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# Aventure malgache

By Unknown

The entire world has heard about  
the dramatic episodes  
of the French Resistance.  
No one knows better than you  
the importance of this heroic period  
in the history of the French nation.  
The story that we are about to tell  
will teach you nothing.

That, we know.

We tell it, because it is true.

And because it shows that,  
across the seas,  
in the farthest reaches  
of the French Empire  
we are one and the same.

#### MADAGASCAN ADVENTURE

Directed by Alfred Hitchcock  
Produced at Welwyn Studios, England  
with the collaboration  
of French-speaking writers  
artists and technicians  
working in Great Britain.  
London, 1944.

A handful of actors in London,  
were asked  
by the French military authorities  
to form a theatre company  
and perform shows  
for soldiers and civilians  
but also for the many English  
who know and love France.

One of the company's actors was,  
until the war,  
a lawyer in Madagascar.

It is the 28th June 1940.

Listen to his story...

- What's the problem, old boy?  
- I don't understand a thing, that's all.  
What don't you understand?

This character they've given me  
in their new play.

I feel like I'm feeling my way in the dark,  
I can't find anything.

- Let me tell you,

your acting is wonderful. - Yes?  
- But you're playing a different role.  
- Thanks for nothing.  
Think of someone  
and base your character on them.  
Ah, if only you'd known  
my old friend Michel!  
- Michel Simon?  
- It's not a Michel Simon role.  
I wasn't talking about Michel Simon,  
I was referring to Jean Michel,  
Head of the Police in Madagascar.  
But my character  
is not a policeman,  
quite the opposite,  
he's a big time gangster.  
And secondly, I don't know Madagascar  
or your friend Michel.  
Even so, you can still  
base your character on him.  
It's funny  
because you look like him.  
The first time that I saw you,  
I said to myself,  
"Fancy that!  
He's the spitting image of Michel."  
It would be easy, very easy  
to get the two of you confused.  
And you'd agree,  
had you been in court with me  
in Antananarivo in April 1940.  
I declare that my client is innocent.  
An importer of his standing has  
no reason to breach the customs laws.  
The rolls of silk  
that were intended for him  
disappeared from the  
Tamatave custom house shop!  
But I assure you  
that my client did not steal them.  
Who else but him  
would have had an interest  
in making them disappear?  
Those who had an interest

in their being misplaced.

Who then?

These gentlemen from  
the Police Directorate, for instance.  
Whom I formally accuse of plotting,  
conniving, and scheming this entire scam.  
This is a complete fiction, stay tuned to  
find out what happens in the next episode.  
The worst detective novels  
are always written by pseudo-detectives.  
Kindly refrain from entering into any  
controversial debate with the witness!

Your questions

must be addressed through me.

In that case, I accuse, firstly,

The Police Services  
of conspiring to share amongst themselves  
the 20% incentive  
officially paid to those  
who inform the authorities  
about a violation of customs laws.  
The public prosecutor has requested  
a fine of 200,000 francs  
which, along with the tax  
and charges,  
comes to over  
650,000 francs to pay.

The gentlemen  
of the Police Directorate  
would therefore be collecting  
over 100,000 francs  
including the Head of Police himself.  
That's quite enough.

What do you take us for?

For dangerous people  
who have transformed Madagascar  
into a fiefdom of exploitation.

Your Honour, I object!

Mr Clarus, careful what you say!

Your Honour, would you ask  
the witness, Michel,  
whether, in addition to the financial  
interest he has in this affair,  
he has a more direct

and personal interest?

Here we go again, fanciful ramblings!

Oh really!

I ask the court clerk to please  
take note of the following question.

What was it that Michel attempted to do  
to my client's wife?

Your Honour, I object!

If you continue with these  
personal attacks against the witness,  
I shall prevent you from speaking.

I shall take measures  
against such an accusation  
to defend my honour!

Honour? Come on now!

