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The Devil-Doll

By Garrett Fort

Turn off your motor.
Hold the light up in those trees.
We'll get them
before they leave the island.
- Lavond, my friend, will we make it?
- Yes.
The dogs lost our scent
when we crossed that river. Come on.
Yes, I've work to do.
I've dreamt only of my work.
Well, my work is no dream.
I've been awake for 17 years.
But you have only hatred in your heart.
My work will help the world to live.
My work will help three men die.
What is it, Prince?
What're you trying to tell me?
What's wrong?
Lachna. Go away. Go away, Prince.
Lachna, Lachna,
see what's wrong with the dogs.
It's Marcel, my husband!
Call off the dogs, Lachna.
Call off the dogs, quickly!
Come here, Prince. Quickly!
Go to the shed. Go to the shed.
- Here. Help me.
- We're safe.
Easy now. Easy, old friend. Come along.
Marcel.
- Marcel, my husband.
- Malita.
So you've come.
How did you get here?
Did they pardon you?
- We escaped.
- But the police. They'll be following you.
No. They lost our trail, weeks ago.
Come, let's get inside.
Malita, I knew you'd come here
as we planned.
I knew you'd be waiting.
Oh, Marcel. Marcel.
You've been working.

I knew it by the howling of the dogs.
But you've failed, you've failed again.
I can see it in your face.
Now, now, don't excite yourself, Marcel.
He's weak, madame.

- He's been ill a long time.

- Who is he? Is he...

I know our mistake now.

It came to me one night
in that cesspool of stupid minds.

- Marcel. Marcel.

- No more failures, Malita.

The next one will have a perfect brain.

Marcel.

But we're not alone.

Oh, Paul.

- Malita, this is my friend, Paul Lavond.

- Madame.

We escaped together.

- He saved my life more than once.

- I am grateful, monsieur.

We need have no secrets from him.

Now, Malita, where are they?

- I've thought, I've planned so long.

- They're in the next room.

Malita, help me. Help me.

Malita, shut off the tanks.

No.

No.

No.

Malita, some of the others, quick.

Careful. Careful, Marcel,
you might hurt them.

No. Just as I thought.

They're all alike.

They might as well

not have any brain at all!

What is it?

Is this the great work you've been
dreaming of so long? Toy dogs?

Toy?

Forgive me, Lavond. Have you been
locked away from life so long
you don't recognize

a prisoner of life itself?

Why, it feels warm.

Almost flesh and bone.

- Like the real animal.

- It is.

Eight hours ago

it was a full-grown Saint Bernard.

You think I'm mad.

The world would think so, too,
if they knew what I was going to do.

Lavond, my friend, millions of years ago
the creatures that roamed
this world were gigantic.

As they multiplied,
the earth could no longer
produce enough food.

Think of it, Lavond, every living creature
reduced to one-sixth its size,
one-sixth its physical need!

Food for six times all of us!

Lavond, you know that all matter
is composed of atoms?

- Yes, yes, of course, I know.

- And all atoms are made of electrons.

- Yes, I know.

- Well, I've found a way
to reduce all atoms
in a body simultaneously
to any desired degree and still
maintain life, as in this little dog.

Well, then, the dog should be alive.

It is! It is. Only, in reducing the brain,
all records are wiped off, no memory left,
no will of its own.

A creature capable of responding only
to the force of another will.

Malita, place it on the table.

Now, watch.

Malita, a piece of bread.

Lavond, watch the others.

Watch them.

See, Lavond, only a few crumbs
is all they need.

Napoleon, Napoleon.

Get down. Get down. Get down.
That's a nice dog.
See, Paul? See?
Look! Look, look,
the little ones are falling down.
Naturally, I stopped concentrating.
- I broke the beam of thought.
- No man can do this.
But I did. You saw me do it.
But tonight, my friend,
I'll show you a complete success.
A little dog this high,
but perfect with an active brain.
- Malita, get the big dog.
- No, no, Marcel, not now.
- Rest.
- Rest? How can I rest? I tell you...
Oh, you've done enough tonight.
Have you any brandy?
- Yes.
- Come along.
Lachna, get some brandy, quick. Quick.
Prince, Prince, go upstairs. Go.
Brandy, brandy, you moron.
Now some hot broth. Hot broth!
What use are you? Go!
Malita, where did you get her?
In a Berlin slum.
She's an inbred peasant half-wit,
but I wanted no prying wits about me.
Did anyone know she came with you?
No, Marcel, no one knows.
A friend of Marcel's is a welcome guest.
I hope you can stay with us a long time.
You'll be safe here.
And you can help us with our work.
Oh, thank you very much, madame,
but I'm afraid that'll be impossible.
I have work to attend to myself.
You see, when a man saves an ambition
in a dirty dungeon
for 17 years,
it becomes almost an insane obsession.
Well, with Marcel it was science,

