

"The Last Door"

Eugene O'Brien Has Role of Chivalrous Crook in Selznick's Picturization of Clever Story.

Reviewed by Mary Kelly.

Melodramatic, replete with double-crossings, miraculous escapes, identity surprises, "The Last Door" might be compared, without unfavorable insinuations, to a high-class serial-episode. In it is found that pleasant strain of romanticism, accompanying acts of daring and dishonesty that, to the imaginative, is sure of an appeal. In its very impossibility, its deviation from the staid, regular course of life as is known off the screen, lies the story's charm. There are one or two instances where this privilege of exaggeration has been abused, but with these exceptions, the whole picture is in one key. At these particular moments, such as the escape from the roof, facilitated by the immediate handiness of a step-ladder and also a later moment of melodrama when the lady, fleeing through an unknown passageway, finds her automobile waiting, a little more thorough directing could have succeeded in making these escapes less convenient and more plausible.

The leading role, an altogether likeable one, is handled lightly and swiftly by Eugene O'Brien. Not a great study in characterization nor a big outlet for emotionalism, it calls more for a show of unlagging action and a spirit of adventuresomeness. This spirit is more or less characteristic of the entire action and the entire cast. The winter sport scenes start the picture with a punch and the witty twists and turns keep up the speed of the story mentally as well as physically. Martha Mansfield proves a valuable aide to the star.

The Cast

"The Magnet".....Eugene O'Brien
Freddie Tripp.....Charles Craig
The Widow.....Nita Naldi
Mrs. Rogers.....Helen Pillsbury
Helen Rogers.....Martha Mansfield
Guest.....Katherine Perry
Colonel.....Warren Cook

Story by Ralph Ince and W. W. Foster.

Directed by Wm. P. S. Earle.

Scenario by Edward J. Montagne.

Length, Five Reels.

The Story

Somerset Carroll, popular guest at Mrs. Roger's reception, surprises the company by remarking that if he should meet the escaped convict who has been haunting the Rogers' neighborhood, he would help her instead of turning her over to justice. A little later when he is alone in the library and the others have gone out on a "hunt" for the criminal, a shabbily-dressed girl dashes in and asks his help in concealing her. The police are immediately on her trail and Somerset assists her in making an escape by skating across the pond and getting refuge in a remote farmhouse. Late at night, upon the arrival of the police, the two climb out of the window and taking the officers' machine make another getaway.

They arrive at Somerset's home and presently the girl announces that she has been playing a game just for fun, that she is Helen Rogers and is acting upon the suggestion of the others in impersonating the convict to see how far Somerset's generosity will go. Hereupon her host offers her a surprise by announcing that he is not really "Somerset Carroll," but that the real owner of this name is at his home, a prisoner. He decides to keep Helen there against her will and to visit the Rogers' home and relieve the family of their jewels, according to the nature of his profession. He is caught in the act by Helen who escapes from his home and follows. She shields him at the critical moment and just after he has left the Rogers' home, the real Somerset Carroll

arrives and exposes him. The police are summoned to run him down. Helen also visits him and begs him to reform. He eludes the officers by means of a shifting stairway and secret passageway under a pool. He promises to consider her advice, and the ending points to the development of a love affair.

Program and Exploitation Catchlines:

He Was a Crook With Everyone Except His Friends and the Girl He Loved. He Played Life Dangerously and Got a Thrill Out of Each Risk.

Eugene O'Brien in a Role of a Chivalrous Crook, Romantic, Fearless and at All Times Lovable.

Exploitation Angles: The title might be used in some way like this: "Make the door to the — — Theatre 'The Last Door' on your travels tonight. It was Eugene O'Brien's Passage to Freedom from the Law. Make It Your Passage to Freedom from Cares." Be sure to differentiate between this vehicle and the type of feature with which the star's name is usually associated, calling attention to the fact that it is a society crook story.

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