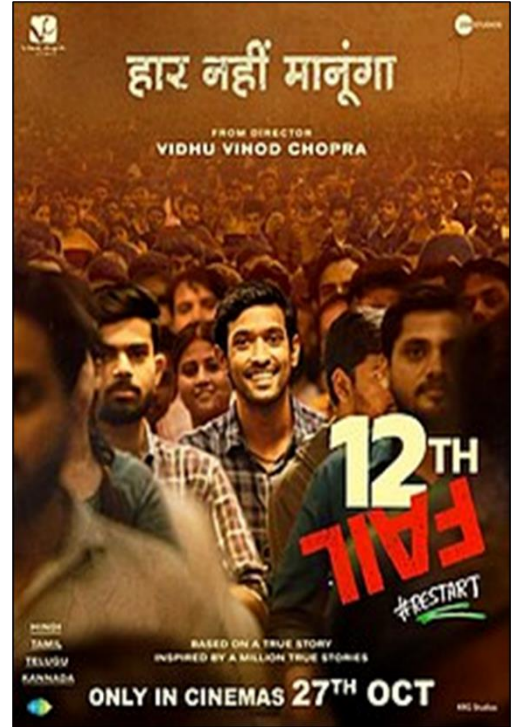


12th Fail: A Movie Review

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In this world, there are two categories of movies. The first category includes such movies that are promoted by the director and the actors themselves, while the second category includes such ones that are promoted by the public itself. The Movie *12th Fail* (2023) falls in the second category for projecting the odyssey of UPSC aspirants on the silver screen in such a way that writhes the soul of the spectators and convinces the universal dictum that, in every family, someone is born to uproot poverty with indomitable courage, backbreaking work, and undying proclivity. Such one remains ever busy in attaining the aims and objectives of life even in disparate conditions and continues till the conditional prosperity of the family and beyond is attained. Vidhu Vinod



Chopra scripted, directed, edited, and produced, Vikrant Massey, Medha Shankar, Anant Joshi, and Anshuman Pushkar starred, low-budgeted Bollywood movie *12th Fail*, rated 9.2/10, 90%, and 4.9 respectively by the IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes, and audience rating summary, is based on Anurag Pathak's eponymous non-fiction (*12th Fail* 2019), and bestows the biographical raga and saga of such one known as Manoj Kumar Sharma, an IPS Officer, who cuts the Gordian knot of extreme poverty with his dedication, uphill battle, and will power.

Narrating the story of Manoj Kumar Sharma's (Vikrant Massey)'s expedition, Pritam Pandey (Anant V Joshi) says that he comes from a freedom fighter's honest family of Chambal—the area of dacoits. Extreme honesty seems to be a curse for his family for causing his father to suffer from the pain and pangs of suspension, owing to which he strikes Chauhan (Dev), the corrupt Officer. Manoj, like his classmates, makes chit-slips for the final exam of the 12th class, but the strictness of DSP Dusyant Singh (Priyanshu Chatterji) spoils all's plans. Manoj is no exception. Later on, this DSP becomes his idol and his advice "To leave the cheating" becomes

a guru mantra for him. While his father's challenging his suspension in the high court, the penury of the family, and the charge of false case on his brother by MLA's henchman, change the narration and direction of his life. He decides to pass the 12th exam without cheating. What though he gets the third division?, it gives him a new direction. In the succeeding years, he passes his B.A. in History and Hindi Literature with the idiosyncratic aim of becoming a DSP. With the help of his grandma's savings, he sets out for Gwalior for MPPSC, but knowing the Group Ist exam has been postponed for three years, wandering in the streets with hunger, he goes to a daba for work for food, hitherto, he comes across Pritam Pandey, the beige flag. It's he through whose mouth first time he hears the first letter of IPS. Immediately, he decides to go to Delhi with him for the UPSC Exam empty-handed. Hitherto, he meets the restarter Gauri Bhaiya (Anshuman Pushkar) and Shraddha Joshi (Medha Shankar), his mentor, motivator, and supporter of the nadir. Failure after failure becomes his destiny, but hard-to-hard work becomes his way. Drudgery of the odd jobs, hectic exams of life, and upheaval in love and friendship become dwarf before his cantankerous will. He cracked the interview in his last-ditch attempt. A 12th Fail topped the best exam of his life, love, and friendship beyond the distinction.

