

MA BONNE ÉTOILE

Lucky Star

French with English subtitles



Directed by: Anne Fassio

Genre: Dramedy

Country of origin: France

Runtime: 92 min.

SYNOPSIS

Louise Barthélémy has always lived in Normandy around horses either at La Ferrière, the stud farm owned by her father Pierrot, or at the jockey school run by Bronec. Louise is still a child when her mom passes away which triggers her dad's difficulty in keeping La Ferrière afloat as it is on the brink of bankruptcy. But soon the birth of Marquise, a mare that Louise raises with great love and care, brings hope to the family in spite of the relentlessness of fate....

This a tale of love, passion and courage.

REVIEWS

Perseverance

The equestrian world is used as a backdrop in filmmaker Anne Fassi's second feature film (...) She has moulded her film into a fairy tale utilizing the stereotypes of the bad and the prince charming. The filmmaker deals with the topic of coming of age including the relationship of a widowed father at a loss with his daughter.

The bond between the horse and Louise is set against magnificent landscapes to emphasize their connection. Moreover the Normandy backdrop creates an image of nature, harsh and rough, reflecting that of the equestrian world itself. The research on that milieu is remarkable (...)

Young actress, Fleur Lise, was rewarded the "Premier Rendez-Vous" and the Best Actress Prizes at the Cabourg Film Festival in 2012 (...) The equestrian milieu, which she is familiar with, enabled her to easily use her great abilities as a horse rider to show to perfection her symbiotic relationship with Marquise. As for Christopher Lambert, he plays alongside Claude Brasseur the part of a father unable to get his feelings across to his daughter. The two act as a substitute "couple" to raise Louise.

In the end, the film directed by Anne Fassi is touching thanks to the genuine interpretation of the characters and the relationship with the animal. It starts with a drama to finally open up into the simple message that in life everyone has to face defeat then lift one's head up to start all over again with renewed strength.

(Translated from a review in French by David Brejon from Abus de ciné at

<http://www.abusdecine.com/critique/ma-bonne-etoile>)

DETAILS

◆ LANGUAGE

As pointed in the review, the film takes place in the **equestrian world** of trainers, riders, horses which is portrayed as **rough and tough** on the people who struggle to be the best no matter what.

The **language** reflects the **directness and harshness** of that milieu. Horse **excrements** for instance are sometimes referred to "dung" or simply what they are "a pack of shit".

In this film, the English subtitles do not always translate all of the expletives (mostly “merde”) uttered by the characters.

However, the passion and level of rivalry between the characters result in some use of coarse language such as “asshole(s)” that comes about 4 times in the conversation for “con”, “connard” also translated by “jerk”. “...a bastard” stands for the usual “salaud”. The word “ass” is inserted in a few expressions: “Kick your ass”, “candy ass” (for “couilles molles”), “stubborn like an ass” (...*têtue comme une bourrique*). A couple of “F...” words can be read in the translation as well.

The usual familiar expletives like “shit” appear several times, “damn” as well.

“What the hell...” also translate the anger and frustration of the character.

Some familiar language such as “veto” for vétérinaire, is difficult to translate in English so it turned into “Where the hell is the vet?” to express the urgency of the mare giving birth.

Slurs against female jockeys:

Alexis, the character embodying the upper class and the rival of Louise, implies that she should be a hairdresser in the village as a girl and not a jockey.

Some sexual references:

When Louise arrives at the jockey school, she shares a room with two other young women who ask her if she has done it before (referring to sleeping with a man) and that it will be easy for it to happen at the school. As well one of the young women refers to having her period.

VIOLENCE

The film offers a restrained portrayal of non-graphic violence when, very briefly, Marquise is mishandled by Alexis, her new owner. He very briefly hits her with his riding crop. The same character is seen briefly whipping his horse during a race to win. As Marquise is obviously injured, a very brief shot shows the extent of its leg injury.

NUDITY

None

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Louise meets her prince charming Julien. She kisses him with love and shows him affection. Julien at one point is on top of Louise to kiss her.

