

Liberty vs. Nature

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Why is modern youth so goofy? The movies shown on long-haul airplane flights rarely promise to be anything but silly, but a movie from Catalonia recently made this ever hopeful 12-hour prisoner watch, and suggested an answer – liberty! The movie may have said more than it meant.

Here is the story. A young couple, unmarried but living together as is the way of “partners” today, are shown agreeing to part company if either of them ever feels like it. However, they love one another enough to hire together an apartment where she is happy to make with her man her first domestic nest. Alas, he has to be hospitalized with a grave liver problem, requiring a transplant for him to survive.

Visiting him regularly and caringly in the hospital, she offers him a part of her own liver. At last he accepts. The doctors find her compatible. The transplant is performed. Both recover from the operation. Joyfully he returns to the apartment to rejoin the girl who has saved his life, but he finds her . . . different! While he was in the hospital, a male colleague at her place of work took an interest in her, and she in turn found him attractive. So when the “partner” whom she saved rejoins her, she tells him that they may be bonded by his having in him a physical part of her, but he no longer has the best part of her, which is her heart! Weakly he comments, “What a pity!” But given their original agreement, what more was there to say?

The movie ends with her gently weeping in his arms, leaving open the possibility of a happy-ever-after ending, whereby he would regain her heart’s affections, etc, etc. However, it seems just as probable that she will “move on” (as they say today) to her new “partner.” In fact, to any bond created by her considerable sacrifice she even seems likely to prefer

freedom for her feelings.

Now nothing in the movie remotely promotes the Catholic formula for such domestic happiness of man and woman as this "valley of tears" allows of, namely, a girl keeps her heart in reserve for the one man she will marry, marries him, and then never lets him go. But the movie does quite objectively suggest that that "liberty" which can cut off a girl's deepest natural instincts of nest-making and self-sacrifice for her man, is not necessarily going to make her happy. Girls, if you are looking for happiness in this life, let alone for eternity, trust Mother Church.

Kyrie eleison.