Nothing would prevent me  
from telling you straight  
that you are a gangster, Michel.

Gentlemen, this is intolerable!

The court shall enforce  
all the necessary sanctions.

Hearing adjourned.

See you soon, Michel,  
see you soon.

You'll pay for this, watch out.

Yes, until the next instalment,  
see you soon, Michel.

Yes, I'm beginning to see this chap now:  
a fat, vicious rascal.

No, you're on the wrong track,  
imagine more of a harmless dandy

A dandy, ah, that's different then.

Why didn't you expose Michel's schemes,  
didn't you have any proof?

No proof, my dear boy!

I had more than enough proof to get him,  
and I would have done...

but for a small announcement  
on the radio!

...to ask if they are ready

to join me in finding,

between soldiers,

after the struggle and for honour,

the means of ending hostilities.

Armistice, come on!

It's treachery, more like.

Good god, a Marshal of France,

Ptain, the hero of Verdun.

Will the veterans of Madagascar

accept this surrender?

Never! Never!

My friends!

- We must take immediate action.

- Yes, it's over to you, Mr Clarus.

If you lead the movement,

we'll follow you.

We have to contact

the other divisions on the island.

- Tananarive, Tamatave, Majonka.

- We have to keep up the struggle.

- England is not yet lost.

- And we're not lost either!

- Mass uprising!

- Let's defend the island!

One moment, my friends.

We must remain calm,

keep our heads, eh?

First, we must put ourselves at the  
disposal of the military authorities.

The lady, these gentlemen  
and myself

are part of a single council  
that brings together all the  
veteran groups who were formally rivals.

We have over 5,000 members  
who wish to place themselves  
at your service, General.

Thank you for your Sacred Union.

What are your intentions?

- To continue the war!

- At England's side!

- To keep Madagascar French!

- Despite the collapse of the Metropole.

To help our allies, one day,  
drive the Krauts out of France.

Our first task is to organise  
the defence of the island  
against any attempts at an invasion.

If Japan enters the war soon,  
our military base in Diego Suarez  
will appear very attractive to them.  
Allow me, General, but without wishing  
to appear pessimistic,  
we'll need arms to defend ourselves:  
cannons, planes, tanks, submarines.  
Where will we find these things?  
I say that we must rally  
all those with the desire to fight.  
Don't you worry,  
they'll find the means.  
- England will help us.  
- South Africa too.  
In the name of helping us,  
they'll send troops over,  
occupy the big island and keep it.  
Re-read your history books.  
England already stole  
India and Canada from us  
South Africa has always wanted  
Madagascar and its wealth,  
its minerals, and other riches.  
Let's be realistic.  
Your British friends could easily  
one day become your masters  
Yes, let's be realistic.  
Listen carefully, my friends.  
I say, my friends.  
You'll all admit, I'm sure,  
that here in Madagascar,  
we have just three options:  
to be slaves to the Krauts,  
to endure the Japanese yoke,  
or to bow down to the English.  
I prefer the last option.  
- Oh yes!  
- Absolutely!  
- He's right! Yes!  
- Well said! Well said!  
We're all agreed.  
General, this is not the time  
for personal improvisation.  
We have a leader in France,

Marchal Ptain.  
You should obey him  
and await his orders.  
Indeed, it must be thought through.  
You see, my friends  
if I do nothing  
I go against my conscience,  
and if I act according to your wishes  
I am a rebel.  
Exactly, a rebel.  
Don't forget, that above you  
stands a Governor.  
Would you have him imprisoned,  
by any chance?  
Oh! Slow down.  
We must be sure to see things clearly.  
The General was  
basically a decent fellow,  
though he wasn't the brightest.  
Why didn't you escape  
on the first boat out of there?  
Impossible because Michel  
would have suspected it, wouldn't he?  
He must have suspended  
all exit permits off the island though.  
Of course, the boat service  
had already ceased.  
But we were organised,  
we managed our modest affairs  
without fuss,  
without noise and oh so quietly.  
So why did you stay?  
Out of affection for Michel?  
I stayed on the orders  
of the Resistance.  
My friends needed me  
to organise new departures.  
As a respected lawyer,  
it made things much easier.  
But Michel was no fool,  
didn't he suspect anything?  
Of course, but I was no fool either.  
First, let me tell you,  
I became a bigger Vichy supporter