One morning, after a party, they find themselves side by side under a blanket in the middle of the field. The rest can only be guessed.

HORROR

None

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

The film presents two situations that are upsetting for the main character:

- the passing away of her mom as Louise is still a child
- the passing away of her favourite horse Gracieuse who had to be sacrificed to save her filly Marquise that Louise raises with great care and love.

The insecurity brought on the difficult financial situation of the stud farm managed and owned by Louise's father Pierrot. Louise is worried, she asks her dad: *What do we do when we have no money?*

When Marquise is taken away from her because of Pierrot's debts, Louise cries: *"It's your fault!"*

A few other elements come to stir up Louise's preoccupation with the safety of her beloved Marquise:

- the fire that erupts in the stables causes the character some distress
- the separation from Marquise saddens Louise
- the suggestion that Alexis bully Marquise grieves Louise who tries to save Marquise by stealing her away.
- Marquise was intentionally drugged by Maxime, one of Alexis Lacassagne's hired agent.

Although there is no alcohol or tobacco abuse, it is to remark that the young jockeys- to-be (over 18 years of age) consume beer at a party and that champagne is being drunk to celebrate some of Louise's victories over her bad luck.

In conclusion:

This film is the **inspiring story** of a family who **perseveres in fighting** their bad luck until they are **rewarded** for their **courage** and for **keeping hope**. Louise the heroine of the film is very **engaging**: she shows **exceptional love to a horse**, Marquise, that means everything for her. She also privileges her love and respect for her father, for their long time friend. When Louise finds her soul mate, she continues to celebrate the memory and legacy of her mom.

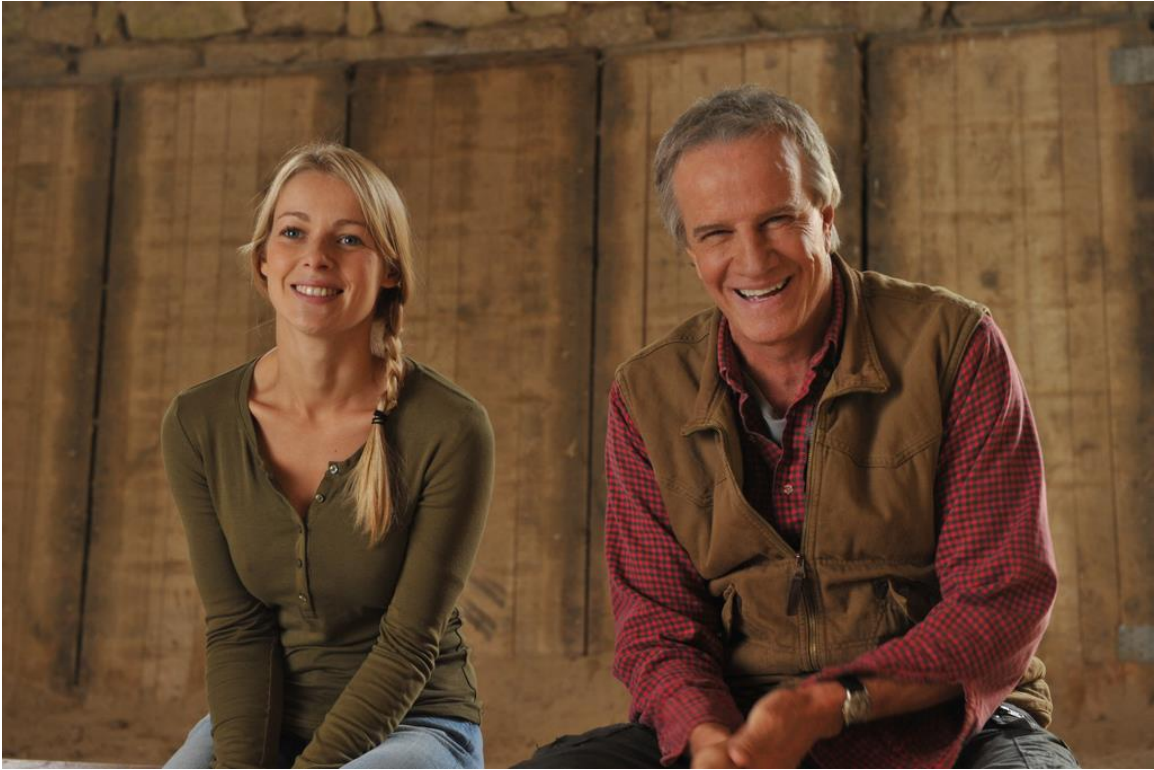
The film morality: never give up even in the thick of the blows of bad luck! "They can knock you down but they can't knock you out!"

