



Intimate Evening

With Eva *Ward*

By TOM DONNELLY

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News

"SOMETHING'S bound to happen in the second act," someone said at Olney the other night, thus in the same breath giving vent to criticism of things past and to a dogged expression of hope in things to come.

And, sure enough, something did happen. Miss Eva Gabor, the ravishing blond star of Olney's first show of the season, "Her Cardboard Lover," discarded her evening gown and started bouncing about the stage in some lingerie that looked expensive enough to have come from Tiffany's.

From a purely pictorial point of view, the evening was a big success. Miss Gabor is indeed a tempting morsel, and in every physical particular a credit to her family. The Gabor Sisters, as you must know if you glance even hastily at the gossip columns and picture magazines, are in the great tradition of glittering Sister Acts. The Gabor girls are to 1952 what the Bennett Sisters, the Talmadge Sisters, and the Cushing Sisters have been to previous eras. (Not that I'm implying that there isn't a lot of life left in the Bennetts and Cushings. It is just that the glory of the Gabors is so much more current, so in the making, as it were.)

In addition to jolling and leaping about in fabulous wisps of silk and lace, and getting into and out of an evening gown that looked like a pink marshmallow sundae, Miss Gabor also modeled some handsome jewels from the shop her mother, Madame Jolie Gabor Christmas, operates in New York. Eva's sisters, Zsa Zsa and Magda, were not on hand for the Olney opening, having their own careers to pursue, but Madame Gabor was there, lavishly strewn with handsome pearl ornaments of her own design. "I moost apologize for thees leetle drass I am wearing," she said, indicating a gown that looked pretty snappy to me, "but I deed not have the time to get eento anything preesantable. It was rush, rush, rush into thee plane." I asked her how her jewelry business was and she winced and said, "Oh, those taxes. Sometimes I theenk thee taxes outweigh

thee jewels." Someone said, "Eva is the image of Jeritza as a young girl, isn't she?" Madame Gabor said, "Jeritza was no Hungarian!"

"Her Cardboard Lover," much as I hate to bring it up, was the "Love and Let Love" of the 20's, even if the audiences and critics of that olden time didn't recognize it as such. Today this Jacques Deval farce, in the adaptation by Valerie Wyngate and P. G. Wodehouse, has all the refreshing stimulation of a warm glass of champagne laced with yogurt.

Simone, the heroine, hires Andre, an impecunious boulevardier, to pose as her lover because, she swears, she needs outside assistance to hold her back from the casual embraces of Tony, who treats her shamefully but whom she cannot resist.

There, does that bring it all back?

If you weren't allowed to go see Jeanne Eagles and Leslie Howard in the stage version, perhaps you saw Marion Davies do it on celluloid? Is my mind playing tricks on me, or did they switch it around so Marion was the cardboard lover? I have dim recollections of Marion arraying herself in a bolster from the bed and doing an impersonation of Jetta Goudal, the vamp. I wouldn't swear, but I have a feeling that this plot also served Buster Keaton in something called "The Passionate Plumber," and I know for a fact that it was a remake of this work that helped to finish off Norma Shearer's screen career.

So much for reminiscence. Miss Gabor, as I say, is a gorgeous creature. She also has something that looks to me like a passable histrionic equipment, but the effect of this is rather marred by her voice, which is inclined to grate. Her associates had thoroly memorized their lines, an unusual summer circumstance which may have been a mistake on this occasion.