

PRICE OF HEARTACHE

This is a film about MEN, WOMEN, LONGING, CULTURAL DIFFERENCIES, CITIZENSHIP, and even SCAMS. In a nutshell, it's a film about **LOVE**.

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The film begins with people walking on the streets of Ottawa, Canada. Camera zooms out and among the Ottawa office workers we see a woman in her wedding dress....carrying a heavy door on her back! Something is written on the door but we don't see what. The woman stops by the building with a sign that reads "Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration". The despair is written all over her face. Lainie Towell's voice tells us that she is doing this walk to symbolize how she was used by her husband from Guinea as a doorway to Canada and she wants the government to send him back.

Roxanne, a pretty 41-year-old woman from Vancouver's suburbs, is flying to Marrakech for the eighth time in two years. For her husband Abdelrafour, who is 14 years younger, Medina - the incredible Old City in Marrakech - is the most ordinary place in the world. We filmed Abdel with his numerous friends, neighbors, and family in Medina - in his familiar environment. On the other hand, Roxanne is the visitor who is mesmerized by the place, culture and warmth of human interaction. There is no way she would be able to detect a false note in the richness of the sounds of Marrakech! Even our camera captured lots of tender glances, warm smiles, hot kisses - and nothing suspicious!

Thanks to this story, we realize that there are other factors, besides evil intentions, that can fail an international marriage in a short period of time. We will help people to imagine Abdelrafour moving from loud, colourful, crowded Medina to Pitt Meadows, a very quiet, tiny Vancouver suburb. In Medina, Abdel says "hi" to every second person on the street. In Pitt Meadow, Roxanne doesn't know her next-door neighbors. In Marrakech, Abdel is dividing his time between playing soccer and hanging out with his buddy Sherak. His education is minimal and he has never worked full-time. In Pitt Meadows, Roxanne is very busy taking care of her 13-year-old son who has developmental issues, and her busy work schedule - as a single provider and entrepreneur she is used to long hours and hard work. Abdel has never been on a plane, he has not been outside of Morocco, and he comes from a large but poor family. When we were filming in Marrakech, it was all fun and games for both Roxanne and Abdelrafour - a long, happy vacation. What will happen when Abdel finally arrives in Pitt Meadows?

Within Roxanne's story, we will show the story of Stephanie and Adourahim. Our camera enters the story at a big party in Marrakech: Roxanne and Abdurafor. We see them together - kissing, singing, hugging. Steph is a 41 year old from Vancouver - she is funny and sweet, but she is also obese. Abdourahim is 10 years younger, fit and wears a "Guantanamo Bay" prisoner's shirt. The couple is about to get married. Abdourahim explains that he loves his future wife because she has a BIG heart, plus in Islam marrying an older woman is more acceptable than in the West: one of Prophet Muhammad's wives, whom he was very passionate about, was fifty when he was twenty five. Abdourahim is proud to be doing something like his Prophet. Abdourahim, whose father is an imam, expects his future wife to convert to Islam. Steph is ready to do it, without telling her family in Canada. She truly, whole-heartedly wants to get married to Abdourahim...

Certainly, the film's audience will be divided and not sure if Abdourahim is using Stephanie primarily to get into Canada. We hope the film will make people realize that, when you go to exotic places, you face a completely different culture, and everything you don't understand, or see as suspicious, could simply be explained by "cultural differences"!

These three stories of Western women falling in love with men from African countries are not that rare. With advent of internet it is so much easier to find partners across the globe and to maintain these relationships via Skype. In the end, the men will arrive in Canada and one hopes that the stories of Roxanne and Stephanie will have a happy ending?