with me it was hate.
Hate and vengeance.
I may not look it, madame,
but I was once a very successful banker.
Three men, my partners,
lied and tricked me into prison.
Well, three lives are going to pay for it.
Well, now you know why I can't
take advantage of your hospitality.
I'm leaving for Paris and tomorrow.
- Malita.
- Yes, Marcel. I'm coming.
Madame.
Marcel, please, that's all you can do now.
You must sleep.
No. No, I must see it through, every detail.
You've corrected her brain, Marcel.
She's no longer the stupid half-wit.
She's going to be beautiful.
That's it, Lachna.
Straighten out.
Malita, turn on the tanks.
Wait! This is wrong.
Why? She'll be perfect.
Perfection isn't wrong. Think of it, Lavond.
A human being so high
with a perfect brain.
Malita, the mist.
Lavond, tonight, out of this mist,
you will see the birth of a new mankind,
in full control of its destiny.
In just a few seconds, Lavond,
just a few seconds, she'll awaken.
Marcel. Marcel!
Marcel. Marcel. Speak to me! Marcel!
Marcel, he's dead.
Poor tortured brain.
Perhaps it's all for the best, Malita.
But our work, our work, we must carry on!
- But this is murder.
- No, no.
No, she's not dead.
You must help me.
Marcel would want you to.

You must stay here. Quick, quick, help me.

Some cotton. Cotton.

Now, you concentrate.

She will respond to your will.

It's like some horrible dream.

I don't want any part of this.

- Restore her to what she was.

- No.

She will always remain small, small.

We can make the whole world small

as Marcel wanted to do.

We can go to Paris.

There are many people there.

There's where we begin our work.

Yes, Malita.

- Yes?

- Matin.

- Are you busy?

- Yes, very busy.

Well, this is more important

than anything else.

- Come in right away.

- Oh, all right.

Radin, this is terrible.

Well, what's wrong now? Indigestion?

If you continue to crucify your stomach,

my dear Coulvét, you'll...

Listen to this. "In a sensational statement
by the Prefect of Police today,

"it was admitted that Paul Lavond,
former bank president,

"convicted of looting his own bank
and killing a watchman,

"escaped from prison four months ago.

"He had served 17 years of a life sentence.

"Police censorship had
withheld the news until..."

Well, what about it?

It was a pretty plot, Charles,

but I knew we'd never get away with it.

Victor, not so loud.

- Don't shout it all over the bank.

- No, please.

After all, embezzlement and murder

are things we should keep to ourselves.
But you didn't have to kill that man, Emile.
Stop it!

- Keep your mouth closed.
- He'll come back to Paris, he'll talk.

You cringe and scream
like a woman, Victor.

No, my friends,
our former president may be honest,
but he'll never be so stupid
as to set foot again in France.
I'd sleep better
if I knew Lavond was back in prison.
A 50,000 franc reward would ensure that.
There's a certain amusing irony in offering
a man's own money for his capture.
50,000 francs? Why not?
Give me the Prefect of Police.
Instruct all divisions to restudy
the features of Paul Lavond
from the photograph issued,
and impress upon them
it was taken 17 years ago.
My partners and I will increase
the reward to 100,000 francs.

- Malita.
- Yes, I'm coming, madam.
- Bring the... Oh, I see you have it.
- Yes, I have the bundle.

Come into the back room with me.
Look in the basket, Malita.
100,000 francs reward for my capture.
Who do you think
is offering all this money for me?
The same three swine
that sent me to prison before.
They're frightened to death, Malita.
They know that my freedom
means they're finished.
But what they don't know is
the Paul Lavond they're looking for
is Madame Mandilip,
a poor, tottering old woman.
Yes. Very nice.

Beautifully constructed.

But, madame, the bank
would not be interested
in financing the manufacture of toys.

But, monsieur, I thought
that possibly if not the bank,
that you personally might do it.

No, there are so many novelties
like this on the market now.

But a toy like this
has never been made before.
It's not mechanical and yet,
if you speak to it, it will obey you.

- Obey?

- Yes.

Ask it to do something.

- Do something?

- Yes. Give it an order.

Get up on your feet.

Walk around.

Faster. Faster!

That's amazing!

It didn't move like a mechanical toy.

How do you do that, madame?

That's my little secret, monsieur.

What capital would you require?

To start with, just a few thousand francs.

Well, I'll think it over.

Get in touch with me later.

But, monsieur, I want
to start manufacturing at once.

The Christmas holidays are so close.

Naturally, madame,

I shall have to investigate further
before I advance any money.

Of course. Of course.

I'd expect you to come to my shop
and go into every detail.

- When could you come?

- How about tonight?

- **Say, 8:**

- Splendid.

My little shop is in Montmartre.

