



Elena

Spring
Season
2013

Release: 2012

Cert (UK):12A

Runtime: 109 mins

Director: Andrey Zvyagintsev

Language: Russian with English subtitles

Cast: Nadezhda Markina, Andrey Smirnov and Aleksey Rozin

Elena and Vladimir are an older couple, who come from very different backgrounds. Vladimir is a wealthy and cold man. Elena comes from a modest family and is a docile wife. They have met late in life and each one has children from previous marriages.

Elena's son is unemployed, unable to support his own family and he is constantly asking Elena for money. Vladimir's daughter is a careless young woman who has a distant relationship with her father.



A heart attack puts Vladimir in hospital, where he realizes that his remaining time may be limited. A brief but somehow tender reunion with his daughter leads him to think about what he should do with his wealth. Back home he announces it to Elena. The shy and submissive housewife then comes up with a plan to give her son and grandchildren a real chance in life.

The resulting film is a gripping, almost film noir drama about family values, set against modern Russia where money has become all important, people mean nothing.

Elena is played by Nadezhda Markina who has won several awards at festivals around the world for her acting.



The director, Andrey Zvyagintsev, has only made three films, but has won critical acclaim for all three. His first, *'The Return'* (2003), went down well here in Keswick and earned him the European discovery of the year award; his second, *'The Banishment'*, a nomination for Palme D'Or at Cannes, and *'Elena'* has won him their 'Un Certain Regard' award, plus other awards around the world.