

From Worlds Apart

Synopsis

Power and corruption are rampant in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where two lovers from different social classes struggle to stay together.

Pablo Valdez, a widower, is an uneducated, wealthy land baron. His youngest son, Carlos, is in love with Maria, a simple country girl and the adopted daughter of Jose Agate, Pablo's chauffeur. Pablo disapproves of his son's relationship with Maria, who he suspects was the product of his own wife's adulterous affair with Jose. Pablo, wanting to put a stop to his son's affair with Maria, sends Carlos to college in Miami and arranges for him to stay with friends, hoping he will forget Maria and find a suitable mate with a similar background.

Letters exchanged between the couple are purposely intercepted by their families, and Maria's hope for Carlos' return fades. The sudden disappearance of Jose leaves Maria in complete disarray. Pablo's older son, Carrasco, comes to Maria's aid. He pretends to be a friend, but instead takes advantage of her frail condition and rapes her. Maria runs away and accepts shelter in a bordello, where she is lured into a world of corruption, drugs, and prostitution. Carlos returns from Miami, and to his disappointment finds Maria a changed woman, fallen into a web of evil.

Carlos, pressured by his father's determined opposition to his son's relationship with Maria, leaves for Miami. Heart-broken and confused, Maria feels the need to confess her sins to the local priest, who reveals to her that Carlos is her half-brother. Fearing for her life, she flees to Miami in search of Carlos and takes a job as a hotel service maid in order to make a living. Pablo orders Carrasco to track Maria down before she finds Carlos.

Early one morning, while cleaning one of the rooms, Maria sees Carlos in bed with a tramp. Carlos stops her as she tries to run away and she tells him that Pablo murdered her father. Carlos seeks help from Martinez, a close friend of the family, to act as a mediator. Martinez, a hit man working for Pablo, attempts to kill Maria, but in a twist of fate, he dies in the struggle.

In search of the truth and an explanation, Maria and Carlos return to Santa Fe to confront Pablo, the source of their problems. In the confrontation, Maria kills Pablo in self-defense. Maria is found innocent at her murder trial and, in the process, discovers that she and Carlos are not blood related.