Review #12 : *Dark Passage* (1947)

Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall and Agnes Moorehead

TRAILER

REVIEW

Dark Passage **has a great style** as it offers a view of the San Francisco of the 1940s in ways that hadn't been seen before. **The director keeps the viewer hooked from the start**. The modern style of that era is seen in glorious detail, especially Irene's apartment, where much of the action takes place. The effect of the glassed enclosed elevator makes a dramatic contribution to the look of this movie.

The story of an innocent man falsely condemned to prison for killing his own wife, parallels other movies. What's unusual here is that the presence of this convict is seen in another light, with his own slant in to what really happened to the dead woman. There are other elements in the film that make it appealing, as the relationship between the escaped man, Vincent Parry, and the woman who rescues him, Irene Jansen.

Sidney Hickox's stylish cinematography is one of the best assets of the film. The crisp images that one sees of the city, or the surrounding areas, add to the enjoyment of watching mysteries unfold. The mood is set by the swing music of the time (Frank Waxman) and by some incredible surrealistic moment – such as the horrific scene of plastic surgery...

The film is dominated by Humphrey Bogart, which says a lot about his power as an actor, and as a personality. When one considers he is actually not seen completely until after an hour into the movie, it speaks volumes of how the actor and the director were able to pull it through. The Irene Jansen of Lauren Bacall is another of the things that work in the film. Her radiant beauty and strong style dominate every scene she is in.

Agnes Moorehead also makes a phenomenal appearance as the evil Madge Rapf. As she is confronted with the facts, her expressions keep on changing as she absorbs everything being thrown at her. Her last scene with Mr. Bogart stands as one of the best moments in a film noir of the era...