

Amrit Manthan

This royalty is worth a dekko

Monday - Sunday, 8:30 pm, Life Ok

Cast : Nandita Puri, Amardeep Jha, Adaa Khan, Danish Bhatt, Waseem Mushtaq, Dimple Jhangiani

RATING : ★★

By Kshama Rao

Producer Rajan Shahi's newest offering, *Amrit Manthan* is set in a royal Punjabi household of the Sodhis. The family has fallen on hard times, the royal treasure is fast dwindling but the members of the house are hell-bent on keeping their decadent lifestyle alive. So you have the Rajmata (the grandmother), a queen, the king and a princess. Princess Amrit is the epitome of beauty, confidence and grace but she is also arrogant and shrewd. She, like the rest of the family believes in keeping the prestige and reputation of the *raj gharana* alive even if that means siphoning off a large part of the money gathered in charity functions to the royal treasure! The queen's is the only sane voice in the family. She believes the family should move on and accept the fact they are no longer royalty and that they could well do away with the sobriquets of *rajaji*, *rajmata* and princess.

Meanwhile, the grandmother has a dark secret. There is also Nimrit, Amrit's younger sister studying abroad. At the time of writing, two men have entered Amrit's life. There is Adiraj Singh, a prince who solves all problems with money and is hoping to get married to Amrit and there is Tej, the queen's childhood friend, a soldier's son who has his heart and values in place. While the queen wants Amrit to choose Tej, the Rajmata has her eyes set on Adiraj, as marrying him would mean an end to their financial woes.

The show has an interesting premise but lacks in its execution. On one hand you have the Rajmata and the Queen talking and behaving like royalty and on the other, you have the Rajmata's daughter and son-in-law who behave like petty crooks. We mean, if you have royal blood, you would have gone to the same grooming school, right? Also, it's a bit difficult to believe that the commoners have no idea about the royal family's financial woes especially when you have the Rajmata saying things like, '*Mushkil se do teen mahine ka kharcha nikal jaayega*'... isn't there anyone in the palace who could have spilled the beans about their bankruptcy?

Last but not the least, Adaa Khan as Amrit falls short (literally) of looking like a true blue Princess. Where are all the tall girls? The cast otherwise is decent. Nandita Puri as the queen who never looks into the eye of the Rajmata while talking to her, puts in a smooth performance, so does Amardeep Jha as the grandmother. Adaa manages to say her lines with that touch of royal air. Both the boys disappoint though. Danish Bhatt as Adiraj is stiffer than wood, while Waseem Mushtaq as Tej just lacks presence.

All said and done, the story is engaging in bits and it would be interesting to watch how Amrit pulls her family out of the financial doldrums and of course, we await Nimrit's entry. Hopefully, she is taller!

Verdict: Don't give this a royal snub, give it a shot.