than all Vichy supporters put together.  
Oh! A complete turnaround!  
Not even Michel could tell what I was.  
- And the Governor?  
- Like two peas in a pod!  
Naturally, we both deplored  
all the escapes that were taking place.  
We've also received a new decree.  
Another one!  
Decrees, orders, and more orders,  
our heads will explode.  
All French nationals  
are banned from leaving French territory,  
be it Metropolitan or colonial,  
to serve in a foreign army.  
The German army, for instance.  
To leave French territories, I ask you.  
What chance is there  
of leaving Madagascar, for example.  
An island, surrounded by water,  
no boat service left,  
no external communication...  
You'd have to grow wings to escape.  
On to other things, Clarus.  
I know the influence you have  
on the natives and the veterans.  
Well, use this influence  
as an aid to public health.  
We absolutely must fight,  
by any means necessary,  
the devious propaganda  
the Gaullists have begun.  
Oh, I know that  
it's growing more and more,  
Governor, count on me.  
You're a good judge of men.  
Allow me to tell you  
that you are also an expert in cigars.  
This one is excellent. Thank you.  
Gentlemen.  
He doesn't seem to be a bad guy.  
Excuse me, Governor,  
but I am not of the same opinion.  
No, no, no. That Clarus is a good guy,

a good guy.  
So, Mr Guyot, what's the news?  
Another Gaullist escape:  
19 officers and non-commissioned officers  
of the main armourer.  
Five civilians,  
two women and a little girl of nine.  
They left Diego on a 40-ton sailboat  
that was owned by the captain  
who led the expedition  
along with  
Mr Gabard and Mr Emela.  
That's it, I was sure of it.  
He knows everything, I tell you.  
He knows everything  
about the Resistance,  
even if he's not its leader.  
Have Clarus followed.  
I want to know  
his each and every move.  
I need evidence, at all costs.  
I have my own opinion.  
Yes, but no accusations  
without proof, Michel.  
Personal animosity  
is of no interest to me.  
The day you bring me proof,  
I'll listen, not before.  
Well, you'll get them.  
Just one piece of evidence  
and I'll have him court martialled.  
But listen to me carefully,  
the evidence must be irrefutable.  
Irrefutable! Understood?  
Fear not. You'll get your proof,  
and soon.  
Ouch, it's getting complicated.  
But despite that you continued  
even with this informer on your heels?  
Nothing so easy, nothing so simple.  
Caution, discipline, secrecy,  
absolute secrecy.  
Good evening Louis,  
forgive our lateness

but there's something new  
and a change to our plans.  
Good evening everyone.  
Five of you were to be ready to leave  
on Sunday night.

- Jules.

- My group is ready, right away.

Perfect, you'll leave this very night  
and not Sunday.

Michel is becoming  
increasingly suspicious.

He's even wary  
of his friend Guillaume.

That beats everything!

The hunter hunted.

So, departure.

Embarkation at 2am in the morning.

- I'm leaving with them.

- That's what we all want.

But, Armand, the work  
that you do here is vital.

Keeping watch over  
the goods dispatched on ships,  
you call that a job  
of vital importance?

The British Admiralty  
is of that opinion,  
your reports go out first  
in our secret broadcasts  
to our friends on the outside.

Your job as a pointer  
allows you  
to nose around everywhere  
without suspicion.

I understand, I'll stay.

So, my friends, let's be clear,  
under no circumstances  
are you to move from here.

We'll organise your luggage,  
a guide will come and get you  
from here at...

At exactly midnight.

Understood? Is that clear?

