
Discovering Three Different Woman Lives and Voices in Food in the Movie

When I first heard we were going to watching a New Zealand film as part of our film study, I can honestly say that I was not in the least interested. It's nothing personal, but when I compare New Zealand movies to American movies I can't see any competition. So when I watch a movie, I have high expectations about it and the messages that are conveyed. Ever since I have taken English as a core subject in school, I can't help but be a little abstract about things; as in 'What types of themes are conveyed? Or 'Why does the director use a Bird's Eye View rather than a normal view?' These are the sorts of questions that I asked myself while I was watching the movie.

'Apron Strings,' directed by Sima Urale, is a parallel story about 3 ladies whose lives revolve around food somehow. Lorna, a Cake Decorating Shop owner, lives at home with her mother and 35-year-old unemployed son, and is very close-minded about multicultural changes. Anita is a TV Cooking Show host who puts up a façade in relation to her role as the Indian Princess on her show. Her relationship with her sister Tara is practically non-existent, but her son Michael seems to be the barrier between the two estranged sisters throughout the movie.

One character that I found myself having mixed feelings towards would have to be Barry, Lorna's son. My feelings towards Barry consist of disappointment, irritation and a sense of pity. Examples of this can be when I found Barry very rude, obnoxious and completely childish throughout the movie.

I found Barry rude because of the way that he would talk back to his Nan when she would correct him or give him advice. Come to think of it, there was never a scene when Barry was not talking back to his elders. I look down upon people who do that because that isn't what I was taught growing up. Elders are to be respected no matter what race or belief, and knowing that Barry hadn't been taught this, or hadn't grasped it into his mind firmly, makes me want to slap him on the head until he gets it.

Barry acted like a complete child throughout the movie. For example when Lorna was scolding him, he sat on the living room couch looking like a little 5-year-old. Just like a child, Barry would be all nice and listen to his mother when he wanted something that was not within his reach. But once he was to no, he would throw a fit and continue to guilt trip his mother. I found this very funny because I remember doing the exact same thing to my mother when I was young. But looking back at it now via Barry's character, I see that maybe it wasn't so nice and funny after

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all.

This part linked to my irritation towards Barry every time he would walk onto the screen and ask his mother for money. My feelings towards this are mixed; as in 'yes I understand that Barry might need some pocket money,' but given that Barry is an unemployed 35-year-old is, to me, completely pathetic. I got angry at him throughout the movie because he didn't even consider going out to go and get a job until his 'friend' offers him work but with a \$5000 start up. My understanding is that many cultures around the world preach and practise that money is not freely given but earned. Because of this life lesson that I have learnt since I was young, every time I see Barry on the screen, I get this judgemental feeling towards him, but after learning about his past and his story, I truly do feel sorry for Barry

Even though I pitied Barry, I am disappointed in him because he had 2 choices. He could have chosen to pick up his act and move on; become a better person than his father but instead he chose to mope around like a loser who eats money from his mother's pockets. In my disappointment I found myself getting irritated yet again because I feel as if Barry just gave too easily without putting up a fight.

My disappointment extended towards Lorna, because instead of babying Barry, she should have corrected him and stood her ground from the very beginning of the movie, not at the very end. People around me say that they feel sorry for Lorna instead of disappointed and I guess I do feel somewhat sorry, but not as much as disappointed. I believe everyone is open to what they feel so I can't help but blame her for that, but I do see her reasoning. Parents only want the best for their children, I know that at the least. Lorna subdues her anger towards Barry and continues to nurture him as if he had done nothing wrong and I guess this goes on from when she kicked her husband out and she was left picking up the pieces. I feel that Lorna is too afraid of kicking Barry out because of the guilt she feels when she heard her husband committed suicide. I would be the same as Lorna if I had kids, but I would not baby them. I would be disappointed in myself if I let my 35-year-old son live off of me for the rest of his life instead of going out into the world and actually try and get a job.

I do feel sorry for her in that sense, because she had to step up as the mother and father figure in her family from the point on life. I feel sorry for Lorna in that sense because when you say your vows at the altar your assumption is that they will last, if not, then why get married at all? Coming from the idea above, I think that it portrays my thoughts on marriage exactly. I would rather stay single for the rest of my life than get married and have my family crumble to pieces.

This would have to be my feeling overall for the movie. I feel heartbroken. Heartbroken because when you watch a movie, you would generally like for there to be a happy ending at the end, but instead you get this cliff-hanger where everyone is left thinking about their decisions, or at least

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that was the impression that I got from the montage at the end.

I think that from this movie, I felt as if this family just needed some major counseling. I learnt that everyone needs help but sometimes we don't acknowledge it just like Lorna's family. We tend to put the blame on other people instead of choosing to man up and move on to a better future. We tend to dwell in the past instead of letting go of the past and moving on.

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