It's rather difficult to find.
I'll meet you by the Moulin Rouge at 8:00.
Good day, monsieur.
But remember, I'm making no promises.
You don't have to.
Once you're in my shop,
I'll wager you'll do anything I ask.
Well, I can hardly believe it.
I feel like pinching myself to see
if I'm awake or dreaming.
To think that I really have you here.
I mean, that you're going
to be my partner and help me.
Yes, but remember if I do,
it'll only be financially.
- My name must not appear.
- I wouldn't dream of using your name.
You'll just be my silent partner.
My workshop is downstairs. Follow me.
Be careful. It's very steep.
Now, this is the room
where we keep all our little secrets.
Make yourself comfortable, monsieur.
May I take your coat?
No, no, no, it isn't necessary.
I'll just keep it on.
Please be seated.
- Malita.
- Yes, madame.
Come here, please.
This is Monsieur Radin,
the banker I spoke to you about.
- This is Madame Malita, my assistant.
- Monsieur.
Is everything ready for Monsieur Radin?
- Yes, madame.
- Splendid. Splendid.
Some cognac.
Sit down. Sit down, monsieur. Excuse me.
- No cognac, please.
- No cognac?
No, thank you.
- Won't you have some cognac, monsieur?
- No, no, thank you.

Here's another of our little pets.
Most ingenious.
- It is lifelike, isn't it?
- Isn't it though?
But, monsieur,
you see that little doll sitting over there
on the block?
That's Lachna, our apache doll.
Malita, will you please
bring me the little stiletto?
All our accessories are carried out
down to the most minute detail.
For example, on our ponies,
the harness is exact.
And on our little dogs,
the collars are all different,
but mind you, suitable to the breed.
Thank you, Malita.
And our apache dolls
we supply with a dinky little stiletto.
Why, this is
an authentic little replica itself.
Isn't it?
Isn't it?
Don't be too alarmed, Radin.
You're not dying.
Oh, I see you recognize my voice.
That's one of the few things that you
and Coulvét and Matin
didn't steal from me.
Another is my hatred.
Look at me and see what 17 years
in the grave has done to me.
No, Radin, without my hatred,
I never could have lived to exhume myself.
What swine you three are.
You're going to help me
to recover what I can from life.
That's why you're not going to die.
No, I wouldn't let you die
for the world, Radin.
The police.
One moment, monsieur.
Madame will be with you.

We must finish painting
those soldiers of the legion, Malita.
And we have 10 dolls to dress.

- Good evening, monsieur.
- Good evening, madame.
- Can I show you something special?
- No, thank you.

But your glue pots in the alley,
the neighbors are complaining again.
I'm so sorry, of course. How stupid of me.
But the holiday rush, monsieur,
I quite forgot.
I assure you I shall hang them inside.

- Fine. Do so.
- I will, monsieur.

Well, good day and good luck, madame.
I'm amazed at my good luck, monsieur.
Amazed is the word, eh, Malita?
Stupid policeman, to let an old white wig
cost him 100,000 francs.
It might have been safer to
take him downstairs and make him small.
He's small already in mind.
In fact, Malita, if most men were reduced
to the dimensions of their mentality,
Marcel's plan wouldn't be necessary.
But we're pledged to it, aren't we?
We have sworn.
Calm yourself, Malita.
Let me make the plans.
Where are you going?
To your mother's again
where the police are always watching?
No. I'm going to see my daughter.
It's the one thrill life has left me.
I love to look at her, to listen to her talk.
It drives me almost crazy though, Malita,
not to be able to take her
in my arms and tell her who I am.
Why don't you bring the little girl here?
Why, I couldn't tell her who I am.
Why, she's grown
to hate her father's memory.
I...

I'll not be long, Malita.

It's 5:

How many more pieces have you got?

- Three or four.

- Well, hurry up.

It's amazing the way
you washed-out Cinderellas
can speed up work

when 5:

Are we whacking shirts
on the shore of a stream?

Look at this water, too much soap.

All my profits.

Maizie, come here.

What's that dream on your face?

A rendezvous with

that scoundrel of yours I suppose?

Well, you'll catch this fish first
and these along with it

since you're so stored up for bait.

Oh, good evening.

Lorraine, take care of the customer.

- Good evening, madame.

- Good evening, my dear.

Why, you seem very tired.

Oh, no. I was just rushing
to finish my tub on time.

How soon do you want this?

Tomorrow?

No, no, my dear. The end
of the week will be plenty of time.

Oh, fine.

One skirt. Three blouses.

Your hands seem chapped.

You should put lotion on them.

I know one of the very finest...

Toto has a new taxi.

- Mademoiselle Lavond, I believe.

- Yes, Toto?

I bring you the honor of driving home in
the Fortuna Taxi Company's third vehicle
on which I have just paid

the first installment.

- Is the second paid for yet?

- An insidious detail.

We capitalists must take risks.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

- Right, Madame Mandilip?

