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Adelmo

(ITALIAN-COLOR)

Produced by Nuovo Film. Directed by Rocco Mortelliti. Stars Rocco Mortelliti, Francesca Topi, Vincenzo De Angelis. Screenplay, Rocco Mortelliti, Andreina Camilleri, Roberto Pagni; camera (color), Felice De Maria; editor, Marcello Malvestito. Reviewed at Sorrento Film Festival, Oct. 9, 1987. Running time: 103 MINS.

Adelmo Rocco Mortelliti
Paola Francesca Topi
Mayor Vincenzo De Angelis
Mother Rina Franchetti

Also with: Stefania Mortelliti, Giovanni Zaniboni, Marlo D'Orazio, Pietro Bontempo, Archimede Fala, and Bernardo Zeppari.

Sorrento — Rocco Mortelliti's "Adelmo" didn't make the grade its first time out in the Sorrento De Sica competition for young directors. The meager turnout for its festival screening thinned out noticeably while the lights were down.

The 28-year old Mortelliti directs his own script and takes the lead as the village idiot of a small hill town near Rome. He lives in poverty with his aged mother, also an idiot, who recites Ave Marias when she is not beating Adelmo or eating his food. The sleazy mayor (Vincenzo De Angelis) has been cheating them out of money they are owed by the government and joins the general abuse and mistreatment Adelmo suffers as he wheels around town on his bicycle.

The unhappy equilibrium is upset by the arrival in town of Paola (Francesca Topi) as the town's new doctor. She takes an interest in Adelmo, though not from pity or concern, but because he resembles her ex-lover, recently killed in a car wreck. Adelmo follows Paola around too, though they never speak to each other and succeed only in arousing the ire of Paola's many suitors, including the mayor.

This jealousy only augments the daily violence and humiliation Adelmo suffers and, having finally had enough he retires to the woods for three days and emerges a true lunatic, assaulting his former tormentors with rocks and knives, but causing few injuries.

The townspeople assemble and chase Adelmo through the cobbled streets, when the film abruptly cuts to cameras and set equipment while Mortelliti/Director and Mortelliti/Adelmo ride off together into the sunset.

Abandoning the story was a wise choice, though it ought to have been attempted in the film's first scene rather than its last.

Lensing is tired and acting is universally insipid. Although shot for under \$150,000, "Adelmo" is no bargain.—*Newm.*