

AFTER LOVE

United Kingdom (2020) 89 minutes

Director: Aleem Khan

Cast: Joanna Scanlan (Mary), Nathalie Richard (Geneviève), Talid Ariss (Solomen)



Screening 7th September 2022 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

Set in the port town of Dover in the South-East of England, Mary Hussain suddenly finds herself a widow following the unexpected death of her husband. A day after the burial, she discovers he has a secret family just twenty-one miles across the English Channel in Calais.

Reviews



As the crow flies, only about 30 miles separate the port towns of Dover and Calais — a distance that, in many parts of the world, wouldn't span any greater culture shift than a slight tweak in accent.

When those miles are filled with the English Channel, however, opposite coastlines represent opposite worlds, where everything from language to sexual mores are poles apart. It's a short but jolting journey, an exercise in social and geographic disorientation that British-Pakistani filmmaker Aleem Khan probes to layered, thoughtful effect in his auspicious first feature *'After Love.'*

Guy Lodge, Variety

The debut feature from English-Pakistani filmmaker Aleem Khan is a tale of secrets and lies, a portrait of people caught between identities and cultures.

At its heart is a constrained yet wonderfully expressive performance by the versatile Joanna Scanlan, here offering a masterclass in the dramatic power of understatement ... English, French and Urdu are spoken, but it's notable just how much Scanlan says without words, her eyes telegraphing earth-shaking revelations even as her lips remain sealed.

By contrast, Richard speaks and gestures freely, while Ariss does a remarkable job of capturing both the anger (in one shocking scene, he spits in his mother's face) and the anguish of a young man torn between his parents, his sexuality, his home.

Mark Kermode, Observer Film Critic

Film Facts

- After Love won 6 British Independent Film Awards (BIFAs) and Joanna Scanlon won a BAFTA for Best Actress in a leading role for this film.
- Joanna Scanlan is a well-regarded character actor best known in the U.K. for her TV comedy work (*"Getting On," "The Thick of It"*) and an invaluable supporting presence in such British heritage pictures as *"Girl With a Pearl Earring"* and *"The Invisible Woman."* But she's never previously been gifted a film lead as demanding as Mary in *'After Love.'*
- *'After Love'* is Aleem Khan's debut feature film. He has Pakistani and English heritage.

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