- Absolutely.

You see, Madame Mandilip

understands economics.

Oh, here you are, my pet.

Give this number to your suitors.

Reliable service day and night.

No rear sight mirrors,

free parking time in the Bois.

I hear your grandmother is ill, my dear.

I should so like to pay a call on her.

Oh, it's just the weather, I think.

It's been so cold and damp.

Yes. I feel quite ashamed of myself

for not having called before, but

I've been so busy getting my shop ready.

Well, I must be going now.

Good day, my dear.

- Goodbye, madame.

- Good day.

Here you are, madame. It's nice to know

a reliable firm when you need a taxi.

Yes, indeed. And thanks.

You have my best wishes

in your new venture.

Thanks, and the same to you.

Never overlook a chance

to improve business. That's my motto.

- What's the matter?

- That woman.

- Madame Mandilip?

- Yes.

She's somehow pathetic and kind.

She almost makes me want to cry.

Look, I feel just the opposite

from that right now.

Will you be the first fare in my third taxi?

I'd love to. If you'll give me

just three minutes to finish my tub.

In three minutes, Dame Fortune the Third
will be at your service.

All right.

- Do you like her?

- Oh, she's lovely.

Get inside, mademoiselle.

Do we have to go up in the tower to talk?

Was love ever so humiliated?

Here I am taking you up near heaven
where all angels belong

- and you protest.

- Toto.

Watch your hats.

Going down!

Toto, really,

why did you bring me up here?

Don't you remember?

This is where I first gave you
complete ownership of myself
and a half interest
in the Fortuna Taxi Company.

- There was only one taxi then, remember?

- Yes.

It was April and we could smell
the chestnut blossoms

all the way from the Bois. It was so...

I told you then how I felt about things
and that you shouldn't
waste your time on me.

It's grand to be up here
when your thoughts are all jumbled.

Don't things look different?

Everything seems so small
and unimportant from up here.

But I don't live up here.

I live down there.

Our world's what we make it, Lorraine.

You know, you're not making
the best of yours.

- I make it as I see it.

- Yes, I know.

But you're too sensitive.

It hasn't been pleasant, Toto,
to be pointed at, singled out,

despised as the daughter of a...
It does something to you
when you're very young.
Something that grows up with you.
It got so that I hated to go to school.
- Hated even to... To leave the house.
- Yes.
Kids can be pretty brutal, can't they?
And now since the escape,
it's started all over again.
Pictures in the paper, our movements
watched, people whispering.
Oh, don't let that get you, darling.
You're above all that.
- Do you wonder that I hate him?
- Don't hate, Lorraine.
Oh, not for what he's done to me,
but to my mother.
The mental torture,
the poverty he brought her.
Toto, I think I should tell you the truth.
My mother didn't just die.
- She killed herself.
- Yes. I know.
And even that
doesn't make any difference?
Nothing could make any difference.
But, Toto, I could never escape
from the fact that I'm his daughter.
I could never ask any man
to share that with me.
Least of all you. I love you too much.
Toto, we'd better go.
You might as well kill a person
as frighten them to death.
The frosty weather hasn't done
your flowers any good, has it?
Those violets are rather pretty.
How much are they?
One franc, madame.
They're unusually large this season.
Yes. I'll take a bunch.
- Thank you, madame.
- Madame.

Come, come. Move on. No loitering.
I'm watching Lavond's mother's place.
We're certain he's in Paris.
Yes?
Come in.
Lorraine?
- It's all right, Mother.
- Paul.
Much as I love you,
you mustn't come here anymore.
Ever since that first night, I've been
terrified that someone would suspect.
But there's no reason
why Madame Mandilip
shouldn't come and visit you.
Come along, Mother.
Sit down. Don't worry.
You shouldn't come so late, Paul.
Lorraine will be home
from work any minute.
That's just why I'm here.
As a matter of fact, she knows I'm coming.
You've been talking to her?
Yes. I saw her today
in that filthy laundry she's working in.
But you didn't tell her?
You didn't let her know who you were?
No. Not yet. But I'm going to tonight.
I can't stand it any longer.
But she's so bitter, so resentful.
I know. Poor child.
But we can't blame her for that.
Those three swine.
Paul, listen to me.
If you must tell her,
let me talk to her first, slowly, gradually.
- It's so dangerous, Paul.
- Yes, I know, Mother.
- Grandmother.
- It's Lorraine. Be careful.
Grandmother!
Why, what's... Oh, it's you. I thought
something had happened to Grandmother.
I'm so sorry. I'm used to locking my shop.

It was stupid of me.

I'm so glad. Come on and sit down.

- Are you enjoying yourself, darling?

- Yes, dear.

We've had a delightful little chat.

Oh, how lovely.

Oh, that's sweet of you.

Violets are Grandmother's favorite flower.

- Violets?

- Why, yes.

