

Abel Study Notes



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Directed by: Diego Luna
Certificate: mayores de 15 años
Running time: 83 minutos
Release date: 25 de abril de 2011

Synopsis:

Abel is an unstable child whose problems have only gotten worse since his father was asked out on the family. No one in the household is sure what to do for Abel or how they should behave around him, and a stay in a mental hospital does little to ground him. However, one day Abel wakes up and decides that he's the man of the house, and begins acting like his absent father rather than the youngest child. To the surprise of everyone, adult responsibilities agree with Abel, and the family seems significantly happier with his new personality. But this proves to be short-lived when Abel's real dad unexpectedly returns, and the two vie for the status of head of the household. ¹

These Study Notes are suitable for KS4, AS, A2, Film Studies and Spanish.

Before viewing

- What does 'family' mean for you? Share your views with your classmates. Do you have different opinions?
- Today's society comprises many different types of families. What do you think children need from a family to support them as they are growing up?

Mexican vocabulary. As in English, Spanish has a wide variety of dialects. One of them is the Mexican Spanish which vocabulary is very characteristic. Match the following Mexican expressions with their peninsular equivalent:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. lunchar | a. ir muy rápido |
| 2. pinche | b. comer |
| 3. morro/a | c. hablar |
| 4. dar chance | d. dar la oportunidad |
| 5. en el gabacho | e. cosa (despectivo) |
| 6. ir hecho la mocha | f. en el extranjero |
| 7. chingadera | g. ruin, indigno |
| 8. platicar | h. chico/a, novio/a |

Nuevo cine mexicano. "Nuevo cine mexicano" is a general term given to cinema from México made after 1990. Its features include the search for filmic and artistic quality, as well as thematic concerns with difficult social topics.²

Have a look at the picture on the front cover and describe the mise-en-scène (everything that appears before the camera and its arrangement).

- Which type of shot is it? What can you say about the lighting?
- During the film you will watch several long shots of landscapes. Take notes on these to describe their characteristics (shot, angle, lighting, camera movements, editing, sound...) after you have finished watching.

After viewing

Complete the following sentences with the vocabulary in the box:

familia monoparental
pensión alimenticia
estar embarazada

contestar mal
infidelidad
echar la culpa

compartir la custodia
hacerse cargo

1. El padre de Abel se marchó, así que su familia es una _____.
2. Abel decide _____ de su familia, es decir, él es el responsable.
3. Selene y Paul suelen _____ a su madre.
4. Es fácil _____ a Anselmo del problema de Abel, ya que empezó cuando Anselmo los abandonó.
5. Abel asume que su madre debe _____ porque compartieron un cigarrillo en la cama.
6. Cecilia y Anselmo deberían _____ de sus hijos, pues los hijos necesitan de los dos padres.
7. Como Anselmo no les pasa la _____, Cecilia debe vender las fincas para poder comer.
8. Anselmo ha cometido una _____ porque está viviendo con otra mujer y todavía está casado.

Sexism

Sexism is often present in Latin societies. Actually, the word 'macho' is a Latin word, meaning male. The film criticises sexism in México, through different scenes in which the effects of sexism in daily life are represented (the films that Abel watches on TV, the song 'Macho Man' for Father's Day festival in the school...). Could you find more examples?

Your opinions

- Do you think that Abel takes an indispensable role? Which positive changes happen when Abel becomes the family man?
- In your opinion, is Cecilia doing the right thing by hiding Abel's changes from the doctor? Do you think you would have done the same thing in her place?
- Do you think that Anselmo has the right of demanding fidelity to Cecilia?

Grammar: Reflexive verbs

Complete the sentences with the right form of the verb in brackets:

1. Normalmente mis padres _____, sobre todo si estamos de vacaciones. (pelearse, ellos, presente)
2. Mi hermana y mi primo no _____ nada bien, ¡no podían ni verse! (llevarse, ellos, imperfecto)
3. En vacaciones, mi padre _____ del dinero que gastemos. (quejarse, él, futuro)
4. Me gusta _____ con toda mi familia porque son lo más importante para mí. (entenderse, yo, infinitivo)
5. _____ de tu padre porque era muy bueno conmigo. (enamorar, yo, pretérito).
6. Si tuvierais problemas económicos, _____ cargo de la manutención de vuestros hijos. (hacerse, nosotros, condicional)
7. ¡ _____ bien cuando visitemos a tus abuelos! (comportarse, tú, imperativo)
8. He estado _____ de haberme casado con tu padre muchos años. (arrepentirse, yo, gerundio)
9. ¿Cómo _____ por vosotros mismos si no tuvierais la ayuda de tus tíos? (mantenerse, vosotros, condicional)
10. Antes de que _____ por otra persona, quería decirte que estoy embarazada. (enterarse, tú, presente de subjuntivo)

Written by María Gonzáles Fuentes

1. <http://www.filmaffinity.com/es/film842482.html>
2. <http://respuesta.mexicotop.com/Entretenimiento/nuevo-cine-mexicano-epoca-peliculas-directores-actores>