

T O P A Z E

Screen Play by

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- - -

Continuity by

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- - -

From the Play by

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- - -

FADE IN

1 EXT. DESERTED PARIS STREET - NIGHT

An apartment house, a lamp post, six inches of snow on the ground and it keeps on gently falling. A couple of garbage cans covered with snow are in front of the entrance of the apartment house, and it is a dark night.

The CAMERA MOVES QUICKLY FORWARD and in search of a window which might prove interesting. It moves quickly from window to window. It finally decides on one which has a streak of light moving out of it.

AS CAMERA MOVES FORWARD:

LAP DISSOLVE and KEEP MOVING TO:

LAP DISSOLVE IN

2

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT including two armchairs at each side of a fireplace.

SOUND:

WE HEAR THE STRAINS OF A CHARMING
FRENCH WALTZ COMING OVER THE RADIO.

Our heroine, Miss Coco, is charmingly curled up in the armchair on the right. She is in a fetching negligee and about her is an aura of pleasant satiety. She is putting together a jig-saw puzzle on a small card table.

In the armchair adjoining is the Baron de Latour-Latour. The Baron has his coat off, a smoking jacket on, his stocking feet stretched toward the fire, a lap-board across his knees, and is engaged in a game of solitaire. He also seems to be alone in this room, with no more thought for the piquante lady in the armchair than for the Nabob of Pasoda.

Lying on the rug in front of the fireplace, a fat and humorless cat stretches and basks.

Never have we seen a more domestic couple or looked in upon two people more at home, more oblivious of each other, and more contented, than the two figures before us.

3

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of the cat stretched before the fire.

4

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of the Baron's shoeless feet. He moves them voluptuously.

5

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Coco's feet. They are in a foot-bag.

CLOSE UP of the Baron. We notice while studying this abstracted nobleman that he is not the most honest of God's creatures. He is slipping cards out of the deck to make the game come out. As he is thus cheating himself, he gives Coco a furtive look.

CLOSE UP of Coco. She is reading composedly and has not seen the Baron's stealthy act.

CLOSE UP Baron. Satisfied that his skullduggery has passed unnoticed he places a card in position with a sigh of triumph.

SOUND:

THE PHONE RINGS.

TWO SHOT of Baron and Coco. She answers the phone.

COCO

Hello ... Hello ... No, I haven't asked him yet. I will now....wait a minute.

(she turns to the Baron)

Philippe!

(the Baron looks at her with that kindly, abstracted stare peculiar to perfect domesticity; she continues)
Darling, you've got to help me -- my sister wants a tutor for Alphonse. (1)

CONTINUED

BARON

That brat! It's a waste of education.
Tell your dear sister she's throwing
money out of the window.

He has been removing a notebook from his hip pocket.
He studies this thoughtfully.

10

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Baron.

BARON (Cont'd)

(reading from the book)

Professor Auguste A. Topaze, in care
of the Doctor Stegg Academy, Passy 36-54.
(2)

COCO

Give me that.

He carefully tears a part of the page out and gives
her the piece of paper.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS the piece of paper over to Coco.

COCO (Cont'd)

(returns to phone)

Hello. Philippe has a marvellous tutor.
I'll get him tomorrow myself.... Professor
Topaze... That's all right. How are you?
Kiss Alphonse for me.

(the Baron grimaces wryly over
his solitaire)

Good-bye. (5)

CONTINUED

INSERT
SOUND:

CLOSE UP OF THE CLOCK. |
It must be a carrillon clock. It
begins chiming loudly the hour of
eleven.

BARON'S VOICE

Zounds! (4)

11

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TWO SHOT of Coco and Baron.

COCO

What's wrong? (5)

BARON

Oh, I've got to go. (6)

COCO

(slightly petulantlly)
You don't love me any more. (7)

BARON

I adore you, darling, but you know
as well as I do that I must get home
to my wife. (8)

Baron, exits from shot.

CLOSE UP of Coco.

COCO

(as if the matter bored her)
Of course. You must go home. Home and babies always come first. I forgot, my poor little henpecked Fifi. (9)

CLOSE UP of Baron. He is changing his smoking jacket and it would seem he were in a hurry.