I remember Mother telling how...

I'll put them in water later.

- What's the matter, darling? You cold?

- Just a little chilly.

Well, we'll have a blaze in just a moment.

Not much firewood for a franc nowadays,
is there?

Aren't prices awful?

My yard's just littered with packing cases.

- You must let me send you some.

- Oh, no, we couldn't.

Well, why not?

I have to pay to have it carted away.

Well, in that case, we'd be very grateful.

What a beautiful woman.

Yes. That was my mother.

- This is a lovely rosary.

- It's mine.

Yes, I know. I mean...

I knew it must be.

I gave my little girl one just like it.

She was so proud of it.

They tell me I was, too, when I got it.

Something happen

to change your feelings toward it?

Please, Madame Mandilip.

I'm sure you know who we are

and all about us.

The rosary was given to me by someone

whose name we never mention here.

- Your father.

- I have no father.

You're very young to be so bitter.

- Don't blame me. Blame him.

- Lorraine, your father was innocent.
Yes, that's what I've heard all my life.
That's why they sent him to prison.
That's why my mother killed herself!
And that's why his mother
spends her old age this way,
with barely enough food,
and firewood once a week a luxury!
Please, please.
And do you know
how we get these great comforts?
Not from my work in the laundry.
That wouldn't keep us alive.
No. All our great wealth comes
from the Caf Poule down the street
where I've the honor to work at night.
Where I have the joy of letting a crowd
of sewer workers smirk at me
so they can buy more wine!
A centime a drink I get!
Lorraine.
It doesn't sound pretty, does it?
Well, it isn't!
And Toto's eyes weren't nice to look at
when he held out his heart to me
and I had to throw it back in his face!
That's what my father's done
and I loathe him for it!
See who that is, please.
- I wish to speak to Madame Lavond.
- Monsieur.
I'm from the Prefect of Police, madame.
We are still looking for your son.
Have you heard from him?
Madame Lavond was just speaking
of her boy.
His escape has naturally
quite unnerved her.
- Naturally.
- But I've not heard from him.
- Not even by letter, monsieur.
- Lf you do, madame,
the Prefect will expect you
to notify him at once.

In the meantime,
I'll check with you each day.
You understand, of course,
harboring a criminal,
even though it be your son,
is a most serious offense.
You don't need to remind us of our duty
or of the law. Good day, monsieur.
Good day, mademoiselle. Madame.
I know how you feel, my dear.
But don't blame them.
It's only natural for them
to expect him to come here.
He hasn't seen you for so long.
You must be prepared though.
He may come.
I hope he doesn't.
Because if he does,
I'm going to turn him over to the police.
Yes. Well, goodbye, my dear.
Yes. Yes. I know, Inspector.
But it's been two days
since Radin disappeared.
Yes. Yes, we'd appreciate it.
Matin? I know it's Lavond.
I'm going to ask for police protection.
The less you have to do with police,
the better off we'll be.
Get hold of your nerves before you
say something you'll be sorry for.
- Oh, you needn't worry about me.
- I am.
You've got to get out of town.
Take a trip somewhere.
- But you know I can't with the holidays.
- Then keep your head.
Or we'll both be taking a trip
at the expense of the government.
I'll admit. I can't sleep.
I keep wondering
which one of us he's going to look up next.
- Goodbye, Emile.
- Thanks for coming over.
Well, what do you want?

Your butler is showing Madame
one of my dolls, monsieur.

- Madame will see you.

- Thank you.

Look at this doll, Emile. Isn't it clever?

Oh, my dear Mathilde,

I've other things on my mind besides...

And I do wish you wouldn't ask
every street peddler to...

Madame.

This is a most unusual doll, madame.

Have you any more like it?

Only one, madame.

And unfortunately,

I've made it for another customer.

They look so lifelike.

And it feels almost human.

- What's it made of?

- It's a secret process of my own, madame.

Observe the detail of the features.

See how the eyes sparkle.

The little lips look as if
they were going to speak to Madame.

- How much is it?

- 250 francs.

250 francs! Ridiculous!

Surely not to a gentleman
of Monsieur's exalted station.

Or Madame with her exquisite jewels.

Would it be presumptuous if I asked
to look at that necklace a little closer?

- Of course not.

- Thank you.

Lovely. Very lovely.

Oh, forgive me, madame,

but I do love the beautiful.

You can tell that from my workmanship.

Monsieur, allow me to explain
to you about my little doll.

If you'll examine it,

you'll see how lifelike it is.

- The hair is as natural as your own.

- All right, all right. I'll buy it.

And now, my dear, let the woman go.

