

# Once in a Blue Moon

THE MOON IS BLUE

(Preminger-Herbert-United Artists)

THE cause of an awful lot of talk about indecency, in the United States last year, *The Moon is Blue* has the wittiest, most amusing script I've listened to for ages; and if I say that a hard-to-please colleague who had read the play responded to the film quite as readily as I did you'll realise that it is also put across rather more than competently. This is the sort of film, in fact, that (like the events it portrays) turns up only once in a blue moon.

*The Moon is Blue*, which is adapted from the F. Hugh Herbert play and directed by Otto Preminger, is a comedy about sex. It is set almost entirely in a living room, and the action leads to nothing more torrid than a mild kiss or two and one undeserved black eye. A young architect, Donald Gresham (William Holden), "picks up" a young girl, Patty O'Neill (Maggie McNamara) and takes her to his flat, where she cooks dinner for him and for an unexpected visitor, David Slater (David Niven), the father of Don's jilted girl friend, Cynthia (Dawn Addams). Don is the sort

**BAROMETER**  
FINE: "The Moon Is Blue."  
FAIR TO FINE: "Chance of a Lifetime."  
FAIR: "The Ninth Commandment."

of fellow who admits, when Patty asks him, that he might try to seduce her, but is prepared to promise not to. Patty is the sort of girl who asks such questions, in a way that quite disarms both Don and the charming but dissipated David. Her defence is that it's better to be preoccupied than occupied with sex. "I'll be damned if I know," says Don, "if you're just incredibly naive or whether you're ribbing me," and while I suppose naive must be the word for it, it seemed to me at times not quite the word. Miss McNamara, a newcomer to films, plays Patty in the most engaging fashion, with Mr. Holden and Mr. Niven doing excellently opposite her.

This is a film for adults and particularly—dare I say it?—for civilised adults. That much understood, I can't for the life of me see what all the fuss is about. For in spite of such naughty words as seduction, virgin and pregnant, there wasn't a mouthful I found nasty in the whole delicious confection.



MAGGIE McNAMARA  
Better preoccupied than occupied

same strain to sustain the mood at the theatre, my cigar had grown to quite Churchillian proportions by screening time. But it soon dissolved into thin air leaving not a whiff behind.

*Chance of a Lifetime* is about four years old, but it was well worth waiting for. It tells what happens when the employees of a small implement works accept the challenge of the managing director (Basil Radford) and take his place. No doubt it was meant to have a "message," and the management is shown to be indispensable. But this isn't all that it shows—its picture of the workers' efforts when they get their chance, and its "exposure" (if you like) of the way banks and steel mills throw spanners in the works because they don't like workers' control, could as well have been advertised in a Left Wing journal. I mention this not to grind an axe but as a mild protest against the idea that the film preaches at the proletariat.

Someone has called it, fairly, "a mild and sensible essay" on employer-employee relations; but quite apart from that it is a well-made, well-acted and above all, authentic film about life in a small factory. I've seen nothing more true-to-life than some of the shots—of the yard, for instance, with the men coming in on their bikes. Bernard Miles directed, took a leading part, and shared the script with Walter Greenwood—who, you may remember, wrote *Love on the Dole*.

## CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

(Pilgrim Pictures)

I WENT to the Wellington preview of *Chance of a Lifetime* half expecting a one-sided lecture on industrial relations. The invitation assured me that the film would do much to counter any unrest and discontent among employees in present-day industry, and with more in the

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