BARON

I should think you'd grow tired of being jealous -- with so little excuse.

(as Coco fails to answer, he crosses, putting on his coat, and stands behind her; the CAMERA MOVES with him)

Dearest, my wife and I no longer speak to each other except for the most formal of reasons.

(he kisses her on the top of the head)

A kiss is unknown between us. (10)

COCO

(a bit sarcastically)
A platonic marriage... (11)

BARON

Exactly. The Baroness and I have become like two angry strangers. We dwell like enemy tribes in different wings of the house. When I look at our child I marvel. The poor boy seems like the monument to some forgotten campaign. (12)

CONTINUED

COCO

You're really faithful to me? (13)

BARON

Superbly faithful. I only wish you
could ask my wife. (14)

COCO

Do you think she'll ever divorce you? (15)

BARON

It is inevitable. No marriage could
survive a love such as I have for you. (16)

The Butler enters in the background. They look up.

BUTLER

Mr. de Faireville calling, sir. (17)

BARON

(triumphantly, to Coco)
You see, my friends always know where to
find me. (18)
(he nods to the Butler, who
exits)

COCO

When am I going to see you again? (19)

BARON

(with the air of Santa Claus)
Tomorrow morning before you awake, I'll
usher in the dawn. (20)
(he seats himself to put on his shoes)

CLOSE SHOT of Henri de Faireville at the door. We have here an aristocratic French politician. Exactly what he does in the world of politics will not concern us. It is obvious he would be no good at rousing the public. He is a nervous, easily confused fellow. At this moment he is in a high state of perturbation.

The CAMERA RETREATS before him as he comes into the room.

HENRI

I called your home. I'm sorry. (21)

BARON'S VOICE

Anybody answer? (22)

Henri has joined the Baron and Coco.

The CAMERA HOLDS them in a THREE SHOT.

HENRI

Your wife. (23)

BARON

(annoyed)
I wish you wouldn't do that. (24)

HENRI

I had to find you. (25)

BARON

(intoning for Coco's benefit)
You know I am never at home. (26)
(he looks at Coco)

CONTINUED

HENRI

(recalling his manners as a guest)
Excuse me, Coco. How are you? It's
dreadfully cold outside. (27)
(he shakes hands with her)

COCO

Henri! You've got a fever... (28)

BARON

Nonsense! (29)

HENRI

Coco is right. I am suffering.
Philippe, I must talk to you.
Something has been bothering me
all day. (30)

BARON

Your stomach? (31)

HENRI

(pointing dramatically to
his lungs)
No, my soul! (32)

COCO

(smiling)
Dear me!
(stands)
May I leave the clinic? (33)

BARON

(to Coco)
It will only take a moment.

Coco exits. The Baron sits down and turns
to Henri.

bc

CONTINUED

BARON (cont'd)

Sit down, Henri! (34)

HENRI

No. I must walk.
(he starts to pace)

the CAMERA RETREATING to take in Henri, pacing,
and the Baron in the background. The Baron has
one shoe on and resumes his dressing.

HENRI (cont'd)

Philippe, I am a politician. I admit
it is an unholy profession. But there
are some things even a politician
can't do. (35)

15

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Baron.

BARON

(looks at Henri through his
monocle with some amazement)
For instance? (36)

16

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Henri. He sets himself to deliver
his tremendous bulletin.

HENRI

He cannot vote against his conscience. (37)

CLOSE UP - Baron.

BARON
(sarcastically)
It's been done. (38)

CLOSE UP - Henri.

HENRI
Not by a de Faireville!
(he removes a bottle from his
pocket and comes forward)

The CAMERA MOVES with him, bringing the Baron
into a TWO SHOT.

HENRI (cont'd)
Philippe, I refuse to vote for this
water. It contains neither iron,
sulphur, potassium, nor phosphates of
any sort. That label is a mass of lies.
(sets the bottle down (39)
emphatically on the mantelpiece)

BARON
Granted. But, Henri--
(he rises and faces Henri)
You are forgetting that I, your old
friend, manufacture and sell this product.
It'll only take you a minute to vote,
and presto! We'll have this bottle in
all the public schools. (40)

ANGLE SHOT of the Baron in the foreground and Henri in the background.