What are the squirrels going to do
with all the popcorn I gave them?
Why, they're going
to keep it for the winter.
Aren't they going to give the birdies any?
No, they're going
to keep it all for themselves.
Thank you a thousand times, monsieur.
You'll never know how happy it makes me
to leave one of my dolls
in your beautiful home.
Oh, Marguerite,
you would have to come in now.
It was going to be a surprise.
Good day, madame. Good day, petite.
- Good day.
- Monsieur.
- Emile? Emile, what's the matter?
- Matter?
Why, what do you mean?
Why, nothing's the matter.
Emile.
Emile, what's the matter? Emile! Emile!
Gentlemen, I'm ashamed of you.
Two crimes have been committed
right under your very noses.
Radin has disappeared,
Coulvet has been paralyzed.
Both these crimes point to the vengeance
of this escaped convict, Lavond.
And you, my best men, can't offer me
a single clue as to his whereabouts.
Have you lost your wits?
And you, Maurice,
what's happened to you in this case?
If you don't want
the reward offered for this criminal,
at least spare me this humiliation.
Gentlemen, I want Paul Lavond
under arrest within 24 hours.
Find him!
"Police are baffled by what they consider
"a look of constant terror
in Monsieur Coulvet's expression."

There, Malita, is my proud friend, Coulvet.
Taking up my sentence where I left off.
Congratulations, Lachna.
Splendid work.
I couldn't have done better myself.
Beautiful Green Sea Emerald.
Well, little by little, I'll get you all back.
Leave her alone!
You fool!
Why, you could have killed her.
You might have broken her neck.
Poor little thing.
I'm coming. I'll be right there.
Shut off the music box. Clear off the table.
I'm sorry, monsieur.
I was in the rear of my shop.
- Shall we go upstairs?
- This'll do.
- Are you Madame Mandilip?
- Yes.
- I'm from the police.
- Police?
Oh, come in, monsieur.
- Won't you be seated, monsieur?
- No, thanks.
We understand that you sold a doll
to Monsieur Coulvet yesterday.
Coulvet? Oh, yes, the gentleman
whose picture's here in the paper.
Such a shocking affair.
We've just been reading about it.
Such a charming gentleman, so courteous.
Madame Coulvet was wearing a necklace
that you admired.
Yes. I did.
It was so beautiful,
no one could help looking at it.
It contained the Green Sea Emerald,
one of the most famous stones in France.
You undoubtedly noticed it.
Oh, now I see. I see what you mean.
You think I had something
to do with the robbery.
- Now, madame...

- You suspect me!
Madame, don't excite yourself.
In a case like this,
we have to suspect everybody.
That is until
they can prove their innocence.
All right. I'll go along with you.
I'll answer any questions you want me to.
I'll get my coat.
- You'll have no trouble with me.
- Madame, compose yourself.
You're taking too much for granted.
I'm not going to arrest you.
I haven't anything to arrest you for yet.
All I want is to ask you a few questions.
Oh, dear, an old woman like me
mixed up in such a thing.
What will the neighbors say? The gossip.
I'll lose all my customers.
Why, you might as well accuse one
of my little dolls as accuse me.
Well, I hardly think we'd go as far as that.
Well, this is a beautiful thing.
Surely you don't make them yourself?
Oh, yes, yes,
everything in the shop we make...
Oh, please, don't touch the eyes.
They're not dry.
It's something new
we've been working on.
A doll with tears in its eyes.
It's an amusing idea for
the lady's boudoir. You see what I mean?
No.
Well, the tears remind
the husband or lover
that when they're away
milady is lonesome.
Well, that's something new.
You see, you men never know
what's going on behind your backs.
Well, you see, I...
It's cute.
I haven't seen one of these in years.

Oh, I see. The head.

Oh, careful, monsieur.

You'll get paint on your fingers.

- No, it's all right. It's dry.

- Oh, so it is.

Malita, how many times have I told you
to fill these to the brim?

We put candy in them.

What are you trying to do,
cheat the children?

- Have you any children, monsieur?

- Yes.

Well, you must let me wrap
one of these up and take it home.

It isn't necessary.

- She'll be just as pleased as it is.

- She?

A little girl?

Oh, she'll like this much better.

The clowns are for little boys.

You know, I always thought
policemen were terrible men
that went around
with pistols in their pockets,
always ready to drag a body off to prison.

When you first started questioning me,
I was frightened to death.

But you've been so kind to me,
I'm sorry I haven't been able
to help you more.

Maybe you can at that.

We may want you to come down
for the investigation.

As long as my shop is here,
you'll always know where to find me.

That's fine.

My dear Matin, you'll be going
to that hospital yourself tomorrow
if you don't go home and get some sleep.

Sleep. Do you think I can
close my eyes after seeing poor Emile?

Doctor, what could
have frightened him so?

- What could he have seen?

- He'll never be able to tell us.

He'll be hopelessly paralyzed
for the rest of his life.

A brilliant mind imprisoned
in a useless body.

- Imprisoned...

- Pardon, messieurs.

- Mistletoe fresh from the market.

- No, no, go away.