You are not to move.

They think we're at the cinema.  
Goodnight, gentlemen.  
Good evening Clarus.  
Guillaud, thank you for all you have done.  
I'll lie low a while.  
Goodbye Jules.  
Goodbye Pierre.  
Georges.  
Yes?  
Ah, you are very lucky to be leaving,  
I envy you.  
Mr Clarus.  
I'd like to say goodbye to someone.  
My fiance.  
It's close by, just for a moment.  
No, it's impossible.  
Go. Be quick.  
Ha! Sentimental fool that I was.  
Dear Pierre would never know  
that his farewell kisses  
were to change the entire  
course of our adventure.  
Oh darling, at last.  
I thought you'd never come.  
- What's wrong?  
- I almost didn't come. I shouldn't have.  
But I had to see you, so Clarus...  
Clarus? What are you saying?  
Yvonne, darling. Listen to me.  
You know that some  
are escaping the island  
to join the allied forces.  
Well, Clarus is in charge  
of this movement  
and me...  
I didn't tell you before  
because I didn't want to upset you...  
Pierrot.  
Yes, darling. I'm going too.  
I have to.  
But our wedding, it's all arranged!  
You won't be back within a month!  
Possibly years.  
Pierrot, think it over.

Think what it would mean for us!  
All our happiness, all our lives.  
You can't do this to me.  
You're not allowed.  
Yvonne, darling.  
I love you, you know that.  
Our love is my life,  
but we're not free.  
A country lives by the value and soul  
of its men and of its women, Yvonne.  
And you'll be brave, I know.  
That's why I love you.  
And I have faith in you.  
I have to go now.  
They're waiting for me.  
No, I'll not let you! No, you can't!  
I'm not leaving you,  
nothing can separate us.  
I'll return and we'll have joy,  
happiness, peace.  
Kiss me, Yvonne! Say goodbye.  
Goodbye.  
Hello?  
Hello, Mademoiselle?  
The Police.  
The Police Directorate.  
Two hours  
after this telephone call,  
I found myself in a cell.  
I spent 35 days  
in solitary confinement.  
The 36th day,  
bored of playing with my little mouse,  
and having caught all the flies,  
counted all the cockroaches...  
- Ah, it's Mr Pannis.  
- Yes, it's me. Hello, dear sir.  
My dear colleague.  
If only you knew how grateful I am.  
You're my first contact  
with the outside world.  
Dear sir, the entire colony  
is sorry to learn of your arrest.  
- All the lawyers too.

- All of them? I doubt that!  
You've always been good to me  
and I felt it my duty  
to offer you my services.  
That's very kind of you.  
Oh, I must admit,  
the idea of defending a cause clbre...  
Naturally.  
What exactly  
have you been accused of?  
I have no idea.  
I've not even been questioned.  
What are they saying in town?  
Resistance, I think,  
conspiracy to escape too.  
Really, and you'd be willing  
to defend me  
despite the seriousness  
of the charges?  
That's very kind of you.  
They organised a court martial.  
The first in Madagascar,  
it's very serious.  
Michel must have sworn  
to get me this time.  
He won't get us, believe me.  
I say us, I mean, if I defend you.  
Do you think we have a chance  
against Michel?  
What proof could Michel  
have against you?  
That's exactly  
what I was wondering.  
No doubt you were clever enough  
to burn any compromising documents.  
Dear Pannis, my documents  
were not compromising.  
All the better. Give me  
all the details of your story.  
The tiniest of details... I need to know  
the pitfalls so as to avoid them.  
Of course.  
No doubt, you must have  
letters and telegrams.

