



Dilip Kumar: The Substance and the Shadow

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Dilip Kumar: The Substance and the Shadow Dilip Kumar

An authentic, heartfelt and compelling narrative – straight from the horse’s mouth – that reveals for the first time numerous unknown aspects of the life and times of one of the greatest legends of all time who stands out as a symbol of secular India. Dilip Kumar (born as Yousuf Khan), who began as a diffident novice in Hindi cinema in the early 1940s, went on to attain the pinnacle of stardom within a short time. He came up with spellbinding performances in one hit film after another – in his almost six-decade-long career – on the basis of his innovative capability, determination, hard work and never-say-die attitude.

In this unique volume, Dilip Kumar traces his journey right from his birth to the present. In the process, he candidly recounts his interactions and relationships with a wide variety of people not only from his family and the film fraternity but also from other walks of life, including politicians. While seeking to set the record straight, as he feels that a lot of what has been written about him so far is ‘full of distortions and misinformation’, he narrates, in graphic detail, how he got married to Saira Banu, which reads like a fairy tale!

Dilip Kumar relates, matter-of-factly, the event that changed his life: his meeting with Devika Rani, the boss of Bombay Talkies, when she offered him an acting job. His first film was Jwar Bhata (1944). He details how he had to learn everything from scratch and how he had to develop his own distinct histrionics and style, which would set him apart from his contemporaries. After that, he soon soared to great heights with movies such as Jugnu, Shaheed, Mela, Andaz, Deedar, Daag and Devdas. In these movies he played the tragedian with such intensity that his psyche was adversely affected. He consulted a British psychiatrist, who advised him to switch over to comedy. The result was spectacular performances in laugh riots such as Azaad and Kohinoor, apart from a scintillating portrayal as a gritty tonga driver in Naya Daur. After a five-year break he started his ‘second innings’ with Kranti (1981), after which he appeared in a series of hits such as Vidhaata, Shakti, Mashaal, Karma, Saudagar and Qila.

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