What's this?

- Where did this come from?

- I don't know, monsieur.

Don't lie.

But I assure you, monsieur,
I did not put it there.

What is it, Charles?

Operator, get me the Prefect of Police.

They've got enough of us
guarding this place.

Yes, there's three up in the room
with him now.

You may retire if you wish, monsieur.

- I assure you, you have nothing to fear.

- Retire?

- All the entrances are covered.

- Very well.

- What was that?

- See what that was.

Butler, what was that noise down there?

An ornament fell off the Christmas tree.

You wouldn't think a little thing like that...

- An ornament fell off.

- We heard him.

- Sounded just like glass breaking.

- Yes, yes.

Relieve Pierre and have him
check up on the men outside.

Very good.

Red jack on the black queen.

Do you have to whistle that way?

- No, sir.

- Then stop it.

You mustn't let your nerves
get the better of you, Monsieur Matin.

They won't,
if I can have a little cooperation
from our musically inclined friend.
Pierre.

Don't forget the reception room
at the end of the hall.

We have two men in there now.

- Well, you better check up on them.

- Okay.

I wouldn't get too upset
about that note, Monsieur Matin.

Probably not for you at all.

Just some religious fanatic.

- The city's full of them around Christmas.

- Thanks. That's very consoling.

That's why the Prefect sent
all you men to guard the house.

- There's nothing to worry about.

- Perhaps not for you.

- There's something in this house.

- Oh, nothing could get by my men.

No?

If the other men around the house
are watching as hard as these two...

You better watch your nerves, monsieur.

I don't think you realize
the importance of...

- Do you have to open that door?

- I'll be right here.

If only your men would...

Oh, what's the use?

Two minutes.

- I can't stand much more of this.

- Why don't you sit down, monsieur?

- Please, if you don't mind.

- Sorry.

What shall I do? What should I do?

There's nothing for you to do.

- In a few seconds it'll all be over.

- Yes.

A few seconds. A few seconds.

Lavond, wherever you are,
in heaven's name, listen and have mercy.
I'll confess. You're innocent.

We were the guilty ones.
I've waited a long time
to read that, Malita.
Paul Lavond is vindicated.
Think of it. After 17 years
of shadows, I'm innocent.
Thanks to you, Malita.
And thanks to you, Madame Mandilip.
This is wonderful, Lavond.
Now that you are free,
we can go on with our work
without being bothered by the police.
No, Malita, my work is over,
but I am not free.
Why, if they ever found out who I was,
the police would want
a lot of questions answered.
What happened to Radin?
Who paralyzed Coulvét?
No, Malita. When I proved my innocence,
I condemned myself forever.
We must get out of here.
But before we go, we must destroy
everything in the back room.
No, no! The ghost of Marcel
will curse you forever if you do.
We've got to go on, Lavond.
We've got to carry out his plan.
Now listen to me, Malita,
and try to understand.
I never had any plans beyond
the vindication of my name,
and I only wanted that
because of my family.
Through Marcel's wild schemes,
I was able to do it.
But we can't go on.
Why, our work is hideous.
We're cruel and it's got to come
to an end tonight.
No, Lavond. You can't do this.
I won't let you betray Marcel.
If you go away,
I will carry out his work alone.

Do you understand that? Alone.
You fool. Do you want to go to prison?
As Madame Mandilip,
I mailed a full confession to the police.
But we can't stop now!
There is so much left for us to do.
There's nothing left for me to do, Malita.
The name of Lavond is cleared.
My mother and daughter
will find nothing to be ashamed of.
I'm sorry, Malita,
I didn't mean to speak harshly to you.
I've plans for you.
You'll be well taken care of.
But, please, do hurry.
Every minute counts.
Put Lachna in the basket there with Radin.
Their lives are ruined,
but we can't destroy them.
We'll send them to the Prefect of Police.
We've served his purpose, Radin.
Now he'll serve ours.
Reduced to your size,
I'll control him as easily as I control you.
Now, Radin, you are going to help me.
Why, you poor insane wretch!
I shall destroy you
with all the rest of this horror!
Get out of here!
Malita, put that down!
You'll blow yourself to atoms!
And you, too, Lavond.
You've had your vengeance.
- Now Marcel will have his.
- Malita!
Death doesn't frighten me.
Why, it's been part of my plan.
But not yet, Malita.
I still have something to do for my child.
When that's done, I'll die gladly.
Now, Malita, you don't want to do that.
You don't want to die, Malita.
Think of your work, think of Marcel.
Give it to me!

Malita!

Malita!

- Where's Frank?

- Downstairs.

Frank! What did you find?

Not a sign of anything.

Guess she planned to blow this place up before she mailed her confession.

Well, that's the end of Madame Mandilip.

We're pretty smart, eh?

Got everything pinned on Lavond, only to find out it's the work of a crazy old woman.