HENRI

I can't do it. (41)
(he sits)

BARON

Henri, have you forgotten? (42)
(he looks sly and rubs his thumb
and forefinger together)

HENRI

No, but I'm trying to forget it.
Philippe, that bottle of water is
of benefit to nobody! (43)

BARON

There you are wrong. It may have no
effect on the well-being of its
consumers, Henri, but think of the
miracles it will work for you and
me and those we love. And are we
nobody? (44)

HENRI

It is swindling the public. (45)

CLOSE UP of Baron. He is standing in front of the fireplace toasting his fanny luxuriously as he speaks.

BARON

If the public doesn't like being swindled, it can always have a revolution. Until they shoot us, we must be gentlemen. Besides, what of your stamp collection? Where, may I ask, are you going to get the money to buy those Bolivian stamps? (46)

21

INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TWO SHOT - Henri is in the chair and the Baron still by the fireplace.

HENRI

You refuse to take me seriously. (47)

BARON

I refuse to humor you. (48)

He pats Henri on the back, and takes his elbow, causing him to rise. The couple move toward the door.

The CAMERA ACCOMPANIES them.

HENRI

What if somebody finds out? Imagine how we would all feel to be exposed as swindlers. (49)

CONTINUED

BARON

You will automatically become a financial wizard. Come on, I'm in a hurry. (50)

He is walking toward the hall; Henri is accompanying him.

HENRI

(sighs resignedly)
Oh, dear... (51)

BARON

(looks at him)
Henri, I feel you have come through a great crisis. (52)

The Baron and Henri are now passing Coco's bedroom. Her door opens and Coco pops her head out. They halt by the door.

COCO

(to Henri)
Are you cured? (53)

HENRI

Yes --

(pause)

I'm afraid I'm a stamp collector first and a friend of the people second. (54)

CLOSE UP of Coco. Coco looks at the Baron.

COCO

I'd like to be a stamp collection and
have someone's undivided attention. (55)

23 INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TWO SHOT of Baron and Coco.

BARON

Er-r--we will resume in the morning. (56)

COCO

You'll wake me up? (57)

BARON

With a guitar under your window. (58)

HENRI'S VOICE

Good night, Coco. (59)

BARON

(kisses Coco goodnight; a bit
soulfully)
Goodnight, my dear. Be sorry for me
that I must leave you. (60)
(he exits)

ON Coco, standing in the doorway --

FADE OUT

24

INT. LATOUR-LATOUR BARONIAL HALLWAY & STAIRCASE-NIGHT

SOUND

LONG SHOT. It is midnight. We hear mysterious music. The ghosts of this ancient family patrol the deserted hallway. We hear a furtive little sound of a key being inserted in the outside of the large hall door.

25

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

CLOSE UP at the door of M. Latour, our erring benedict, as he enters like a Venetian conspirator. His head comes first, and then, satisfied with the quiet, the rest of him follows. He closes the door, carefully behind him. He stands as before Austerlitz, reconnoitering with his eyes to the right and to the left.

26

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

LONG SHOT of the hallway with a door in the b.g. The Baron then begins his strategic march to the bedroom. Baron though he is, and the last of a proud line, or next to the last, he proceeds with all the low class furtiveness of a Bronx lodge member coming home. We see him tiptoe to the door. Here his cunning deepens. He opens this door with infinite caution and enters.

27

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Baron at the door. He closes the door and turns his glance across the room.

28

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of what the Baron is regarding so apprehensively. Asleep in a large French canopied bed is the Baroness. The bed coverings make an unlovely hillock in the middle. Max, a Pomeranian, is asleep at the foot of the bed.

CLOSE UP of Max. He has heard the intruder and sets up an unnerving racket.

CLOSE UP of the Baron. He comes to a petrified halt in the middle of the room and does his best to quiet the dog. He makes appealing faces; he commands silence with his finger; he tries to coax the dog to his side perhaps to kill him.

CLOSE UP of Baroness. She has opened her eyes and sat up in bed. She switches a light on. Sitting upright, supported by a host of pillows, the Baroness has a disquieting military air about her.

CLOSE UP of Baron. He smiles ingratiatingly.