Telegrams? I sent many.  
In our profession, indeed.  
It might be used against you,  
by claiming, for instance,  
that they have a double meaning.  
Michel is capable of anything.  
You will need all the details.  
I only have my memory  
to help me in here.  
When would you need  
all these details by?  
As soon as possible.  
I brought you everything you need.  
Here.  
Excuse me.  
I don't have anything to write with.  
You'll have it  
by tomorrow morning.  
I'll work straight through.  
Perfect.  
Goodbye, kind sir.  
Goodbye, dear colleague.  
Dirty scoundrel, rotten sneak.  
Turncoat!  
I would have thought  
Michel was too intelligent  
to think you'd have fallen  
for the trap.  
For, I understand him very well now,  
the chap.  
I see him, very clearly.  
I too saw him very clearly.  
What I saw clearly was  
that my Michel was very troubled.

**First telegram:**

Clearly!  
"The chestnuts will ripen  
on the 35th April."  
- There are no chestnuts in Madagascar.  
- There's no 35th April either.  
Is that all you've found?  
Sir, I did 10 years at the  
ministry in Paris, I know my job.

It shows.

- May I suggest an explanation.

- An explanatory explanation?

The telegrams are on two levels.

Once we've deciphered them,  
we have to uncover the meaning,  
providing we find the code.

My role is restricted  
to the first level, sir.

Basically, we still need to find the code.

Pablo, I suspected this a long time ago.

Do you have the information I wanted?

Yes, on your orders,

I checked all the bookshops in Tananarive.

Impossible to find a copy  
of Les Fables de La Fontaine.

Yes, they've all disappeared.

They were sold suddenly three months ago.

No one knows why.

They couldn't tell me who to,  
but mainly to children and natives.

But someone sent them.

But I get exactly the same information  
from each and every town in the colony.

This time I think I've got them.

The key is in La Fontaine.

That was quite risky sending  
all those coded telegrams.

Oh yes, I admit I was more  
of an amateur conspirator back then.

I'd never make such mistakes now.

I can just see that toad Michel  
at the court martial,  
laughing, triumphant,  
gloating at his success.

No, his attitude was rather different...  
more, let's see, how should I say...

So, gentlemen,  
you have the 132 decoded telegrams,  
either sent or received  
by the accused.

And these telegrams prove, irrefutably,  
that Clarus was one of the organisers,  
if not the head of the Resistance.



Therefore, I would like to request capital punishment against Clarus. Does the defence have anything to say? The court should note my client's honesty, for he says, yes, I sent the telegrams, yes, I knew about the escape but I defy anybody to prove that in the last three months, he took part in the Resistance movement. Here then, is the crucial point the prosecution must prove. Otherwise, you should acquit my client, or, at the very least, allow for extenuating circumstances. The Court Martial gives Paul Clarus the death penalty. He is to be executed 24 hours after the ruling. So, you were killed. Luckily I was a Verdun war veteran. Apparently, Marchal Ptain himself sent a cable to have my sentence reduced. Ptain, such sweet irony. Take note, angel Gabriel. Yes, they gave me five years forced labour. And what of the Resistance? - I was still in touch with the Resistance. - Really? Yes, even from my small cell, with my alarm clock pressed to my ear. Michel never found out about the alarm clock. My little alarm clock! You were just a radio transmitter but I liked you very much. Your murmurs were sweeter than any lover's. Tell me,

did Michel lose interest in you?  
Oh no. It took him nine months  
to come up with something.  
Take the handcuffs off.  
That'll be fine, leave us.  
Come closer, Clarus.  
See the trust I'm showing you.  
It may well be the last time  
we meet, Clarus.  
I'd like us to talk, man to man.  
Come on, a glass of rum.  
It won't hurt.  
I have bad news for you.  
You're leaving. To the labour camp.  
Trans-Saharan railway.  
It's deeply regrettable, Clarus.  
A man such as yourself,  
to lose everything  
in this whole business.  
Tilting at windmills.  
To end up in a forced labour camp  
when you could have...  
Well, I feel pity, not for you,  
but to those closest to you,  
all those you care about,  
and that you've sacrificed.  
It doesn't matter to me  
if you don't believe me,  
but I'd like to give you  
one last chance.  
I can prevent your departure.  
To keep you in Madagascar,  
make your five years more bearable,  
let you see your family more often  
and give you regular news of them.  
Go on, drink.  
So, the cards are on the table,  
old boy.  
I can cancel your departure, if...  
naturally, there's an "if"...  
If you tell me  
where your secret transmitter is,  
the operator's name,  
and the code used.

