

Film Review: Problems in Iran Prove Universal in ‘A Separation’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 27, 2012 - 10:59am

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CHICAGO – Divorce, aging parents, economics, religion and social standing can be applied to any circumstance in any modern culture. The culture in Iran may seem mysterious, but there is nothing uncommon regarding what their people go through in the Oscar nominated “A Separation.”



Winner of the Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language Film, and nominated for an Academy Award in the same category, “A Separation” is a universal example of how one problem can trip a wire to many problems. Viewed through the filter of the patriarchal society of Iran, those problems offer even more intensity, with the women becoming both the arbiters of the solutions and the victims of what future may result from those solutions.

Nader (Peyman Moadi) and Simin (Leila Hatami) are shown in the beginning as requesting a divorce in an Iranian court. There is no major conflict, it’s just that Nader refuses to leave his aging and senile father (Ali-Asghar Shahbazi) and Simin wants to take their daughter Termeh (Sarina Farhadi) and move away. The judge refuses to grant the divorce, so the couple begins a separation.

The major circumstance of this split is that Nader needs to find day care for his father. After several meltdowns, he reluctantly hires Razieh (Sareh Bayat), who is pregnant and complains about the commute and the work. When Nader comes home to find the old man on the floor, tied to his bed, he physically throws Razieh out of his home. The angry woman falls down the apartment stairs, which sets off a legal battle to determine if Nader assaulted her. Razieh’s husband Hodjat (Shahab Hosseini) is now involved, and even Simin comes back to try and placate a volatile situation.

“A Separation” continues its limited release on January 27th. See local listings for show times and theaters. Featuring Peyman Moadi, Leila Hamtami, Ali-Asgahr Shabazi, Sareh Bayat and Kimia Hosseni. Written and directed by Asghar Farhadi. Rated “PG-13”

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Leila Hatami (Simin) and Peyman Moadi (Nader) in ‘A Separation’
Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classic

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