

GLAM RECCO

Samara
Tijori

"The uncertainty
is unnerving
and scary"

EFFORTLESSLY
Sexy

From four years behind the camera to a breakthrough performance in Daldal, Samara Tijori is steadily carving her own space as an actor to watch. Her journey reflects curiosity, resilience and a willingness to take on challenging, layered characters. With a fearless approach to her craft and an instinct to choose roles that drive the story, Samara is only getting started. The next chapter looks exciting. Rohit Khilnani gets Samara talking about her journey, her craft and her plans.

GR: You began your career behind the camera as an assistant director before stepping into acting. Looking back, how did working behind the scenes shape the kind of actor you've become?

Samara: I was an AD for 4 years before I started acting and actually being an AD made me realise how passionate and curious I was about being a part of the world of filmmaking. I've used my position as an AD to its fullest. I knew I wanted to act when I started ADing and I made sure that I was the point of contact for all actors because I needed to be as close to them as possible to learn from them. Working behind the camera teaches you discipline and the value of community and standing by one another. Now when I walk onto a set as an actor, I could never take a single member of the crew for granted. It made me see how each person on a set is an expert in their own job.

It builds immense trust within you. Also watching an actor take direction from a director and then do their next take, that's what used to excite me the most. I was learning on the job. It helped me understand exactly what's going on from a logistical and technical perspective, in all departments.

GR: Your performance in Daldal has been widely appreciated, and many viewers felt it was a breakthrough role... Was there a particular moment on set when you felt, "I belong here as an actor"?

Samara: Firstly, thank you to everyone for the level of reception for Anant! I was NOT READY. Lol. There were actually many moments on and off the sets of Daldal which made me feel like "I belong here". But of course, there were a few special ones. One of them being the scene I sing the Russian song in, in the climax, on the PA system.



It's the most present and not present I've been on that set. And I also really feel for Sajid and Anant's childhood sequences. I think both of us, Aditya and I, felt the most comfortable and free on those days of shoot because we felt like we belonged to that world and we just fit.

GR: You underwent a significant transformation for your character in Daldal. What did that process involve, not just physically, but emotionally and mentally? Were there aspects of the role that stayed with you even after filming ended?

Samara: The emotional transformation I had to make to play Anant was a very very interesting one. And by far the toughest one I've had to make. I'm someone who doesn't know how to express my anger in real life; I've never even banged a door or thrown something in anger.

But Anant was different. I sat with a psychiatrist to understand how the upbringing of a boy differs from a girl and what are the building blocks and the emotional peaks a boy has in his childhood vs a girl. And turns out they're actually significantly different. I did have to sit with myself and imagine what it would've been for me as a little boy to have that kind of conditioning, which society and culture inadvertently does for you. I went to a society in Mumbai and met the women who dance / perform for men on a nightly basis, and they live in that society and bring up their children there. I spoke to them, I saw how they lived, I spoke to their children and saw how their children were brought up as well. All of this helped me shape Anant's core. Of course, me studying Criminology to begin with was a massive plus for me to dive into a criminal's headspace, but it was these little things that helped me create her as a whole. As for what's stayed with me, is how empowered she made me feel. How strong she made me feel. In fact, I relied on her to get through a tough phase in my life back then. I can now express anger very freely and it feels very very different to me, as Samara. I'll always have a part of her.



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Photographer - Sheldon Santos
Hair - Swapnil Diwakar
Make up - Antara Ghosh

GR: After receiving such positive reviews for Daldal, did you expect the opportunities to come more easily? How do you deal with the waiting period between projects and the uncertainty that many actors talk about?

Samara: I think I've learnt over a period of time now that you shouldn't have expectations with regards to what a role is going to do for you. Because whether you like it or not, it can actually go in any direction. Yes, there's always hope for it to go positively, but you can never guarantee anything in this industry. So, I don't think I expected anything to come "easier" to me post Daldal. But yes, I can confidently say, that when I approach someone now, there is a slight difference in the way I'm looked at, and that does make me feel more confident. I deal with the wait period with a mix of delusion and self-belief. Lol. The uncertainty is unnerving and scary, but I have a part of me that doesn't stop telling me that I'm going to make it, and I really just listen to that little voice, every day. Especially on the bad days.

GR: The entertainment industry often demands resilience in the face of rejection and unpredictability. What has been your biggest lesson about patience and perseverance so far?

Samara: My biggest lesson has been during a 3-year period, from 2021-2024 when I had no work, and no money coming in. I used up my savings to survive those 3 years and I will always be grateful and say that it's a privilege that I have a home in this city and live with family because if I didn't have that, I wouldn't be able to say this. Those 3 years were a massive test for me. I considered quitting, I doubted myself as an actor, even as a person, my confidence nose-dived, it affected every aspect of my life. But I continued to audition in the hope that something will click, and in 2024, Daldal clicked. It was the delusion I spoke of before that helped here haha.

GR: How selective are you about the roles you choose today? Are there certain kinds of characters or genres you're actively hoping to explore next?

Samara: I wouldn't say I'm super selective although I am to an extent but that's only to do with me wanting to play parts that are impactful. I'm not someone who wants to go for the optics only, I am someone who wants to play a character that drives the plot. And this can be true of any genre. Even a romantic film, even a comedy, all of it.

GR: When you're not shooting or auditioning, what does a typical day look like for you? What hobbies, interests, or routines help you stay grounded and creatively inspired?

Samara: I don't have a very set routine in that sense, but I have a scaffolding of one. Off late, since I've launched my own game, "Meerly Trying" I've been working on building and growing that a little more :) I paint, and sketch a decent amount. I'm also trying to read more. Watch more content, especially world cinema, to grow my film vocabulary. I try to fix up meetings with whoever I can reach out to, and I'm actually constantly trying to find ways I can collaborate with creatives I want to work with and see how I can make that happen. I work out every alternate day and I'm also a social person, so meeting close friends of mine is very grounding because almost all of them aren't from this industry.