

Neil's First Screen Kiss With Deepika



Deepika Padukone has kissed Saif Ali Khan on screen, but her new co-star Neil Nitin Mukesh was a virgin kisser on camera. The conservative actor had no choice but to succumb to a liplock for Yashraj Films' "Lafange Parindey".

Neil has pulled out the plug on his no-kissing clause as he was virtually forced to do a long, lingering kissing scene with Deepika.

Director Pradeep Sarkar and Deepika had to use every possible power of persuasion before Neil abandoned his chastity vow.

"At first Neil was totally against the kiss with Deepika. He has refused to kiss in all his films," said a source close to the project.

"In fact his first director, Sriram Raghavan, threw a fit when Neil refused to kiss Rimi Sen. In his second film, 'Tera Kya Hoga Johnny', director Sudhir Mishra insisted Neil kiss Shahana Goswami, but the actor refused. Even in 'Jail' where there was a love-making scene with Mugdha Godse, Neil refused to kiss," the source added. Conservative to the core, Neil plunged into his first kiss only after the director assured him that the romantic relationship needed a culmination.

"Pradeep persuaded Neil and he finally saw his director's point of view. But the actor was nervous. Deepika had kissed before on screen. Not Neil," the source said.

"He first suggested a peck. But was finally persuaded to do a long, torrid smooch comparable in intensity and duration with Aamir Khan and Karisma Kapoor's kiss in 'Raja Hindustani'," the source added.

Post-Cancer, I'm Back To Extraordinary Life: Lisa Ray

Canada-based Lisa Ray is in no hurry to act and is instead keen to spread cancer awareness and write a book.

Excerpts from the interview:

INTERVIEW

Is your illness completely gone? How far are you back to your normal life?

My disease, multiple myeloma, is in remission. We don't take the attitude that it is ever gone completely, but we monitor regularly and now I'm leading a particularly healthy life...that's why research is so important in the field of multiple myeloma - the next drug could be the one that saves my life. Someone told me, 'healing begins when you realise there's no cure'. I am not back to a normal life, but an extraordinary life because of the insights I've gotten and the changes I've made to my lifestyle. In a word: simplified.

The tenor of regular life beckons you, Lisa. Have you fully surrendered to it?

I am engaging with the world, but with a different quality now. I do my best not to get stressed or over-extend myself, as was my habit before. I don't think there's such a thing as 'regular life' - there's just life with many different shades. So I'm doing a variety of things, but on my own terms. And I'm trying to invest in the things that I enjoy. I'm also still recovering from the stem cell transplant, so I have to take it slow at times.

One reads that you are going through severe post-illness trauma. How are you coping?

I'm coping as anyone does. I have good days and bad. Also what I'm going through is not unusual - so many people go through similar experiences post-cancer. I don't want to sensationalise any of it but perhaps just to share and raise awareness...I'm learning a lot and mostly about how to practise compassion with myself.

Have you gradually gotten back into the full swing of your career?

I don't believe in a swinging career. I believe in living my life to the fullest and career is just one small aspect. I think I sacrificed a lot of my life for my career to date and it's time to balance this out now. Cancer is a huge wake-up call.

Having said that, I'm exploring new creative opportunities. The point is to chase joy.

I've also had some unexpected honors recently. I was invited to MC (Master of Ceremonies) a luncheon for the Queen in Toronto and I was also seated at the head table. It was a great experience.

I'd also like to raise a lot more awareness for cancer, multiple myeloma and stem cell technology. That will be an integral part of my career. As well as writing a book.

Have you signed any more films?

I haven't yet signed another film. I'm in no hurry. I don't want to spread myself too thin as I'm getting offers to appear as a speaker across North America and I use this as a platform from which to raise awareness for multiple myeloma.



Will Try To Match Shilpa, Big B: Salman



Bollywood heartthrob Salman Khan, who will step into the shoes of the "Bigg Boss 4" host said that he will try and match upto the standards set by previous hosts Shilpa Shetty and

Amitabh Bachchan.

"Shilpa Shetty and Amitabh Bachchan have done a great job in the past as the hosts of the show. I really respect them for that and I will try to match upto them," Salman told reporters here.

"I will try to make the audience feel there is more fun outside the house than inside," he added.

