

# OUT OF ITS CLASS

## STREET OF SHADOWS

(Anglo-Amalgamated British-Nassour Pictures)

NOT every student of the Superior Criticism, with one eye on John McCarten and the other on Alfred Hitchcock, will agree with my grading for *Street of Shadows*. Looking at it in cold blood five days afterwards I'm not sure that I do myself, for it's easy to pick holes in this modest thriller. It smudges the story line by relying at one point too heavily on suggestion, it has some loose ends, its love story is rather feeble, and so on. Yet its merits are exceptional and exciting, and its climax has such intensity that for comparisons I have to recall some of the masterpieces of the screen.

The stars of this piece are Cesar Romero (as Luigi, a pin-table saloon proprietor), Kay Kendall (a married woman with whom he falls in love), Edward Underdown (a police inspector) and Simone Silva (a former girl friend of Luigi who runs around a bit).

Below these in the cast list and too little known to get into the advertise-

### BAROMETER

FAIR TO FINE: "Street of Shadows."  
OVERCAST: "Miss Sadie Thompson."  
MAINLY FAIR: "Flight to Tangier."

ments is Victor Maddern, who, as Luigi's likeable lame assistant, Limpy, just about carries the film (as an acting vehicle), and has enough energy to spare to do a good job also in a second part as Miss Kendall's husband. The film, which is based on Laurence Meynell's novel *The Creaking Chair*, starts off by creating a vivid picture of the whole sordid Soho set-up with which the story is concerned, offering as it paces smoothly along a worthwhile clue or two as well as several red herrings. Rather late in the day a woman is murdered. Luigi heads for hide-out, and from then on it's up to Mr. Underdown.

I don't propose to lighten the darkness—and there's plenty of it—by explaining just why the ending that emerges from all this should entice you forward, dry-lipped, on to the edge of your seat. That wouldn't be fair. But I can say it's due largely to the well-drawn and well-played part of Limpy, the sort of character you really care about, who lifts the film out of the usual



SIMONE SILVA, VICTOR MADDERN

thriller class and makes it a small human document. But it's partly due also to the work of several people who never cross the camera's path: the director, and scriptwriter, Richard Vernon; the photographer, Phil Grindrod; Eric ("Meet Mr. Callaghan") Spear, who

wrote the music; and Tommy Reilly, who (with his mouth organ) helped to put it across. Here, as in other parts of the film (the big saloon sequence, for instance), they seem a beautifully balanced combination of talents with a very firm grip on their material.

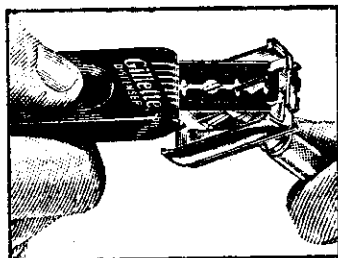
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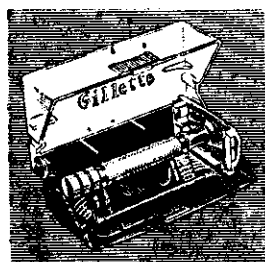
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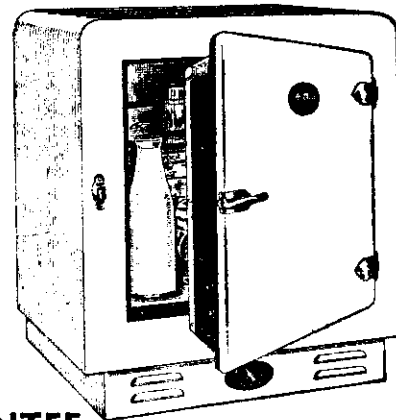
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