Movie Review: 'Under the Same Moon'

by Lilia O'Hara

"Under the Same Moon" tells the story of Rosario, a single mother who leaves her native Mexico. Her 9-year-old son, Carlitos, left behind with his grandmother, eagerly awaits her telephone calls every Sunday at the same time.

'UNDER THE SAME MOON' - Adrian Alonso stars as Carlitos in the touching film 'Under the Same Moon.' CNS Photo courtesy of Fox Searchlight. Carlitos decides to go in search of his mother in Los Angeles after his grandmother dies and thus embarks on a journey where he comes across a variety of characters.

Each encounter creates a panorama that shows us various facets of the immigration phenomenon:

There's the smuggler who organizes the immigrants' journeys, and the young woman who wants to help children cross so she can pay for her brother's education. There's the pimp and the drug addict, the people who give food and shelter to the migrants, the businessmen who employ child labor and more.

In spite of all the characters, the film manages to stay focused on the love between mother and son.

Not knowing Carlitos is on his way to Los Angeles, Rosario, who works cleaning houses, is unjustly fired by one of her bosses and considers marrying a security guard in order to be able to become a legal immigrant. But logic and her belief in doing the right thing prevail.

"Under the Same Moon" (presented in Spanish with English subtitles) maintains a good pace, and the emotions never flag. Every step taken by Carlitos, magnificently played by Mexican Adrian Alonso ("The Legend of Zorro," "Al otro lado," "Voces inocentes"), presages a possible tragedy or unexpected turn. The characters are well-defined, and millions of immigrants of all nationalities surely can identify with its joys and sorrows.

Those who are especially sensitive will want to bring a hanky. Everyone will leave the cinema with some hope in their hearts.

"Under the Same Moon." Running time: 1 hour, 49 minutes. Rated: PG-13.

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