

## **“The Visitor”**

Professor Walter Vale (Richard Jenkins) is a widower who has long since banked the fires of enthusiasm for life. Uneventful routine is both his curse and his solace. The events that will change his life begin when he is unable to talk his way out of giving a paper at a symposium in New York City. Forced to leave his university sanctuary, he intends to stay in the apartment he has long maintained in New York City. A surprise is in store for him.

Opening the door to his apartment he is startled to find it occupied by a young Syrian man and his Senegalese girlfriend. They are equally startled since they have been paying rent to a scam artist who they thought was an authorized leasing agent. From this awkward beginning emerges a unique and lovingly crafted tale.

In one of the first cracks in his shell of indifference Vale allows them to stay in the apartment until they find another place. It is a decision which will change his life. Zainab (Panas Guris) is a quiet and self-possessed young woman who designs and sells her own jewelry as a sidewalk vendor. Tarik (Haz Sleimen) is a sunny and outgoing Syrian musician who plays drums in small combo. Vale, who has half-heartedly struggled for years to master the piano, is gradually drawn into Tarik’s love of music but everything is threatened when Tarik is picked up by immigration authorities.

Vale now bends all his efforts to save Tarik and finds himself meeting someone else outside his normal orbit when Tarik’s mother comes to New York to rescue her son. This leads to something else Vale had never expected. Anchored by a flawless performance by Richard Jenkins, “The Visitor” glows with radiant humanity.

(Amazon Prime)