

Chaand Chupa Badal Mein This moon is bright

Monday to Friday, 8 pm, Star Plus

Chaand Chupa Badal Mein is about the shy, quiet, sensitive and sensible Nivedita (Nivi to her family and friends) Sharma who since childhood has been a loner of sorts. One day she meets Siddharth Sood, the heir to a rich family living next door but also her dearest *bachpan ka dost*. They both have a history. Siddharth's grandmother holds Nivedita's father responsible for her son's death, a secret buried in the walls of the massive *vilayati kothi* they live in. On the other hand, Nivedita's mother unable to take the accusation dies of a heart attack leaving her under the care of a loving grandmother, a guilty-as-hell father and an indifferent *chacha-chachi*. She has a younger brother and a cousin sister, Divya, the smarter and brighter of the two girls. Then as love stories would have it, Divya falls in love with Siddharth who in turn is completely smitten by Nivi, who he fondly calls as *puttur*.

Also, on the periphery of the show are other characters like Siddharth's wicked *chachi* (why are *chachis* and *bhabhis* often black on TV?) who is always instigating her mother-in-law against Nivi. Then there is her husband who is eyeing the property which the grandfather has intentions of passing it on to Siddharth.

The story set in Shimla moves at a slow pace, which is the show's undoing. Though it doesn't offer anything new in terms of story or drama, it is still fairly engaging because of the heartfelt performances of the lead and supporting cast. Neha Sargam as Nivedita is innocence-person-



Cast:

Sarita Joshi,
Neha Sargam,
Abhishek Tewari

RATING:



ified. Hers is an absolutely untouched, pure performance. Abhishek Tewari as Siddharth is sincere but needs to loosen up a bit. Sarita Joshi as Nivi's *dadi* does an encore of *Baa* (from *Baa Bahoo Aur Baby*) minus the grimness. She is the wind beneath Nivi's wings. The dialogues are a plus point and the Siddharth-Nivi relationship is handled delicately (credit goes to writer Pratima Kulkarni).

The predictability of the story notwithstanding, you are still left feeling for Nivedita, waiting for her to come out of her shell and live life to the fullest.

VERDICT:

Watch it, better than the rest of the fare on TV today and you have Javed Akhtar endorsing it!

■ Kshama Rao

☆☆☆, OUTSTANDING ☆☆☆☆☆