we had to film the dinner scene which was the ensemble scene, we had spent two days together. Everybody got to know each other, and everyone was comfortable. The hardest scene to shoot was the rape scene. I wanted it to be uncomfortable to watch, but I think it fit nicely into the movie. Had it been too brutal, it would have stood out like a sore thumb. Nothing in the film is too vulgar or too difficult to watch.

How do you think that people are going to react to this? What reaction do you want to evoke from audiences?

I wanted to show them a different side of Indian culture. I am Indian myself, and had I not been Indian there would have been a lot of backlash. The fact that I am coming from a point of view as a British Indian, I don't know how the American audience is going to react. A certain portion of people will hate me, but I think my generation will support me. I have stood up and have written something real. Women are abused, and I've seen it myself. It's evidently visual to everybody, but nobody steps forward to help them.

These days, men are having affairs with women and other men. It's sort of a fusion of yesterday's world and today's world. There might be more backlash from the older Indian generation because of the homosexuality part. I think the modern day generation will understand. In today's society, these