BARON

Good evening, my sweet. (61)

CLOSE SHOT of Baroness. The Baroness comes to her senses with a bang.

BARONESS

(staring at her night clock,
which shows twelve-fifteen)
Where have you been? (62)

CONTINUED

The Baron comes into the shot.

BARON

Darling, I'm exhausted. I've had
the most tiring day. As it was I
left before the conference was over.
(he smiles winningly, leans
over the Baroness and kisses
her)

Did you miss me? (63)

BARONESS

I've been almost out of my mind
waiting for you. (64)

BARON

(he looks at the dog angrily)
Hortense, I draw the line at sleeping
with Max. He has his own bed. (65)

BARONESS

Leave him alone. He's very nervous.
Phillippe, I don't know how to tell you..
(66)

BARON

What? (67)

BARONESS

Promise me, you'll control yourself. (68)

BARON

Darling, I'll be as stoical as a turtle.
What is it? (69)

CONTINUED

BARONESS

Something dreadful has happened to
our son. (70)

BARON

(still undressing)
He'll outgrow it! (71)
(he starts toward the bathroom
door which is in the background)

BARONESS

Phillippe, I'm talking to you! Come
here at once! (72)

He returns and takes a card from her hand.

34

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of the Baron, as he starts for the
bathroom again; he reads aloud.

BARON

"Charlemagne de Latour-Latour. Report
Card for November. Geography 0,
Mathematics 0, Chemistry 0, History 0,
General Knowledge 30. Signed, A.
Topaze." Ha!

(he puts the card on his washstand
and starts to brush his teeth)
A fascinating record. He must have
had an off-month. (73)

CLOSE UP of Baroness and Max. Bathroom in background.

BARONESS

It's a plot against our child. A plot fostered by that creature, what's-his-name, Topaze! (74)

BARON'S VOICE

Topaze or not to pass - that is the question. (75)

BARONESS

(screaming at him in the bathroom)
This is no time for joking, Philippe! Our son Charlemagne, descended from an illustrious line of heroes and statesmen, is held up to the world as practically an idiot! (76)

BARON - -

(entering in pajamas)
Has he been eating well? (77)

BARONESS

I demand that you see the Minister of Education! (78)

BARON

Darling, I doubt if he could spare the time for tutoring. (79)
(he sits on a chair at the foot of the bed and starts to remove his shoes and socks)

BARONESS

You will drive me mad with your levity.... Oh, you don't love me! (80)

CONTINUED

BARON

I adore you. I am only wondering whether our child isn't perhaps a little at fault. (81)

BARONESS

Charlemagne has explained the matter to me. This Topaze has deliberately attacked him. He holds a grudge, a sinister grudge against him. (82)

A door in the right background opens and Charlemagne appears in his pajamas. He is a boy of twelve.

36INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Charlemagne as he enters room.

CHARLEMAGNE

Did you call me, Mama? (83)

CAMERA BACKS to include the Baron.

BARON

How do you do, my fine scholar? I have just been looking over your astonishing record. (84)

CAMERA now includes the Baroness.

BARONESS

Phillippe, don't make the child cry! (85)

CHARLEMAGNE

(tenderly; to his mother)
I won't cry, Mama. (86)

BARONESS

Tell your father what you told me.
Go on - have no fear, Charlemagne. (87)

37 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

Well, I'm not the idiot, that old
Professor Topaze is. Er - um - (88)
(he mumbles a second)

BARONESS'S VOICE

Go on, dearest. Don't falter. (89)

CHARLEMAGNE

Well, he's a communist and I can
prove it. (90)

38 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

TWO SHOT of Baron and Charlemagne.

BARON

What! (91)

CONTINUED

CHARLEMAGNE

Yes, daddy. He's against the rich and he doesn't like me because I'm a de Latour-Latour. (92)

BARON

You should try to win him over. (93)

CHARLEMAGNE

Let him try to win me over, if he's so smart. (94)

BARONESS'S VOICE

Quite right, darling. (95)

CHARLEMAGNE

He gives all the good marks to the working people's sons. If you've got a dirty neck and holes in your stockings, you get a hundred in everything. One fellow - Charlot's - his name - and just because his father's a grocer or something old Topaze always gives him a hundred. (96)

39

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

THREE SHOT. Baroness in foreground, Charlemagne and Baron. Baron rises.

