



Epitome Journals

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

ISSN : 2395-6968 | Impact Factor = 3.656

The Struggle of Ravan and Eddie to Become Superstars in

Kiran Nagarkar's *The Extras*



Vishwanth Y. Yatnalli

Ph. D. Research Scholar

Dept. of English, Karnatak University, Dharwad, India

Email: yatnallivishwanath6@gmail.com

Abstract : Kiran Nagarkar is one of the brilliant writers of post colonial India. He is a novelist with a difference. His mastery over language is amazing. His portrayal of the character is excellent. Another important element found in his works is his sense of humour. He is a born story teller. He has six novels to his credit. They are *Seven Sixes Are Forty Three*, *Cuckold*, *Ravan and Eddie*, *God's Little Soldier*, *The Extras* and *Rest in Peace*.

This paper focuses its attention on the struggle of two characters Ravan and Eddie and their struggle to become superstars in the novel *The Extras*. Nagarkar has beautifully narrated the story. Both Ravan and Eddie had to undergo a lot of sufferings, humiliation and setbacks to realise their dreams. Though they work hard, they could finally become popular music directors and not superstars in the bollywood.

Keywords : Struggle, Film Industry, Ravan, Eddie, Superstars, Music

Research Paper :

The Extras by Kiran Nagarkar is the second novel in the trilogy of *Ravan and Eddie*. The novel is set in Bombay. It was published in 2012. The present research paper focuses on the story of two boys, namely Ravan and Eddie and their endeavour to become superstars. Both Ravan and Eddie are staying at the CWD (Central Works Department) chawl in Bombay, but they do not speak to each other because Eddie considers Ravan to be the murderer of his father. Though they do not speak to each other, their goal is same. They are fascinated by the film world and from childhood days only, they have dreams to become superstars in the films. They are ready to make any kind of sacrifices to achieve their dreams. Ravan's favourite hero is Shammi Kapoor and he is mesmerized by Shammi Kapoor's acting in the film *Dil Deke Dekho*. He wanted to be like Shammi Kapoor, who was a drummer before joining the film industry. So Ravan thinks of purchasing a drum set. As it is very expensive he buys a xylophone. Then he joins the wedding musical band namely New India Brass Band. Mr. Navare is the leader of this band. Thus, his career as a musician begins. Along with this job he also works as a taxi driver.

Eddie is working for another musical band namely Bandra Bombshells. He knows seven Portuguese songs, twenty five Konkani ones and every hit song that is played on Radio Ceylon's Commercial English Channel. Eddie loves Belle, an Anglo-Indian girl who is also working with Bandra Bombshells. He has met her for the first time at the Radio Ceylon's singing contest in Bombay. Eddie had a melodious voice that could have tremendous impact on audience. Daphne, Belle's mother was a music teacher. She is having high hopes for Belle. She wanted her daughter to be a great artist. Even she teaches Eddie about the music and how to play the piano.

After working a few days in New India Brass Band, Ravan got his own band. He names it as Cum September Jai Bharat Band. He had borrowed the first two words from an English movie. This is a turning point in his life. Mr. Tamhane invites Ravan's band to perform at his son's wedding function. He promises Ravan that he would pay him eighty rupees after the marriage. Ravan happily accepts the offer and performs along with his band. But after the wedding function Mr. Tamhane pays only forty rupees. When Ravan asks the remaining amount, Mr. Tamhane insults him and criticizes his band. Ravan was disappointed. He shouts after Mr. Tamhane who is walking away, 'I'm going to be a star. A hero. People are going to queue up in front of my house. I'll earn thousands a day.' (71)

Eddie does not want to be a hero in the bollywood. His ambition is to rock the whole world with his extraordinary performance and become an international star. His ambition is to go to America and make Rock Around the Clock, Part Two. He never loses his hope under any circumstances. He had determined to become a Hollywood superstar. He always listens to American and British rock 'n' roll music. He watches only Hollywood movies and not Hindi movies. He considers Hollywood as the only place which would offer him both his kind of music and moving image. That was where Elvis got into films and became the most powerful musical icon in the world. But all his efforts to go to America are in vain. Belle tells him that he should not brood for foreign opportunities; he should strive hard here only in order to achieve his goal. It is Belle who is instrumental in forcing him to join Krishna Kumar's acting classes. Initially Eddie is not willing to attend the classes, but later he changes his mind and joins the classes. After attending some classes, he begins to appreciate Krishna Kumar. The only thing that made Eddie upset was that Krishna Kumar had allowed Ravan from the fourth floor of his chawl to enrol in the same class.

