

= Remember Last Night ? =

Remember Last Night ? is a 1935 American mystery comedy film directed by James Whale . The film , based on the novel The Hangover Murders , is about the investigation of the murder of one of a group of friends . The survivors are unable to recall the events of the night of the murder because they were all too drunk . Remember Last Night ? features an ensemble cast headed by Edward Arnold , Constance Cummings , and Robert Young .

Whale convinced Universal Studios head Carl Laemmle , Jr. to buy the screen rights to the novel so Whale could avoid directing Dracula 's Daughter , as he wished not to direct another horror film so soon after shooting Bride of Frankenstein . Initial drafts of the screenplay were deemed unsuitable under the Production Code because of the focus on excessive drinking . The novel 's original title was also unsuitable because of the word " hangover " . Following revisions , the film was approved and was released on November 4 , 1935 to mixed reviews and poor box office results .

= = Plot = =

To celebrate their six @-@ month anniversary , Long Island socialites Tony and Carlotta Milburn arrange a wild drinking party with friends , culminating in a stop at the restaurant owned by Faronea . They are unaware that Faronea is conspiring with Baptiste Bouclier , the chauffeur of party host Vic Huling , to kidnap Vic . The next morning the Milburns awake hung over to find Vic dead from a gunshot through the heart and his wife Bette missing . Tony calls his friend , district attorney Danny Harrison to investigate . Bette arrives with Billy Arliss at whose home she had slept . Because of their excessive drinking , no one can remember anything about what had happened the night before . As circumstantial evidence mounts against Tony , he calls in hypnotist Professor Karl Jones to help everyone try to recover their memories . Just as the professor is about to reveal the murderer , he is murdered .

Next to be killed is restaurateur Faronea . After Tony and Carlotta eavesdrop on him conferring with an accomplice at his restaurant , Faronea discovers them . Tony bluffs that he knows about the kidnapping plot and the accomplice murders Faronea . The couple returns home to find Bouclier murdered in his quarters . Friend Jake Whitridge responds to a frantic telephone call from Billy . Tony and Danny arrive , as they had planned with Billy , moments after Jake . Jake attacks Billy and knocks him out . When he regains consciousness Billy attempts to shoot Jake but Tony saves him . After the various spouses arrive , Tony announces he has solved the mystery .

Billy borrowed money from Vic on behalf of Jake , using a false name . Jake altered the check to be for \$ 150 @,@ 000 instead of \$ 50 @,@ 000 and Vic forced Billy to reveal he had borrowed the money for Jake . Jake shot Vic at Jake 's home and brought his body to the party , where everyone assumed he was just passed out . Jake paid Bouclier to remain quiet , which is why Bouclier had to kill Professor Jones . Bouclier , Faronea 's accomplice , killed Faronea after Tony spoke to him about the kidnapping plot . Jake then shot Bouclier . Danny places Jake under arrest and extracts a pledge from Tony and Carlotta to quit drinking . They agree and drink a toast to it .

= = Cast = =

Edward Arnold as Danny Harrison

Robert Young as Tony Milburn

Constance Cummings as Carlotta Milburn , Tony 's wife

George Meeker as Vic Huling

Sally Eilers as Bette Huling , Vic 's wife

Reginald Denny as Jake Whitridge

Louise Henry as Penny Whitridge , Jake 's wife

Gregory Ratoff as Faronea

Robert Armstrong as Flannagan , the Milburns ' mechanic

Monroe Owsley as Billy Arliss

Jack La Rue as Baptiste Bouclier , Vic 's chauffeur (as Jack LaRue)
Edward Brophy as Maxie , Harrison 's assistant
Gustav von Seyffertitz as Professor Karl Jones
Rafaela Ottiano as Mme. Bouclier (as Rafael Ottiano)
Arthur Treacher as Clarence Phelps , the butler
E. E. Clive as Coroner 's Photographer

= = Production = =

Universal Studios head Carl Laemmle , Jr. was eager for James Whale , fresh from his great success with *Bride of Frankenstein* , to direct *Dracula 's Daughter* . Whale was idle , waiting for Irene Dunne to finish work on *Magnificent Obsession* so she could begin work on Whale 's *Show Boat* . Wary of directing two horror films in a row , Whale instead convinced Laemmle to buy the rights to a mystery novel called *The Hangover Murders* . Whale argued that the same sort of audiences who went to horror films also went to mystery films and pointed to the hit *Metro @-@ Goldwyn @-@ Mayer* film *The Thin Man* as evidence that a picture based on the novel would be a success . Laemmle agreed to buy the rights for \$ 5 @,@ 000 , only after extracting a promise from Whale that he would direct *Dracula 's Daughter* next .