Even though there was news that Salman will return to the small screen with the second season of the game show "Dus Ka Dum", the actor has changed his plan and will be seen in "Bigg Boss 4" to be aired on Colors.

When asked about the reason for this change, the actor said: "I had the contract to do the first season of 'Dus Ka Dum'. That contract is over now. If they want me to return for the second season, I would do that but right now there are no such talks, so I took this up."

Also, the grapevine is rife that Salman's "Bigg Boss" will be aired at the same time as Amitabh's "Kaun Banega Crorepati" (KBC).

So what does he feel about the competition? "There is no competition. We are two different personalities, we have different styles, so there is no comparison. I don't think I can host KBC the way he does," the actor said.

"Bigg Boss" is the Indian version of popular British reality show "Big Brother". It has celebrity contestants locked in a house under the surveillance of multiple cameras for a period of three months without any contact with the outside world.

Tale Of Two Bollywood Sisters: Sonam And Rhea Kapoor

One is obsessed about food, the other about fashion. One doesn't mind showing her dirty feet and hates makeup, the other is glamorous. They are two young Bollywood sisters who seem as different as chalk from cheese, and yet, Rhea and Sonam Kapoor share not just clothes but also space.

"Sonam and I share each other's clothes a lot. Her style is a little more glamorous. I like simpler things. But she always takes my things," Rhea, 23, who has produced the movie "Aisha" that stars 25-year-old Sonam, told IANS.

"You know how girls always need pieces to mix and match everything. I buy only those things...jackets and plain pants. And Sonam buys ridiculous things; she obviously can't wear a ridiculous thing and go for coffee. So she just takes my things all the time," said Rhea.

"But thank god we don't have the same foot size. I am 37 and she is 39. She is like giant, so she can't take my shoes," she added with a bout of laughter.

Unlike Sonam, Rhea likes to sit with her legs on the sofa and is not bothered about what her hair looks like. She "hates" makeup and hasn't visited a parlor for a manicure since a year.

"I haven't done a manicure in a year. I don't like people touching my hands. My feet are not even pedicured...I randomly clean them," Rhea said while raising her right foot to show her dirty feet.

"Sonam is obsessed with spas; she loves getting her nails done and stuff. She always wants me to go to a parlor with her. For her 'Saawariya' premiere...she told me - 'You're not coming to the premiere with these cuticles; they look disgusting!'" said Rhea.

Nevertheless, Rhea too is quite stylish. She also opts for the best of high street fashion labels and likes to mix and match them with her mother's jewelry.

But more than fashion, it's food that Rhea is obsessed with.

"I am obsessed about food. I constantly eat. My whole focus is always on food. I can't wear skirts and shorts any more because my legs are so heavy. I haven't gone to a gym in a long time. Every move of mine revolves around my next meal. I plan my whole day according to my food," Rhea says.

However, Rhea calls Sonam a "junkie".

"Sonam is not like me when it comes to eating. She is more of a junk addict. She eats every sort of junk...chips, chocolate, biscuits...give her a book and one packet of Hide & Seek biscuits...it will be over in seven minutes. But I am a proper foodie...I need my appetizers, soup, meal and desserts," she reveals.

Meanwhile, Rhea has plans to take over production from her father, veteran actor Anil Kapoor. "I am going to take over from dad. There are



some interesting, really fun projects that I am working on. But obviously my whole focus is on 'Aisha' right now," she says.

Rhea, who was assistant director in "Wake Up Sid", says direction might be an option for her in future.

"I want to direct, but there's still a lot of time for it. It is just too much responsibility to direct a project and I am too young and immature for it. All I know is after working on 'Wake Up Sid' and 'Aisha', there's no way in hell that I want to act," she says.

And why is that? "When you grow up with a father who is an actor and a sister who is an actress, it's not a faraway thing. I know the realities of being an actress. I know what it's like to be an actor and I don't want to do it. That's all.

"And especially after I worked on 'Wake Up Sid', I found the whole process of being behind the camera very interesting. Besides, I am too much of a control freak to just say my lines and go away. Nah! No acting for me," she concludes.

"Aisha", based on Jane Austen's novel "Emma", is scheduled for an Aug 6 release.