

Trouble in paradise



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Review of ' Trouble in Paradise' ' Trouble in Paradise' was the first non musical comedy film, by German born director, Ernest Lubitsch in 1932. Though, Lubitsch started his career as an actor, he went on to become acclaimed director of comedy films, specializing in silent, musical and non musical comedy cinema that were full of satirical punch at the social hypocrisy. ' Trouble in Paradise' is a romantic comedy, set against the backdrop of lover's paradise, Venice and Paris. The film is a fast paced dramatic escapades of the two con artists, Gaston, the protagonist and his accomplice, Lily, who make their living through swindling others. This is one of Lubitsch's best and the most favorite film and had chosen the main character because he liked to ' rehabilitate obscure European plays'. It was a great box office success and had won critical appreciations from the critics. The popular genre of screwball comedy of the 1930s in Hollywood was given a new dimension by Lubitsch in this film. While the normal screwball films were racy slapstick romantic comedies that just hinted subtly at sex and united the lovers only at the end, ' Trouble in Paradise' reveled in sexual innuendoes and larceny. The two main characters of the film were lovers as well as partners in crime whose dedication for their work was equaled only by their passion for each other. Throughout the film, with suggestive dialogues delivered with orchestrated grace and finesse, Lubitsch has not only expanded the idea of thievery into a glamorized activity, he has also shown that sexual exploits can also become intrinsic part of the overall plot. All the works of Lubitsch have his special signature ' Lubitsch touch' that never fails to keep his audience very firmly to the ground realities. This film too has its share. In fact, at the start of the film itself, the romantic gondola of Venice is shown as a carrier of garbage! Indeed, the juxtaposition of the

extreme is the highlight of Lubitsch films which he carries with aplomb. The film is representative of the artifice that a man is forced to portray in order to accomplish his nefarious intentions. Posing as aristocratic Baron, made it easier for Gaston to fool his intended victim, Madame Mariette Colet and steal her riches. He was an honest thief because he had accepted the fact unlike 'Giron', accountant of Colet, who had been ripping his boss for years and yet always pretended to be her well wisher. He even wanted to report Gaston to the police for the same crime that he had been committing for years!

The film is aptly titled because it is the story of two lovers who are in the idyllic setting of Venice and then Paris, both considered as paradise for people in love. But while there, another woman comes between the two and causes momentary trouble between them. The misdeeds of the main characters are overshadowed by wit and glamour of the script. It cannot be called escapist but may have elements of social satire because it has shown sexual exploits, infidelity and deceit as part of normal behaviour within the societal norms which may be construed as immoral and highly unethical.