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Aar Paar (Cupid's Arrow)

Hindi/1954/B&W

Direction: Guru Dutt

Screenplay: Nabendu Ghosh

Dialogue: Abrar Alvi

Music: O.P. Nayyar

Lyrics: Majrooh

Camera: V.K. Murthy

Editing: Y.G. Chauhan

Sound: V.V. Gandhi

Produced by: Guru Dutt Films

Cast: Guru Dutt, Shyama, Shakila, Johnny Walker, Jagdish Sethi, Jagdeep, Rajendra, Bir Sakhuja, Rashid Khan, Noor, Uma Devi

Kalu is a taxi-driver in Bombay, who has served a short sentence for rash driving. Coming out of the jail, Kalu goes to his sister's house where he used to stay before. But his brother-in-law will not have him there any more, and Kalu finds himself on the streets. However, he makes friends with a street urchin, Elaichi, who finds him shelter in front of a shop, where he can at least sleep in the night.

One day Kalu comes across Nikki, the daughter of Lalaji, the owner of an automobile repair workshop. Though the encounter is initially not friendly at all, it does not take long for the two young people to fall deeply in love with each other. Among Kalu's other associates is a glamorous dancer who performs in a floorshow in a hotel. She is also in love with Kalu, though Kalu, of course, does not reciprocate the feeling. He is an occasional visitor in the hotel where the girl dances, and is also friendly with the Parsi barman, Rustom. Kalu is aware that the owner of the hotel is actually a smuggler and is using the hotel as a

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front. After getting to know Nikki, Kalu decides to try for a mechanic's job in her father's workshop.

Kalu and Nikki's romance deepens, but Lalaji catches them together and promptly sacks Kalu. As the owner of the workshop, he does not want a mere mechanic to associate with his daughter. Nikki also finds out that Kalu has a police record, and feels disillusioned about him. In the meanwhile, the owner of the hotel offers a job of a taxi-driver to Kalu, which he accepts. Some time later, Kalu gets an opportunity to prove to Nikki that his jail sentence was not for any criminal activity, but only for rash driving. Nikki is convinced that he is telling the truth. Kalu, who is very much in love with her, dares her to elope with him that very night, for Lalaji will be more difficult to win over in a hurry. But Nikki is scared of her father, and finds it difficult to take such a

Shyama and Guru Dutt in Aar Paar



Guru Dutt

drastic step. Disappointed and hurt, Kalu goes away, and the dancer immediately tries to make the most of the opportunity thus presented to her. But Kalu is not really interested. Though he flirts with her, it is just his way of taking his misfortune in his stride. he even helps Rustom to woo a Christian girl with a fat mother and innumerable brothers and sisters.

Elaichi, who has remained a staunch friend, brings Nikki one day to the hotel, in the hope of bringing about a reconciliation between her and Kalu. Now it is Kalu's turn to play hard to get, and he insults and taunts his old girlfriend. Unfortunately, around this time, the hotel owner and Kalu have a disagreement over the nature of the work that Kalu is expected to do for him. Following the quarrel, the hotel owner kidnapes Nikki in an effort to pressurize Kalu into cooperating with him in a long-planned bank hold up. But Kalu, who refuses to become a criminal, runs away with the car and rescues Nikki. He also helps the police to arrest the gang of smugglers operating from the hotel. Now Lalaji has to change his opinion about Kalu, and agrees to give his daughter in marriage to him.