Taxi? Taxi?

- Taxi.

- Yes, monsieur. Sorry, monsieur.

Step right in, monsieur.

Aren't you afraid of losing customers by such devotion to the newspapers?

I'm sorry, monsieur. I'm usually on the job, but I just happened to be interested in this story of Paul Lavond.

- Would you care to read it, monsieur?

- No, thanks, I've read it.

- Where to, monsieur?

- Drive anywhere you want to.

That's a very dangerous order to give a taxi driver, monsieur.

Yes. But you're not an ordinary taxi driver, are you?

Toto?

That's all I am now, monsieur.

But one day soon I hope...

- How'd you know my name was Toto?

- Because I...

My name is Paul Lavond.

Now, now, careful, Toto.

Don't let me startle you.

Drive somewhere we can be alone.

- I promised to meet Lorraine at sundown.

- How is she?

Have you seen her since the papers?

No, monsieur, I didn't like to talk to her about it at the laundry

- in front of all the others.

- Yes, I know, Toto.

You don't know what your freedom means to me, Monsieur Lavond.

Yes, I do, Toto.

That's why I've got to talk to you, but alone.

When I want to be alone, monsieur, I always go to the tower.

It's so far above everything and everybody.

- The Eiffel Tower, Toto?

- Yes, monsieur.

Now that I have my freedom, my exile must commence all over again.

- You can see that, can't you?

- I'm trying to.

Well, at least you can understand why I can't rejoin my family.

Yes, yes, I can see that.

But it all seems so unjust and unfair.

All you've done, you've done for them.

I'm so sorry, Monsieur Lavond.

Oh, I wouldn't be.

I'm rather happy about it.

You can marry Lorraine.

My fortune will be restored to her.

And you can live contentedly together ever after.

- That's a proper ending to a story, isn't it?

- Lorraine. I forgot.

What?

This is where she's going to meet me at sundown.

I didn't mean to trick you, monsieur.

I merely thought it would please her.

I still do.

Whatever may happen afterwards.

Oh, Toto, it can't be.

Why, even when I was innocent, her hatred of me hurt a good deal.

And now that I'm guilty, her belief in me would hurt even more.

And if the police should ever... Oh, no, no.

- I'm going.

- But where?

At least you can tell me that.

I could send you your money and...

Where I'm going, Toto,

I won't need any money.

Goodbye, and remember I expect you
to take good care of my little girl.

Watch your hats.

- Toto, have you seen the papers?

- Yes, dear.

- Then you've read about Father?

- Yes.

- Aren't you ashamed of me?

- Of course not.

Well, I am, terribly.

I'll never forgive myself never. I...

I'm sorry?

- Are you Lorraine Lavond?

- Yes.

The daughter of Paul Lavond?

- Yes. He's my father.

- May I speak freely?

- Yes, of course, monsieur.

- Where are you going, Toto?

I'll be right here, dear.

Won't you sit down, mademoiselle?

I was waiting for you

because our friend here

was good enough to tell me

he was going to meet you.

- Why?

- Well, in searching for you today,

I was fortunate enough

to be directed to him.

You see, mademoiselle...

- I'm a friend of your father's.

- Is he in Paris?

- I served many years with him in prison.

- Where's he now?

- As a matter of fact, we escaped together.

- Oh, please tell me where he is.

I'll search for him, anywhere.

You see, I've hated my father all my life,

and now I've got to find him
and beg his forgiveness.
And ask him to come home with me.
I don't think he ever
really thought you hated him.

- Are you sure?

- Yes.

But he can never come home to you.
My dear child, your father is dead.
Yes. He passed away in a swamp
during our escape from prison.
The last thing he did was
to write a letter to his mother,
which I have given to Toto.
He sent me with a message to you.
He told me if I ever saw you,
to take your hand and tell you
that he loved you very dearly,
and that all those years in prison
he'd watched you grow,
talked to you,
laughed with you, dined with you,
and that he sent you a kiss.
Then, he said,
this was the most important thing of all.
He told me to tell you to forget him.
To find happiness and keep it.
To marry and to give your children
all the love you might have given him
if he hadn't been taken away from you.
It's very kind of you
to bring me this message.

Yes.

Little bit foolish, too.

The police are still after me.

Well, goodbye.

- Goodbye and good luck.

- Thank you.

Well, I better be going.

The sun's almost down.

It'll be up again tomorrow.

Will it? I wonder.

- Goodbye.

- Goodbye.

Toto,

I have the strangest feeling

I've seen him somewhere before.

- You have.

- Where?

He was in the laundry looking for you.

There were so many people around,

he got afraid.

On account of the police, I mean.

- That's how he came to find me.

- Perhaps that's it.

I don't remember.

Remember me?

Oh, Toto.

- It's a nice evening, monsieur.

- Yes.

Probably the nicest evening of my life.