BARONESS

Come here, darling. You must stop fretting.

(to the Baron)

Philippe, I want this Topaze removed at once. (97)

CONTINUED

CHARLEMAGNE

Thanks, Mama. (98)

BARON

(with perhaps a note of hope
in his voice)

Does this - monster ever beat you? (99)

CHARLEMAGNE

(staring for an instant)

Yes, all the time. (100)

(he bursts suddenly into tears)

BARON

(very interested)

Is that so? Where? (101)

40INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of Baroness, with Baron in background.

BARONESS

(seizing her child passionately)

My poor darling! Come here!

(to the Baron)

You heartless father!

(to Charlemagne)

Poor baby! I'm not going to let you
sleep alone. (102)

SOUND

She pulls the child into the bed and he lies
beside her, sobbing convulsively as she caresses
him. The dog starts barking. The Baron regards
this ensemble.

CLOSE UP of Baron.

BARON

(tentatively)
Perhaps we'd all be more comfortable
if I used the bed in the other wing. (103)

MEDIUM SHOT of Baroness, taking in the whole bed.

BARONESS

Philippe!
(she throws open the covers)
Your place is here. (104)

BARON

(gets into the bed)
Darling, I must get some sleep. I
have to be up very early. (105)

As Max, the Pomeranian, begins walking a circle
around and around on top of the Baron, finally
settling himself and beginning to scratch violently,
we

FADE OUT

43EXT. OF STEGG ACADEMY - DAY

A magnificent limousine is drawing up in front of the school. Snow is falling.

44EXT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

MED. SHOT of door of car. The Chauffeur alights and opens the door, and reveals that pearl among scholars, Charlemagne.

45EXT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

CLOSE UP of Charlemagne in the car. He is regarding some street urchins playing in the snow.

46EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - DAY

TWO SHOT - chauffeur in foreground, Charlemagne in background. The chauffeur hesitates; fearful of interrupting these young meditations, then he leans forward and murmurs politely.

CHAUFFEUR -

Here we are, sir. (106)

Charlemagne slowly turns his head, gives the chauffeur a withering look, and resumes his perusal of the street gamins. He heaves a long sigh and steps heavily to the running board. The chauffeur is holding a pair of overshoes in his hand. Charlemagne extends one foot as the chauffeur bends down.

47EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP - Charlemagne's feet. The chauffeur struggles to put the overshoes on.

CLOSE UP - Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

Hurry up, butter fingers.

49

EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - DAY

MED. SHOT - Charlemagne and chauffeur. The shoes being on, Charlemagne deigns to walk. The chauffeur, carrying the boy's books, follows. The CAMERA PANS them across a wide sidewalk. At the entrance, Charlemagne halts on the step and extends one foot at a time to have the overshoes removed. During this operation he is thoughtfully making a snowball.

CHARLEMAGNE (cont.)

O.K. (107)

CHAUFFEUR

(tipping his hat)

Very good, sir. (108)

(~~the chauffeur~~ starts away with the shoes)

The CAMERA BACKS to include chauffeur and Charlemagne. Our young hero waits until he has walked about eight feet and then lets him have it on the back of the neck with a snowball. This deed done, Charlemagne speaks.

CHARLEMAGNE

How's that? (109)
(~~he~~ goes into the school)

The CAMERA PANS TO CLOSE UP of the chauffeur.

CONTINUED

CHAUFFEUR

I wish he was my son! (110)

The car pulls away.

50 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT - most of the young students are seated. There is general clamor and horseplay. Charlemagne comes down as aisle on the way to his desk. He knocks several books from their desks as he passes. He arrives at his desk in the rear of the class and in camera foreground. Two cronies, next to Charlemagne, the best dressed students in the class, cross to him.

51 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of Charlemagne and his two cronies.

FIRST CRONY

Have you done the potassium lesson? (111)

CHARLEMAGNE

I should say not. (112)

SECOND CRONY

You better look at it. It's pretty hard. (113)

FIRST CRONY

Here it is, on page eight-six. (114)
(he hands Charlemagne a book)

51CONTINUED

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF BOOK. IT IS ENTITLED, "FIRST STEPS IN CHEMISTRY" AND SIGNED "A. A. TOPAZE".

52INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MED. SHOT of Charlemagne and cronies. First Crony opens the book to page eighty-six. Charlemagne takes the book and tears the page out of the book and continues tearing it into small bits and starts hiding the bits away in the full inkwell. The inkwell overflows. Our little hero ignores this.

CHARLEMAGNE

(poking away into the inkwell).
This is what I think of the lesson --
and of Professor Topaze! (115)

The cronies are lost in admiration.

53EXT. STREET - DAY

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of a pair of leaky shoes. They are scuffling along hurriedly. We PAN UP of a full length shot of Professor Topaze. This amiable, bearded and confused looking pedagogue with his leaky shoes and almost scarecrow clothes is laden down with text books, copy books, test tubes which stick out of his coat pocket, and his chemical retort is under his arm. As he walks he begins to sniff the air. He looks to the left and sees a steaming chestnut stand.

MED. SHOT of Chestnut Vendor and Stand.

VENDOR

Good morning, good morning, Professor
Topaze. (116)

Topaze enters the shot.

TOPAZE

Good morning, my dear sir. That's a
very fine odor you are giving the
countryside.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF THE WARM CHESTNUTS WITH THE
VENDOR'S HAND CARESSING THEM.

Topaze stands for a moment hesitant, and ogling the
warm chestnuts, and then speaks in an apologetic
voice.

55

EXT. STREET - DAY

CLOSE UP - Topaze.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

You'll have to excuse me. I haven't
time today. Tomorrow perhaps. (117)

With an ingratiating smile, Topaze hurries on
through the snow. He looks back for a last sniff
of this heady odor. The CAMERA MOVES with him.
Topaze enters the school.

SOUND:

ANGLE SHOT of long bare corridor in Stegg Academy. Headmaster Stegg, a wizened, choleric little man, is pacing the hallway that opens on to the various classrooms. He is looking firmly and with an intolerance that comes natural to him at the hurrying boys who pass. The warning bell is sounding. They greet him with deference and receive a stare for their pains.

Topaze enters the shot and starts to pass Stegg with the same schoolboy's brief and deferential salute.

TOPAZE

(to Stegg)

Good morning, sir. (118)

STEGG

One moment, Dr. Topaze.

I have some good news for you. (119)

Topaze crosses to Stegg.

-

57

INT. CORRIDOR OF ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of Topaze and Stegg.

TOPAZE

Is it -- is it about my raise in salary? (120)

STEGG

Much better. I am pleased to report that owing to my tireless efforts the academic palms are now within your grasp. (121)

TOPAZE

(overcome)

Oh, I have received the palms! Doctor Stegg -- (122)

(he stops and seives his hand)

STEGG

Not so fast, Doctor Topaze. Twelve members of the Academy have now read your First Steps in Chemistry and are favorably disposed. There remain but eight members, which is three members less than last year. (123)

TOPAZE

(trying to be happy)
Then I shall not be mentioned in this year's list? (124)

STEGG

Yes and no.

(they recommence their walk,
the CAMERA ACCOMPANYING)
Colonel Lespinasse informs me that you have been awarded the palms, in a spiritual but not a political sense. That is to say, morally! (125)

TOPAZE

Morally? Well, that's something! I must thank you. It gives me great hope. (126)

STEGG

Dr. Topaze, for ten years -- (127)

TOPAZE

Eleven -- (128)

STEGG

For eleven years I have been demanding that the Academy recognize your merits. It has cost me a great deal of time and money. (129)

FULL SHOT - Through the back wall which contains a long window, we see the playground, trees, gymnastic apparatus, falling snow, etc. In the f.g., the children are conducting a minor Bedlam.

We see Topaze passing the window on his way to the classroom entrance. One of the children spies him and yells the news to his classmates. No words are distinguishable in the racket which now miraculously subsides. Of a sudden, all is quiet and orderly, and every child in his place. Topaze enters through the door in the b.g.