Both Ravan and Eddie along with other young actors would be waiting outside RK Films, Filmalaya, Navketan, Mehboob or any of the other production houses. Once a director gives a chance to Eddie, he feels very happy and performs well. But the director doesn't like his acting and humiliates him. Abe hero, the director moved towards Eddie, 'you think you are the star of the film? Let me enlighten you, you are not. You are just one of the crowd, an extra. (250) When the cameraman praises Eddie's acting, the director warns him to mind his own business. Eddie is disappointed by the behaviour of the director. After some days, both Ravan and Eddie get a chance to act as extras in a song in the film Apne Dil Ki Suno. It is Ravan's timely help that provides an opportunity for Eddie. Ravan has two pairs of suits, one black and another white. Ravan keeps one for him and gives another to Eddie. Those were essential for that song. That song was a big hit. With that success Ravan and Eddie become close friends. They are popular with that song in the CWD chawl. Young boys and girls are eager to meet them. Even they requested Ravan and Eddie to take them to their next shoot. Tamhane, the court clerk is the first to congratulate Ravan.

After their success in Apne Dil Ki Suno, Ravan and Eddie are given another chance by Nagma Rani, the most sought after choreographer. She wants Ravan and Eddie for a film that Trilok movies is producing. Ravan and Eddie go to Mauritius by plane. Along with them, Nagma Rani, Rustom Khan, Kumar Kapoor and their heroines and a chorus of sixty extras are also present. Two shots are done by four in the evening. As the third shot is complicated,

the hero Rustom Khan keeps missing the same step. He is unable to perform it and had dropped the heroine Sapnaji for the fourth time. In the meanwhile, Eddie offers his help to Rustom Khan. But Rustom Khan becomes angry with Eddie and tells him that he is just an extra. He immediately summons the director and sees to it that Ravan and Eddie are sent back to India immediately. Nagma Rani is helpless. Thus, all their dreams are shattered soon.

On another day Eddie feeling bored tells Asmaan, another extra that he hates this profession. Then Asmaan consoles him and tells him that he is not bored. Other extras are bored. But she, Ravan and Eddie are not bored as they are not stupid and dull like other extras. Asmaan is good at composing poems and Ravan and Eddie set those songs to music and entertain other extras. One day Asmaan asks Eddie to teach her tae kwon do. Eddie replies her that Ravan does tae kwon do and he knows mallkhamb. Then Asmaan requests them to teach both to her. As Ravan and Eddie begin teaching Asmaan, other extras also join her. Whenever assistant director Click Click Kapil is free he shoots the stunts played by Ravan and Eddie. Another amazing thing is one afternoon superstar Dharmendra turns up and stands with the rest of the crowd to watch the performance of Ravan and Eddie.

One day assistant director Click Click Kapil meets Ravan and Eddie. He informs there is a golden opportunity for them. The director Maniyar sir is not happy with the final fight sequence of the film Bharat done by Pappu Raghavan. So the director wants to change it. Now it is the best chance for them to achieve something. Ravan and Eddie accept the offer and work hard and do the final fight sequence brilliantly. That was a big success. They are happy at the response of the audience. But to their disappointment, their names do not appear on the credit titles. They are not even invited for the premier of the movie. Their efforts to meet the director Maniyar sir are in vain. The director does not pay them. He avoids them. Ravan and Eddie are angry with the director but they could not do anything as they are new to the industry. They meet ClickClick Kapil but he is not in a position to do anything.

After few days Click Click Kapil once again meets Ravan and Eddie and informs them that he is going to direct a film and asks them to compose the music for his first film. The film name is Hulla Gulla. Initially Ravan and Eddie are not ready to accept his offer because of the past bitter experience. Later they agree. Asmaan composes songs. Ravan and Eddie put those songs to music. HullaGulla registers a phenomenal success. Not only children, but young men and women on buses, streets and on the trains are singing the songs of HullaGulla. Their songs set new records in the music industry. The songs are played by the wedding bands. After the passage of five weeks not even a single producer, director or even a

second and third assistant directors meets Ravan and Eddie. They think it their bad luck. But to their surprise, one day many great people from bollywood are outside the CWD chawls and are eager to meet Ravan and Eddie. They force Ravan and Eddie to compose music for their films. At last the talents of Ravan and Eddie are recognised.

Thus, Nagarkar has very beautifully narrated the journey of Ravan and Eddie and their efforts to become superstars. Though they do not become superstars, they are popular as music directors.

Works Cited

Nagarkar, Kiran. *The Extras*. New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers, 2012, Print.

Lukmani, Yasmeen, ed. *The Shifting Worlds of Kiran Nagarkar's Fiction*. New Delhi: Indialog Publications, 2004, Print.