Where the characters of the movie 12th Fail, being dynamic (chiefly the protagonist and the narrator) and static (the rest are static), are delineated with such genuineness and extent that they lay off to be mere actors on screen and become vessels through which the spectators can vicariously experience the myriad of emotions there the plot, being simple, rises with Sharma's father's suspension, passes with his odyssey for success, attains the climax with his long-awaited grand result, and brings resolution with the melody of Shraddha and Sharma's shehnai. Where Pandey's commentary-like narration in third-person omniscient attracts the audience, there the exalting and heartening dialogues, dealing with the applied philosophy of life, stir the spectators to go through the movie. "Papa used to say, fear from the darkness within, not from the darkness outside", "If citizens were educated, it could be a real problem for leaders" (By Sharma), "You speak even lies as truth. Become a news reporter" (by Shraddha), and "this is the battle of all of us, if one wins, the millions of sheep and goats will win" (by Gauri Bhaiya) are such exemplary dialogues that, surpassing the extremities of the formulaic storytelling, present a compelling and resounding cinematic experience.

The visual aesthetics of the movie 12th Fail are nothing short of breathtaking. Each frame of the film is meticulously crafted to evoke a varied range of sentiments with the help of

spellbinding cinematography—lullaby, pause, silence, echo, and whistling— that captures the essence of the characters’ struggles and triumphs as follows the visually stunning and emotionally poignant. The use of light and shadow is particularly noteworthy for adding layers of symbolism to the story and enhancing the overall broadcasting experience. Furthermore, the soundtrack deserves special mention, as it complements the on-screen drama flawlessly. Music that boosts the emotional impact of the crucial scenes also serves as a narrative device guiding the audience through the intricate layers of the plot. Despite this, the movie *12th Fail* boasts a stellar cast whose performances are nothing short of extraordinary. Each actor embodies their character with such conviction and sincerity that it is impossible not to be deeply moved by their portrayal. The chemistry between the cast members, outfits, colors, moods, and sound is palpable especially, for adding authenticity to the relationships portrayed on the screen. The motivational of the hilarious mood and ridiculous tone of the movie are superb.

What incontestably makes the movie *12th Fail* a cinematic gem ever produced is its ability to leave a long-lasting mesmerizing and mind-wafting impact of its persuasive narrative, surpassing character development and adept direction on its spectators. Long after the credit roll, the themes continue to resonate, encouraging viewers to reflect on their challenges and social norms and prompting them to question preconceived notions about success and failures, urging them to redefine their understanding of personal triumphs. The message that hard work never goes to waste and the moral that the harsh consequences with a clear purpose in life lead to the highway of success is in the crux of the movie. Additionally, what sets this movie apart as a cinematic masterpiece is its ability to delve deep into the human psyche, exploration of the themes of resilience, self-discovery, and the triumph of the human spirit in the face of adversity that, from time to time, needs redefining of the boundaries of toil, dedication, support, and love, along with the narrative of such consistency built para socialistic champions (aspirants) who quizzically start the journey of their career, even unknown to the destination, in the towns and cities like Delhi, and promptly continues their situationship to it with repeated restart in the de-influencing heat dome of their society and beyond.

To draw an inference, the movie *12th Fail* stands as a testament to the power of cinema to inspire, provoke thought, and evoke profound emotions. Its exceptional narrative-style coped with outstanding performances and technical brilliance elevates it to the pinnacle of cinematic excellence. The quality of entertainment and enlightening of this movie gives it a timeless

classic sensibility that will be remembered forever for its melodious, but thoughtful lullaby (haar nahin maanoonga, raar nahin thaanoonga), mantra (restart, restart, restart), and jami jamayi vyavashtha.

Note: Dialogues used in this article are translated by the reviewer and the image is abstracted from Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:12th_Fail_poster.jpeg).