

All About My Mother

[music: *Otra Vez Huyendo Y Sin Despedirme* by Alberto Iglesias]

Hello and welcome to another episode of the *nomadamin* English podcast. I'm *Amin Bahmani Yeganeh*, an English teacher and the founder of *nomadamin*. Every episode, a fascinating subject, well... at least fascinating to me, is chosen to help you improve your English, and gain new perspectives on the world. I, the storyteller, will be using intermediate English, to be accurate almost intermediate and at times with a **pinch** of higher-level language, to push you forward a little bit. But there's nothing to worry about. If you miss something, you can always skip back and listen again. Full transcripts are also offered at <http://nomadamin.com/podcast>.

[Introduction]

Today, we're discussing the movie *All About My Mother*, or originally *Todo Sobre Mi Madre*, by the iconic Spanish director, the man himself, El Señor *Pedro Almodóvar*. Well... I'm a huge fan of his, as you can hear the excitement in my voice, but that's not the only reason for today's episode. Obviously, he's achieved so much more than my interest. He's one of those directors with his own style, you know, his signature. I mean, once you've watched a couple of his movies, you can tell whether a movie is his or not. Now, what makes his cinema so unique? You'll **figure it out** in a bit. Don't go anywhere.

[Director]

Well... Let's see how we can get to know *Pedro Almodóvar* and his cinema a little bit better. His unique style is a **blend** of feminine characters, **vibrant** visuals and colors, surprising **twists** in the story, and I'd say a bit of **Hispanic** magic, which is usually known by the term 'magic realism', as you've perhaps heard in the literature world or maybe elsewhere. In terms of awards, he's also done an impressive job and won **quite a few** actually, including two Academy Awards, one for this very movie, *All About My Mother*, and one for another **masterpiece** named *Talk To Her*. There's even more, but I'm not gonna bore you by listing them now. I'm sure you can google it yourself.

[music: *La Mecanica Del Transplante* by Alberto Iglesias]

[Plot]

Now, what is this movie about? By the way, like always, I'm not gonna spoil it for you if you haven't already watched it. I mean, it's just the plot. Ok... The movie follows the story of *Manuela*, a nurse and a single mother who tragically loses her teenage son, *Esteban*. **In her grief**, she **sets out on a journey** to Barcelona to find *Esteban's transgender* father, *Lola*, whom his son never knew. Along the way, *Manuela* meets all sorts of characters who challenge her **perceptions** of motherhood, love, and even identity. The movie explores

complex human relationships and is a **testament** to the director's unique cinematic style.

[Concepts]

One of the main concepts of the movie is the idea of motherhood in its various forms. *Almodóvar* **portrays** motherhood not just as a biological relationship, but as a **bond** that goes beyond gender, social norms, and even death.

The other one, I'd say, is the idea of self-discovery. As *Manuela* faces the challenges in her life, she learns to **embrace** her own strength and **resilience**. This message is beautifully captured in one of the movie's most memorable quotes which goes: 'Life goes on. It always does. Until it doesn't.', which, by the way, I **wasn't supposed to** quote until the next part of this episode, but who cares?! Right!? I was gonna mention it anyway.

[Quotes]

Ok... now it's the actual time for me to quote a few lines from the movie, the English translations of course, giving you a taste of it:

- *Agrado: Well, as I was saying, it costs a lot to be **authentic**, ma'am. And you can't be **stingy** with it because you are more authentic the more you **resemble** what you've dreamed of being.*

Here's another one,

- *Huma Rojo: There are people who think that children are made in a day. But it takes a long time, a very long time. That's why it's so awful to see your child's blood on the ground. A stream that flows for a minute yet costs us years. When I found my son, he was lying in the middle of the street. I **soaked** my hands in his blood and I licked them. Because it was mine. Animals lick their young, don't they? I'm not **disgusted** by my son. You don't know what it's like.*

And finally,

- *Huma Rojo: But can you act?*
*Manuela: I can lie very well, and I'm used to **improvising**.*

[music: *Tjabone* by *Ismaël Lô*]

[Reviews]

Now, let's take a look at some reviews. Critics, all over the world, and not just in Spain, have **praised** the movie for its emotional depth, **stunning** visuals, and **compelling** performances. *Roger Ebert*, the American movie critic from the *Chicago Sun-Times*, described it as 'a film of great beauty and great heart.'

Also, as mentioned before, the movie won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2000, **cementing** *Almodóvar's* status as a master moviemaker.

And last but not least, I'm **working my ass off** to make you this episode for a reason, aren't I? I mean, it's definitely one of my all-time favorites. So, there you go, you've got your guarantee now.

[Other Movies/Books]

For those of you who have already watched and enjoyed *All About My Mother*, or now have decided to do so, having listened to this **convincing** episode to this point, I have some more recommendations from *Pedro Almodóvar's* works. For me, the other must-watch movies of his are *Talk to Her* and *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*. I think, either of the two movies also **showcases** his cinema. But that's not all. There's also a short movie and a book I wanna give a **shout-out** to. The short movie is called *The Human Voice*, which to my own surprise, has the same qualities as his long, I mean normally long, movies. And perhaps more importantly for you as English learners, this one is in English, and not Spanish. So, you wouldn't need the subtitles or anything. Now, the book I told you about... it's a kind'a unique short story book, a mixture of his autobiography and some fictional stories, named *The Last Dream*. And **I'm tellin' ya**, it's nothing short of his movies, some might even say better than them, so much so that, at some points, it feels like he himself has been more into writing than movie making.

So... this part got longer than I expected, but honestly, I couldn't have not mentioned any of these. But, I think you're **all set** for now. Who knows!? Maybe you **go after** some more yourself.

[Closing]

And that brings us to the end of this episode. [I] hope it helps you improve your English and have a good time in front of the magic box.

At the end, let me remind you that the *nomadamin* podcast is and will be free to make high-quality education accessible to everyone. So, if you enjoy listening to this podcast, please make a donation using the button on the player or the link in the description to support the channel and play your part. I would also sincerely appreciate it if you **spread the words** about the podcast by sharing it with your friends and other English learners.

With the hope that this episode has given you an idea for the next movie you wanna watch, until next time, **adios!**

Words List

a pinch of: a small amount of something

to figure out: to solve a problem or discover the answer to a question

blend: combination, mixture

vibrant: full of energy and life

twist: a sudden change in a story that is surprising

Hispanic: of or relating to Latin American or Spain

quite a few: many

masterpiece: a work of great artistry

in one's grief: one's great sadness, especially at the death of someone

to set out on a journey: to leave a place and begin a journey

transgender: someone whose gender is now different from the one the doctor gave them when they were born

perception: a belief or opinion

testament: proof

to portray: to describe

to embrace: to accept, to welcome

resilience: the ability to be happy again after something difficult has happened

to be supposed to: to be expected

authentic: original

stingy: ungenerous

to resemble: to look like, to have a similar appearance

to soak: to make something very wet

disgusted: feeling extreme dislike

to improvise: to create and perform without preparation

to praise: to admire, to hail

compelling: convincing, persuasive

to cement: to make something stronger

to work one's ass off: to work very hard

convincing: compelling, persuasive

to showcase: to exhibit, to display

shout-out: a public expression of thanks, admiration, etc.

I'm tellin' ya: used to emphasize that what you are saying is true

all set: when someone is all set, they do not need more help

to go after: to pursue someone or something

to spread the word: to communicate a message to a lot of people

adiós: a Spanish word to say goodbye