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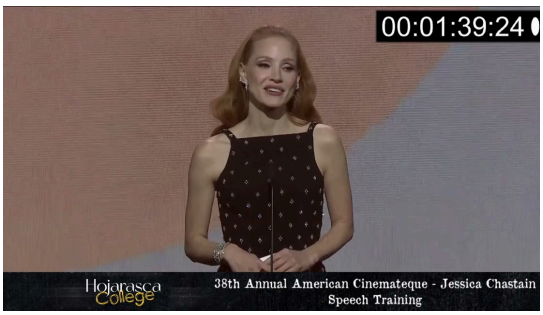
38th Annual American Cinematheque – Jessica Chastain (2024)



Performer: Jessica Chastain

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00:00:00:00

- Once upon a time, in a small village at the edge of a vast forest, there lived a lineage of women, each with fire in her heart and dreams as big as the mountains.

00:00:18:16

- These women worked tirelessly, raising children on their own and providing them with every ounce of strength they had.

00:00:28:24

- Yet for all their resilience, they were bound by an invisible thread, a thread woven by society, tying them to roles they hadn't chosen, stripping away their freedoms, little by little.

00:00:47:07

- The first of these women had to abandon her education to care for a child she hadn't planned for.

00:00:55:07

- Her daughter followed down that path, and her daughter's daughter was also caught in that cycle.

00:01:05:08

- It was as if the forest surrounding these women grew thorns that kept them from venturing out beyond its borders, from seeing the world of possibility.

00:01:19:15

- For generations, this was their fate.

00:01:26:12

- An inherited curse, passed down like an unwanted legacy.

00:01:34:16

- But one day, a girl was born who dared to dream differently.

00:01:43:07

- She admired the women in her family for their strength, but she questioned why they had to bear these burdens alone.

00:01:54:15

- She believed there could be a world beyond the boundaries of their small village.

00:02:00:22

- And with each story of struggle, and with each act of courage that she witnessed, she gathered the strength and made a vow.

00:02:11:15

- She would break the cycle.

00:02:16:07

- Growing up, every woman in my family faced societal expectations that confined them to narrow roles.

00:02:25:19

- My great-grandmother, my grandmother, my aunt, my mother all became mothers before the age of 17.

00:02:34:20

- In a low-income household, without access to health education or birth control, they faced realities they hadn't chosen but were conditioned by society to accept.

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