The Production Code Administration , which had gone into effect just weeks after the release of *The Thin Man* and which restricted the drinking of alcohol on @-@ screen , disapproved of the project even before a script was written . PCA head Joseph Breen forbade the use of the word " hangover " in the title . Laemmle agreed and in mid @-@ August temporarily retitled the project *Wild Night* before settling on *Remember Last Night ?* in response to a survey of exhibitors . Breen dispatched two representatives to meet with Whale , Laemmle and studio censor Harry Zehner in an effort to reduce or eliminate the film 's reliance on drinking . The two men realized that most of the alcohol use was required for the plot ? and thus allowable under the Production Code ? and Whale promised to keep the novel 's ending in which Tony and Carlotta agree to quit drinking .

Harry Clork and Doris Malloy put together a 34 @-@ page treatment which Laemmle approved in April . The pair completed their draft on May 20 , 1935 . Whale had Dan Tothorough re @-@ write the dialogue and the draft was ready for submission to the PCA on July 15 . When Breen reviewed the draft , his objections centered on the excessive alcohol use . " We take this opportunity of pointing out to you , in regard to the matter of the treatment of drinking in this story , that , generally speaking , it is presented in a light , facetious , acceptable , amusing , and desirable mode of behavior . It is upon this that we feel rejection may be reasonably based . " A revised script with the drinking toned down slightly was submitted on July 24 , the same day Whale started shooting . *Remember Last Night ?* was budgeted at \$ 385 @,@ 000 . Whale inserted lines that made fun of horror pictures , a genre with which he no longer wished to be associated . Carlotta is shown jumping on a diving board flapping a towel and exclaiming " Look , I 'm *Dracula 's Daughter* ! " and in another scene she says " I feel like the *Bride of Frankenstein* ! " Shooting wrapped on September 14 . Whale was nine days over schedule and \$ 75 @,@ 000 over budget .

= = Release and reception = =

Remember Last Night ? was cleared by the PCA on September 24 , 1935 and following previews in October , opened on November 4 . Financially the film was a failure that according to Laemmle lost money for the studio . Critical reception was mixed . The *Hollywood Reporter* called the film " a murder mystery to kid all murder mysteries " and " a riot of comedy spots superimposed on a riot of crime detecting " . Whale , the reviewer found , " let himself go in a riotous directorial splurge " . Although less effusive , The *New York Times* praised the film as " good minor fun " and noted the likeable pairing of Young and Cummings . Ed Brophy , Edward Arnold and Arthur Treacher were also singled out for praise . However , the *Times* concluded that *Remember Last Night ?* should be enjoyed " in moderation " as the " halfwit behavior of the roisterers in the film " may make the viewer come away " with the feeling that one or two additional murders among the madcap principals would

have made Long Island a still better place to live in " . Variety was strongly disapproving of the film .
" The women are more blotto than the men , and two of the wives are on the make . It 's all faintly unwholesome . "

Local censorship boards made numerous cuts to the film . The long drinking party scene was cut , as was part of a 30 @-@ second kiss between Tony and Carlotta that opened the film . Censors also cut a line of dialogue delivered by Louise Henry in response to Carlotta 's declaration that the Marines had landed : " There 'll be atrocities ? I want to be first ! " The film was never re @-@ released , has never been released in any home video format and is rarely shown on television . Modern critical response has therefore been light , although Tom Milne of Time Out New York dubbed the film a " Delightful screwball parody of the detective thriller ... Whale 's use of elisions , non @-@ sequiturs and unexpected stresses creates what is virtually a blueprint for the style developed by Robert Altman in and after MASH . " The Los Angeles Times , reviewing the film for a 1999 retrospective of Whale 's work , found it to be " an amusing trifle , tossed off with considerable wit and skill by Whale " and " pretty good fun if you ? re in the mood for a chic , brittle period piece "

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