



"The Nightshift Belongs to the Stars" Wins @ TFF

Natasha Lardera (April 29, 2013)



The 23 minute life changing short, starring Enrico Lo Verso and Nastassja Kinski, directed by Edoardo Ponti and written by Erri De Luca, "expresses love in its many dimensions and literally gets to the heart of the matter."

As the 2013 tribeca Film Festival comes to an end we find among the talented winners an Italian film: The Nightshift Belongs to the Stars (Il turno di notte lo fanno le stelle), directed by Edoardo Ponti, written by Italian writer Erri De Luca (based on his story by the same title), gets the Best Narrative Short nod. The 2013 Best Narrative Short Competition jurors were Christine Baranski, Kassem Garaibeh, Jessica Hecht, Chris Milk, and Sheila Nevins, and their comment on the 23 minute life changing story is that "The Nightshift Belongs to the Stars expresses love in its many dimensions and literally gets to the heart of the matter."



This is the story of a man and a woman. He is single and alone. She is married. Both are mountain climbers and survivors of life-changing heart surgeries. Beating in his chest is the heart of a young woman, while she got a new mitral valve. Fate and a promise have bonded them. A short story where the heartbeat gets faster, only to find, at the end, a steady rhythm.

Six months after their surgeries, Matteo (Enrico Lo Verso) and Sonia (Nastassja Kinski), to celebrate recovery, they set out to climb a peak on the Dolomites, in Trentino, Italy. On their way up the rocky wall they not only share their passion for the mountains, but they also share the pain and fear they went through, and their willingness to test their new heartbeats. Will their hearts survive the challenge? While Sonia's husband, Mark (Julian Sands), worries about her and feels threatened by the complicity between Sonia and Matteo, the two aim for the summit, opening the route to a new beginning and a second chance at life.

The short is poetic and strong, heartfelt. Written with honesty and shot with passion. The same passion that author Erri De Luca feels for mountaineering. Actor Enrico Lo Verso was participating at one of the screenings during the festival and told i-italy that De Luca is an avid rock climber, he also suffered a heart attack and just two weeks after his surgery he was climbing again. "I wanted to challenge the mountains right away," Erri De Luca said in an interview to La Repubblica back in 2012. "The mountains accepted the challenge and allowed me to start the second act of my life, just like it happens to the film's protagonists. That was a test for my new blood circulation and I could do it embraced by the beauty of nature." Lo Verso, didn't know much about climbing before training for the film, the actor had 4 days to prepare for the climb up the mountain, but said it was a breathtaking experience... and, once on top, Matteo, his character, can declare his love for the girl who gave him a new heart, and a new life. The audience was taken by the poetry of it all, some even shed a tear.

Poetry, not just mountain climbing, is a big part of Erri De Luca's life too, and something he has in common with the characters of the film. Erri De Luca is a writer, novelist, story-teller, essayist, translator and poet. He has published more than 60 books, numerous collections of short stories and poems, translated in more than 30 languages. He is considered by many literary experts "a master of the Italian language of the past two decades." His grandmother was Ruby Hammond, an American woman who moved to Italy in the first years of the past century. His name, Erri, is an Italian version of Harry, his uncle's name. Erri De Luca started writing when he was a student. For about twenty years he has been a manual worker. His first novel, "Not Here, Not Now," was published in Italy in 1989. He is a translator from Ancient Hebrew and Yiddish, and is an appreciated translator of several books of the Ancient Covenant. He was awarded the France Culture Prize in 1994 for his "Aceto, arcobaleno," the Laure Bataillon Award in 2002, for "Tre cavalli" (Three horses), and the Femina Etranger for "Montedidio" (God's Mountain). In 2010 he was bestowed with the German International Literary Petrarca Award.

Erri De Luca appeared in a cameo role in the movie "L'isola," by Costanza Quatriglio, and made his debut as a screenwriter and leading actor in the short film "Di là del vetro" (Beyond the Glass), presented at the Venice Film Festival in 2011. In "The Night Shift Belongs to the Stars," he also plays a small role. De Luca has been a member of the jury at the Cannes Festival in 2003. He wrote and starred in several plays including the theatrical drama "In viaggio con Aurora" (Traveling with Aurora). De Luca contributes regularly to several newspapers and magazines. He is a passionate mountain climber. He currently lives in the country near Rome.

(The biography comes from the site www.thenightshiftbelongstothestars.com [2])

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