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THE TAILOR FROM TORJOK

Scenario

Takes place during the N.E.P. period. Petia Peletkin works as a pattern cutter for the widow Chirinkina. The widow decides to marry him, despite the fact that Petia is in love with young Katia who works for an independent merchant. On the day he is to marry the widow, Petia goes to buy his fiancée a present. At the station, he meets a woman who has missed the train to Leningrad because she didn't have enough money to buy a ticket. Petia comes to her rescue, and gives her the money he was going to use to buy the present for his fiancée. In return, the woman gives him a ticket for the State Lottery. When he returns home with the State Lottery ticket and no present, Petia and his fiancée have a fight. Petia runs from the house to escape the furious guests. He hides in a freight car, and ends up in Leningrad. The day of the Lottery drawing, Petia's ticket is drawn, and he wins 100,000 roubles, but when he goes to look for his ticket, he finds he's left it at the widow's. In the meantime, the unknown woman who gave him the ticket tries in vain to recuperate it. But in Torjo,, the ticket has gone from the widow, to the merchant, who in turn has given it to pay Katia. Petia returns to Torjok to marry Katia. They win the prize money.

Soviet Opinions

What can you say about Soviet humor? In the Soviet Union, people laugh for the same reasons as people in other countries. A Russian Komsomol will die laughing at the sight of a fat man in a top hat and starched bib, walking down the street; the same portly person will split his sides at the sight of the young man in shorts coming off a Moscow streetcar. Both will laugh over the disparity between the type of dress and the context of the surroundings. For the same reasons you would laugh to see a man who walks around in a fur-lined coat in the heat of summer, or to see a man in January in a fine white suit. In short, it is a first reality. Since

Since the revolution, throngs of people unable to do productive work have applied themselves to the task of producing Soviet laughter -- the famous revolutionary "agit-satire".

It's easy to make someone cry. It's much more difficult to make him laugh. People often pretend ~~to cry~~ to cry -- they seldom pretend to laugh.

The TAILOR is our first successful comic film. Actually, our first success. The deluge of newspaper articles about comedies in planning, in pre-production, in production has been unleashed over the last two years. But authentic laughter in a Soviet film, from the beginning to end, is with us for the first time.

After THE CIGARETTE GIRL OF MOSSELPROM, a flabby work, THE TAILOR OF TARJOK comes as a pleasant surprise. The intrigue unfolds in a coherent manner, the action is brisk, if not sometimes too brisk. The film was made professionally by Protazanov, and reveals the range of his talent. Ilenskii has wiped out apprehension over his aptitude for screen performances since THE CIGARETTE GIRL. He absolutely must get rid of his beard and mustache which only weigh down his lively expressive face. Otherwise, he has a sickly look -- grimaces rather than mime, a tickle rather than an authentic laugh. In THE TAILOR Ilinskii plays with his face and wins.

The young Marelskaia plays her role in a simple, magnetic way. With a minimum of means (which is the most difficult) she has made the spectator her friend, provoking a smile from the beginning. Ktorov is weaker than in THE SUMMONS. It seems that the role of rogue and refined criminal will stay with him. Among the "old comedians", Birman is the most expressive. The most important, the TAILOR OF TARJOK collective, was infected by the germ of laughter and it's easy now to make it serve Soviet art.

--Mikhail Kolstov/Pravda/1925