

WIP C The Little One



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Russia

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME: Drama | 35mm | Russian | 100 mins

DIRECTOR:

Sergey DVORTSEVOY

PRODUCER:

ZHU Li

WIP GOALS:

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival screening

PRODUCTION BUDGET:

US\$ 3,000,000

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2008 *Tulpan*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

A story about Ayka, an illegal immigrant woman worker in Moscow who gives birth, abandons the child and then tries to get back to her baby.

SYNOPSIS

Ayka, an illegal immigrant worker in Moscow, gives birth to a baby and then flees out of fear of being discovered by Kurban, who controls a chain of illegal immigrants' business colluding with local police department, criminals and immigration office. If discovered, she would be sent back to Kyrgyzstan since people would consider an unwed Kyrgyz girl who gave birth in Moscow to be an utter disgrace. As Ayka continues her daily routine of three different jobs, her body changes due to post-pregnancy hormones. Through her pet shop responsibilities of looking after a mother dog and her puppies and her family's call, Ayka develops an urge to find her abandoned child. However, only after she tries to get her boy back and is rejected does she realise the birth itself was illegal, performed by a doctor for an under-the-table payment. As she fears that Kurban will discover the whole story, she has no option but to turn to local police officer Victor. Only then do we know that he raped Ayka 10 months ago and fathered the child...

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

With news spreading across the country of the so-called "low-class population" being driven out of Beijing, with rich people like Michael Tien Puk-sun experiencing what it is like to live in poverty in a thought-provoking reality show *Rich Mate Poor Mate*, and with the global film industry gradually redirecting its camera toward grave differences between rich and poor, Ayka tells an astonishing yet brutal tale that embodies the pain of all of these issues.

In giving birth to, abandoning and then trying to get back to her child, Ayka, a typical illegal immigrant woman worker reveals Moscow's unspeakable underground world of corruption, disruption and desire. Following her own struggle and endeavor, what we try to uncover is not only Ayka's tragic fate as an illegal immigrant and a woman who was raped, but also aims a panoramic image of inequality across different classes, races and countries.

DIRECTOR

Sergey DVORTSEVOY

Sergey Dvortsevov is a globally known and award-winning Russian director. His films immediately garnered international acclaim, receiving prizes and recognition at festivals around the world, including the nomination of *Bread Day* (1998) for the prestigious Joris Ivens Award at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam. His subjects – people living in and around a Russia in transition – try in their individual ways to eke out an existence. His first feature, *Tulpan* (2008) won Un Certain Regard Award at the 61st Cannes Film Festival, Best Director and Tokyo Grand Prix at Tokyo International Film Festival 2008.

PRODUCER

ZHU Li

Zhu Li is senior partner and producer at Juben Pictures. She joined Juben Pictures, creator of one of the top-grossing Chinese blockbusters, *American Dreams in China*, in 2013, and was involved in the award-winning Chinese film *12 Citizens* (2014) as Associate Producer. In 2016, she produced the China-U.S. co-production *Meiduo*, that was adapted from the internet best-seller set in Tibet.

She is also the producer of Chinese-Spanish co-production *My Team vs. Real Madrid* and a sequel to the award-winning Chinese blockbuster *Wolf Totem*; both are set to start principal photography in 2018.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Beijing Juben Production Company

Juben Pictures, founded in 2012, is a film production company specializing in developing sensitive but sensational IP, which also comply with mainstream values. Juben's business includes investment in film and television production, talent management and distribution. Through 2013-2017, Juben has invested and produced over 10 theatrical films and 5 web-series, including the blockbuster *American Dreams in China*, the award-winning film *12 Citizens*, and the upcoming big-budget China-Europe co-production *My Team VS. Real Madrid*, as well as the sequel of renowned Chinese bestseller, *Wolf Totem*, which was first helmed by French director Jean Jacques Annaud in 2015.