

Document Citation

Title	Assassins et voleurs (Killers and thieves)
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Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Assassins et voleurs (Lovers and thieves), Guitry, Sacha, 1957

Assassins et Voleurs

(Killers and Thieves)

(FRENCH)

Paris, June 11.

Gaumont release of CLM-SNEG production. Stars Michel Serrault, Jean Poiret; features Magali Noel, Clement Duhour, Zita Perzel. Written and directed by Sacha Guitry; camera, Paul Cotteret; editor, Paulette Robert; music, Jean Francaix. At Paramount, Paris. Running time, 85 MINS.

Philippe	Jean Poiret
Thief	Michel Serrault
Madeleine	Magali Noel
Walter	Clement Duhour
Kelptomaniac	Zita Perzel

Sacha Guitry returns to his pre-war obsessions of ironic comedy to make for one of his most adroit pix since the conflict. This elegantly immoral pic again raises Guitry's fine commentary and story telling techniques. Though dealing with a scabrous subject, it is cloaked in telling wit and emerges a comedy that might have a good chance in special U.S. situations.

Tale is told by a smooth, middle-aged man about to commit suicide. A burglar breaks in and he makes a pact with the intruder to help him do this thing and explains his story beforehand. Then, in a series of deft scenes, the plot is unfolded. The man, rich, young and adventurous, steals the wife of a boyhood acquaintance who had always bullied him. They carry on the flirtation under his nose until the husband comes back early one night. The man hides and the husband strangles the wife and is then shot by the man. In comes the burglar, who happened to also be robbing the house, and the man slips the gun in his pocket and escapes.

It is the same burglar listening to the story. The pic smoothly racks up these varying scenes until the cleverly cynical ending when the would-be suicide does away with the burglar and frees himself.

Guitry has bundled together many hilarious scenes such as a day in a rest-home full of zanies and the young man's criminal life. Though primarily a raconteur's pic, this packs a saucy, irreverent punch for the long hair set.

Though technical credits are ordinary, this does not impair the telling. Jean Poiret and Michel Serrault are just right as the young man-turned-thief and the pro second-story man. Remainder of cast is nearly perfect, and it adds up to a successful, adult comedy.

Mosk.