PICTURES FROM THE FILM



Louise grooms Marquise with love

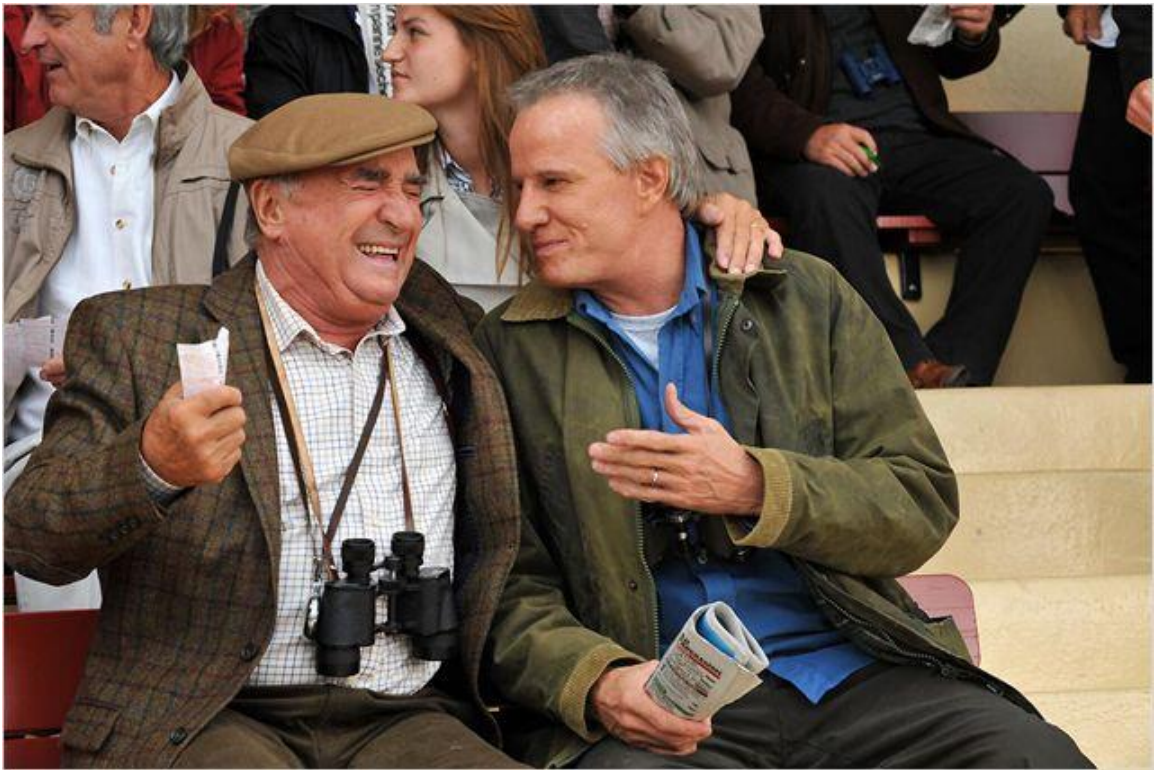




A moment of bonding between Louise and her dad Pierrot



Louise with long time family friend Robert



Two great friends Robert and Pierrot attending a race



Louise and Marquise trying to win the race



Louise and her soul mate Julien



A montage of pictures from the film

