

The Olive Harvest – Synopsis

Writer and director Hanna Elias tells a complex love story in his first feature film, *The Olive Harvest*, amidst the backdrop of intoxicating landscapes in Palestine.

Upon his release from an Israeli prison, older brother Mazen (Mazen Saade) develops romantic feelings for his childhood friend, Raeda (Raeda Adun). However, Raeda is already engaged to Mazen's younger brother Taher (Taher Najeeb), their love kept a secret because of the tradition for the eldest brother to wed first.

The two brothers become estranged soon after reuniting as they struggle to win over Raeda's heart. Mazen, with his romantic poetry and simple love for the olive groves that provide his community and family with their livelihood, shares in Raeda's dreams to remain in the village and harvest the olives. Taher, on the other hand, prefers to live in the city and ambitiously seeks to contain the growing Jewish settlement of the territories as a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. Although his love for Raeda is strong, Taher's devotion toward this cause leads him to neglect his commitment to her.

Unsure of her true feelings, the beautiful Raeda is forced into making a decision by the feuding brothers and by her authoritative father. Each of the three central characters find themselves painfully torn between conflicting choices in this tale of love and loyalty to family, to those that they love, and to the land that they are connected to.

More than a mere love story, *The Olive Harvest* explores the dynamics of human relationships – between brother and brother, woman and man, father and daughter, sister and sister, and person to land.