

= The Best Man Wins (1910 film) =

The Best Man Wins is a 1910 American silent short drama produced by the Thanhouser Company . The film features Thanhouser 's leading players Anna Rosemond , Martin Faust , Frank H. Crane and Marie Eline in a drama about morality . Two suitors are vying for the hand of Julia Seaton and propose to her on the same day , but she asks for a month to decide between them . In the time the caliber of both men are tested when asked by a young girl , named May , to help her dying mother . The doctor refuses to help and the lawyer offers his assistance , but her mother soon dies . The orphan is taken in by the Seaton family and personally attests to the character of both men when Julia Seaton has to choose between her suitors . The writer , director and cameraman are unknown . Released on May 14 , 1910 , the film was met with mostly positive reviews by critics . The film is presumed lost .

= = Plot = =

Though the film is presumed lost , a surviving synopsis was published in The Moving Picture World . It states : " Julia Seaton , a rich heiress , has two suitors , Dr. John Seymour , a wealthy physician , and Richard Calhoun , a poor lawyer . They both propose in the same evening , but while inclined to prefer John , Julia has not yet made a definite choice , and tells both to come back in a month for their answer . The scene shifts to the squalid home of the charwoman , Mrs. Smith , who , ill in bed and unable to earn the rent money , is about to be evicted with her tiny daughter May . The mother faints from weakness , and May rushes for a doctor . She sees Seymour 's sign in a window , and asks him to help her mother . Then the man shows his caliber . Because she has no money , he turns her away . Calhoun , the lawyer , meets May , learns of her plight , and , although poor , pays the overdue rent , and the family moved back in the house . But the privation she has suffered proved fatal to the mother and tiny May is left an orphan . On her death bed , Mrs. Smith is found by Miss Seaton , who is visiting the poor quarters on charity work , and on the charwoman 's passing , society girl adopts poor little May . The child becomes a happy member of the Seaton family and at the end of the month is a fast friend of the kind @-@ hearted Julia . At the end of a month , too , Julia prepares to decide who shall be her life partner , as promised . But it is little May who really decides . At sight of Seymour , she recalls the physician who turned her away , and denounces him to his own and Miss Julia 's face . May recognizes Calhoun as the friend in need , and tells Miss Julia so . The latter feels that Calhoun is a real man and would make a splendid husband , so it 's a cinch that ' the best man wins . ' "

= = Cast = =

Anna Rosemond as Julia Seaton , the rich heiress
Martin Faust as Dr. John Seymour , the wealthy physician
Frank H. Crane as Richard Calhoun , the poor lawyer
Marie Eline as May , the young daughter

= = Production = =

The writer of the scenario is unknown , but it may have been Lloyd Lonergan . Lonergan was an experienced newspaperman still employed by The New York Evening World while writing scripts for the Thanhouser productions . He was the most important script writer for Thanhouser , averaging 200 scripts a year from 1910 to 1915 . While the director of the film is not known , two Thanhouser directors are possible . Barry O 'Neil was the stage name of Thomas J. McCarthy , who would direct many important Thanhouser pictures , including its first two @-@ reeler , Romeo and Juliet . Lloyd B. Carleton was the stage name of Carleton B. Little , a director who would stay with the Thanhouser Company for a short time , moving to Biograph Company by the summer of 1910 . Bowers does not attribute either as the director for this particular production nor does Bowers credit

a cameraman . Blair Smith was the first cameraman of the Thanhouser company , but he was soon joined by Carl Louis Gregory who had years of experience as a still and motion picture photographer . The role of the cameraman was uncredited in 1910 productions .

The leading lady , Anna Rosemond , was one of two leading ladies that Thanhouser would have in its first year of productions . Martin J. Faust and Frank H. Crane , both which were leading men in numerous productions . Frank H. Crane was involved in the very beginnings of the Thanhouser Company from 1909 . Crane 's was the first leading man of the company and acted in numerous productions before becoming a director at Thanhouser . The two suitors vying for her hand in marriage is Bowers credits Martin J. Faust as one of the most important actors in for Thanhouser in 1910 and 1911 , but Faust 's role in productions were often went uncredited . The role of a young daughter was Marie Eline , soon to be known and famous as the " Thanhouser Kid " . A possible film still exists for the work and the identity of the actors are complimentary in between two identical stills in the Jonathan Silent Film Collection . The description of T @-@ 151 , identifies the man in the center as Martin Faust and notes the possibility that the still comes from this work . However , the description for T @-@ 176 identifies two actors as Harry Benham and Frank Crane , but asserts that the two only worked together in 1911 .

= = Release and reception = =

The single reel drama , 957 feet long , was released on May 13 , 1910 . Whether the film is 957 feet or 950 feet long is subject to debate . Bowers notes that some sources state the film is 950 feet long , one such example is the advertising for the film which lists it as being approximately this length . Advertising for the film recognized negativity of Friday the 13th and used it to promote the film to redefine the date to instead bring joy . The film was shown across the United States , advertisements for the showing included theaters in Kansas , Texas , and Pennsylvania . Identifying the theaters showing this work is complicated by the identically named The Best Man Wins by Vitagraph . The silent western produced in 1909 was still being shown and advertised in theaters at the time of the release of Thanhouser 's film . An ambiguous advertisement , but most likely Vitagraph reference , is seen in The Hawaiian Star of Hawaii was published on the same day of the Thanhouser release .

Reviews for the film were generally positive . The Moving Picture World found the story to be interesting and well acted , giving no criticism of the production . The New York Dramatic Mirror 's review criticized the weak plot and the satisfactory acting which was diminished by camera consciousness . The review also found that , " [i] n the scene where the child is taken from her mother 's death bed too little attention is paid to the corpse . " The Leavenworth Times included a review that was favorable and praised the film 's photography . The Arkansas City Daily Traveler had an advertisement from the Lotus Theater that stated Thanhouser films were rivaling Independent Moving Pictures . No known existing copies , complete or partial , are known to exist .