

No Place for Jennifer

UK : 1949 : dir. Henry Cass : Associated British : 90 min
 prod: : scr: J. Lee-Thompson : dir.ph.:
Janette Scott; William Fox; William Simons; Brian Smith.....
 Leo Genn; Rosamund John; Beatrice Campbell; Guy Middleton; Anthony Nicholls;
 Jean Cadell; Anthony Wager

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	♀	M	♂	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5032	4	5	9	1,119	3	-	-	-	-	No	<i>unseen</i>



Before it became the stuff of sitcoms – divorce as a fatal disease in the family
 Source: *Film Illustrated Monthly* vol.4/11

Stills sequence below and captions courtesy of Film Illustrated Monthly vol.4/11 (1949):



Jennifer (Janette Scott), unhappy because her parents are estranged, spends her time with the Marshalls next door...



Jennifer knows that her mother (Beatrice Campbell) is divorcing her father and marrying someone else (Guy Middleton)



Feeling there is no place for her at home, she begs her Father (Leo Genn) to move "to where nobody knows us"



At a new school she finds a sympathetic teacher (Rosa-mund John) with whom her father falls in love and wants to marry...



In the emotional turmoil of the divorce she becomes ill, and is sent to a special clinic for mal-adjusted children



Jennifer's mother tries to take her to Paris, but her father prevents this by again bringing her before the court...



All this is too much for Jennifer, and, the good work of the clinic undone, she becomes terrified and runs away...



She makes her way back to her old friends, the Marshalls where her parents eventually decide to leave her in peace

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996 review:

"Low-key sob story of little girl with bleak future when parents divorce. ** "

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Tears and tingles in this sombre-tinted story of a little girl who faces a chilly future when her parents decide on divorce. ** "

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"Divorcing parents think again when their twelve-year old daughter runs away. From the novel "No Difference To Me" by Phyllis Hambleton."

The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television review:

"Supposed to make you cry about a little girl (Janette Scott – Janette Scott? Well, it was made in 1949) with divorcing parents, but you may find yourself sorrier for Leo Genn, Rosamund John and all involved. Henry Cass directed. 77 "

Film Illustrated Monthly vol.4/11 review:

"In making this film Associated British have tackled a subject which is well enough known, but generally avoided (as being "not box-office") by most film companies – the effect of divorce upon children. They are undoubtedly counting on the terrific drawing power of children on the screen to get moviegoers interested in this poignant story.

The adult stars are Leo Genn, as Jennifer's father, Beatrice Campbell as her mother,

Rosamund John as the teacher who takes pity on her, and Guy Middleton as the "other man." The real star, however, is obviously the little girl who is buffeted from one parent to another, and in casting ten-year-old Janette Scott for this difficult acting role, Associated British hope and firmly believe that they have discovered Britain's Margaret O'Brien.

But the fact that Janette has a bigger part than the adults (she appears in practically every scene in the film) hasn't daunted her in the least, for she is the daughter of a pair of seasoned troupers -actress Thora Hird and James Scott, a musician. (In fact, when the proud parents told Janette that she had got the part, she calmly asked them to "tell me about it later. I'm listening to Dick Barton.")

So whatever you think of this serious little girl with the finely chiselled features, the thoughtful grey-green eyes, and the hip-length hair, it won't disturb her in the least. She's been in films before, and it's all a very old story now. Her first part was when she was just two. She was on the set of "**WENT THE DAY WELL**" watching her mother, when director Cavalcanti got into a spot of bother with a young male actor who wanted his mummy -loudly and repeatedly. As he was just two, Cavalcanti made a quick substitution.

After that Janette had parts in "**2,000 WOMEN**" when she was four, "**NO MEDALS FOR THE GENERAL**" when she

was seven, and "**CONSPIRATOR**" when she was nine. So moviegoers may know Janette already; it will be interesting to see how she survives the transition into the star category.

For Leo Genn, incidentally, this film revives many memories - particularly in the scenes shot at the Law Courts. Leo practised for several years as a barrister at the Bar in London, and held an important brief at the War Crimes Trials in Germany. He has now virtually given up practice, but still keeps his chambers at No. 4, Temple Gardens - and his name on the board outside. During shooting at the Law Courts some of his old acquaintances even recognised him even though this time he was without wig and gown, and in the witness-box instead of behind the bar!

Seems that a man with Leo's qualifications should find himself very popular in his new profession just now - knotty clauses in those seven-year contracts and all that . . ."

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

Janette Scott went on to make "**NO HIGHWAY**" (50), "**THE MAGIC BOX**" (51) and "**AS LONG AS THEY'RE HAPPY**" (52), but only really came to prominence as an adult actress. [William Fox](#), brother of Edward, enjoyed a brief boyhood fame, chiefly in "**THE MAGNET**" (50). Here 10, in his first known appearance, he also had small roles in "**THE LAVENDER HILL MOB**", "**THE MINIVER STORY**" and "**ONE WILD OAT**" (all from 1950). He then disappeared from the screen, only to resurface in the early sixties.

[William Simons](#), age unknown, featured in two British family adventures with an African game park backdrop - "**WHERE NO VULTURES FLY**" (51) and its sequel "**WEST OF ZANZIBAR**" (53), but he had smaller roles in "**THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE**" (50) and "**PRELUDE TO FAME**" (50, with Jeremy Spenser). Finally, [Brian Smith](#) was 16 but, says Holmstrom, "*amazingly small and young-looking for his age, and these were unmistakably boy-roles*", among these being the pivotal role of Taplow in "**THE BROWNING VERSION**" (50), the pupil whose inscription in a parting gift to his retiring Latin master restores the man's faith in his vocation.

See also "**BACKGROUND**" (53) and subject index under **DIVORCE / CUSTODY BATTLES** and **RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS**.