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ON STAGE

("No Exit")

A most unusual type of drama has recently raised a variety of comments and eyebrows in the Los Angeles vicinity. Written by John Paul Sartre, exponent of the new French philosophy "Existentialism", the play is entitled appropriately "No Exit". It is a study of three condemned souls being forced to acknowledge the accusations of conscience.

A single set is utilized throughout the entire performance which lasts without interruption for an hour and a half. Only four characters are in the cast. The scene is that of a shabby hotel room, containing a few articles of dilapidated furniture, and no mirrors, forcing the inhabitants to look at each other throughout eternity. Lighting throughout the play consists of three glaring electric bulbs.

"No Exit" is a tragedy without tears. Neither is there any comedy relief. There is little action and no intricately conceived plot, yet the audience's attention is sustained without the usual recourse to standard stage requisites.

There are three main characters, a French collaborationist, a lesbian and a ravishingly beautiful nymphomaniac, all of whom are dead. The fourth member of the cast, an impudent bell boy, is incidental. He merely escorts these oddly assorted people into the dingy hotel room, which symbolizes Hell.

The characters are ushered in one at a time, first the French collaborator, then the daughter of Lesbos, and last, the beautiful but completely unprincipled nymphomaniac.

After acquainting themselves with one another, their drab surroundings, and the fact that they are doomed to live together henceforth without even the relief of slumber in this garishly illuminated, dreary little room, they begin to exchange confidences.

The man, a journalist, who considered himself a hero most of his life, besides being a collaborationist, mistreated his wife most shamefully. The detailed, half-boastful confession of his cruelty shows him in his true calibre. His great desire is to convince himself and everyone else that he is not a coward.



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