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'My Sailor, My Love,' a lesson in forgiveness and compassion for human frailty

By *Sophie Braccini*



Photo provided

theater actors who could give the film its subtlety and make it believable to the audience. The cast is top notch.

Each character is well developed and brings something quite unique and complex to the story. The old captain is hiding his inevitable physical and mental decay. His long and rough sea life has transformed the young man in love with his wife he once was. He talks about it with his daughter: "It gets harder and harder to come home, and one day there is no grace at the gate." Grace happens to also be the name of his daughter. The dead mother's shadow is in the picture. She haunts her daughter and is part of what feed her unresolved grievances. She is hard on herself, she lacks grace in her life. The film dives into a topic that is not easily addressed on the silver screen, how a man has lost the love of his daughter, without anything terribly egregious hidden in their past, and how to live with this loss when mending cannot be performed.

Howard is hard and unreachable to his daughter, but to Annie he is showing his better side and is generous. The director exposes with sensitivity the different sides of human beings. These characters have flaws, these characters have great qualities. The human equation shown here is complex and endearing. Annie holds one of the keys of the movie when she explains to Grace how she can love her father: because she takes him as he is. She has no demand, no expectation, no grievance, and first and foremost, she does not judge. And this is maybe why, in spite of former mistakes, in spite of a heavy past, in a space of deep acceptance love is still possible.

Even at the end of the movie, the characters' ambiguities and their dark, irreducible parts will not be completely lightened. It is like an Irish sky, with heavy gray clouds that can feel weighty at times but that nonetheless wrap us up in their unspeakable charm.

The movie is brought to Lamorinda for at least a week by the International Film Showcase. It will open on Jan. 20 at the Orinda Theatre. Tickets at orindamovies.com.

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