So, are you going to spill the beans?  
Will you come clean?  
Go on, drink, it sobers you up.  
The condemned man's last drink.  
To your health,  
rotten old hypocrite, crook.  
A little overdramatic, my character  
would never react in such a way.  
Your character?  
What are you talking about?  
I'm speaking of my role, my guy.  
Ha! He's pinched your Michel from you!  
If you want any news of him,  
I'll know who to go to.  
So your only hope was for  
the Resistance to break you out.  
And all the boats transporting  
smuggled goods.  
And for the one in a million chance that  
the British Navy intercepts your convoy.  
One in a million chance.  
Come and take a look!  
On the gangway!  
They're checking the horizon  
with their binoculars.  
Edouard, there's smoke.  
There's smoke but there's no fire.  
No, that's it, our friends  
have sent my message.  
Yeah, yeah.  
Come and see.  
Come and see this smoke.  
Come quickly. Look carefully at it.  
You see!  
It's freedom that's on its way!  
I'm sure that they're English boats.  
And the miracle happens.  
The life of Paul Clarus, Episode 9.  
I persuaded the Allied Authorities  
to help me create  
a radio broadcast in order  
to get the Madagascans  
on their side.  
Somewhere in the Indian Ocean,

Free Madagascar soon called out  
to its friends and enemies.  
You had to speak to the French  
but also to Madagascans,  
Indians, Chinese, in languages  
they could understand.  
That must have required  
a huge number of people.  
Hello, hello Madagascar!  
Free Madagascar  
speaking this evening.  
Proclaim Madagascar's political  
and economic autonomy,  
and support the Allies.  
Everybody, listen to me carefully,  
everybody!  
You too Michel!  
You hypocritical old ass!  
Vichy supporter, child of Ptain,  
and sneaky criminal!  
Vichy will let the Japanese  
take Madagascar over,  
just like in Indochina.  
But not the Allies.  
When they arrive,  
welcome them as liberators,  
not as enemies.  
Do not fight, despite the orders  
of the Vichy traitors.  
Good night and until tomorrow.  
The Royal special tribunal  
has just condemned  
ex-convict, Clarus, to death,  
for seditious and anti-French  
propaganda on the radio.  
And my predictions came about.  
On 4th May 1942,  
the British landed at Diego Suarez.  
Vichy supporters  
gave the order to fight.  
The English occupied  
the town militarily.  
But, two weeks later,  
the English General Sturge,

formally proclaimed  
that the only flag that is to fly  
over the French town hall,  
over the French town  
of Diego Suarez  
is the French flag.  
Michel must have understood  
your warnings,  
and fled to a safe place.  
Old boy, you haven't yet understood  
Michel's character.  
The truth is that as soon as  
he learnt of the Allied landings...  
Shamed be he who thinks ill of this.  
Oh, that's touching,  
it brings tears to my eyes.  
Don't tell me the English  
were taken in by him?  
- No!  
- He was arrested.  
It was his turn to be imprisoned!  
And you claim, dear Clarus,  
that nature has endowed me  
with the necessary attributes  
to play the role of the despicable  
and rotten Michel!  
Listen old fool, I tried helping you create  
the character that you're supposed to play.  
And I tell you it's an insult!  
An insult from an insignificant  
and low-grade lawyer.  
Monstrous pig!  
- Watch your mouth!  
- Hey, come on chaps!  
What's going on in here?  
We're just rehearsing,  
just rehearsing.  
Isn't that so, old stooge!  
Yes, yes.  
What did she say?  
Let's go, it's all over now.