TOPAZE

(surveying his little charges)
Good morning, gentlemen. (135)

CHILDREN

(rising and speaking in unison)
Good morning, Professor Topaze. (136)

Topaze smiles happily at their greeting. The children sit at their desks. Topaze looks around the rather dark room, considers a second, and then switches on the light.

The CAMERA MOVES FORWARD to a CLOSER SHOT of Topaze. He goes to a small clothes-tree, removes his threadbare, worn coat and hangs it up with a coat hanger. He puts on his working coat, a garment even sadder than the other. He removes his cuffs. He returns to his desk, pausing before a small, glowing stove. Here he treats himself to a bit of luxurious heat. He rubs his hands and brushes the snow from the cuffs of his trousers. He turns his back to the stove and toasts himself slyly for another moment, then he goes to his desk, which is on a platform. He removes the spectacles he is wearing and after a little search finds his reading glasses, which he puts on. They are attached to him by a neck ribbon. He surveys the room.

REVERSE FULL SHOT - All the children sit at attention.

CUT TO

60 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP - Topaze. The calendar arrests his attention.

61 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - Of a corner of the room.

The CAMERA QUICKLY ZOOMS to a CLOSE SHOT of the calendar, which reads Jan. 12, Thursday.

62 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - Topaze.

TOPAZE

Mr. Duval --

63 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - Of Mr. Duval. He stands up.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (Cont'd)

You have again neglected your duties toward the calendar. I am annoyed.

64 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - Topaze. He looks at his book.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

This is your third offense, and I am forced to remove it from your charge, Mr. Durand --

CLOSE SHOT - Durand. He rises. Duval in the b.g. sits down disconsolate.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (Cont'd)

In recognition of your good marks, the calendar is conferred to your care.

Mr. Durand marches proudly across the room, as

CAMERA TRAVELS with him. He detaches a page from the calendar and throws it in the waste basket. The date is revealed as Friday, the thirteenth. The CAMERA REMAINS on this for an instant.

MED. SHOT - Of Topaze. On the blackboard behind Topaze we see, as Topaze rises, several chemical notations. Topaze studies these with some pride as he holds the eraser in his hand. He begins erasing. Two of the students start scuffling in the back of the room, there is a whack, a giggle and a hiss.

SOUND

LONG SHOT - From back of class. The scuffling kids are in the f.g. Topaze, in the background, remains with his back to the class and talks as he erases.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

Tomorrow, gentlemen, I wish everybody to come prepared for an examination in --
(there is the loud sound of an impact)
Mr. Letrain, kindly leave the room --
morals and deportment.
(does not turn his head)

SOUND:

CONTINUED

One of the boys who has been scuffling, walks out of the room, the CAMERA FOLLOWING. Topaze turns as the boy stands in the door.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

Let it be a lesson to you that Professor Topaze has eyes in the back of his head. You may return to your seat. (137)

LETRAIN

Thank you, sir. (138)

The boy exits from the shot as the CAMERA MOVES to a CLOSER SHOT of Topaze.

TOPAZE

Before we go any further, I wish to appeal to a boy who has been annoying our class for several days. I willingly forgive him for his past offenses, but I appeal to his moral sense to discontinue his inopportune and undesirable melodies. I know I shall not appeal to his moral sense in vain.

SOUND: (looks at some notes on his desk; as soon as his eyes are lowered, the toodle-doo of a music box starts up; firmly)

Very well, dishonorable miscreant, you have bearded the lion. The lion will know what to do. Gentlemen, I ask you to ignore these or any future sounds. Act as if they did not exist.

(picks up a long pointer)

CLOSE SHOT of one corner of the classroom. As Topaze speaks the CAMERA WANDERS ABOUT the classroom as if seeking the musical culprit.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

Today we are not going to concern ourselves with chemical equations, geographical questions, or matters of historical import. We are going to consider things of a deep and fundamental nature. I refer to the question of good and evil.
(the CAMERA STOPS on Charlemagne)
We are going to dwell on the habits of civilized peoples.

SOUND: Charlemagne makes a movement under his desk and the music sounds again.

69

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze. Topaze pauses for a moment, but controls himself and acts as if there were no melody in the air.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

(he steps from his stand)

Let us take examples from daily life.
Question number one: what must one be to succeed in life?

The CAMERA MOVES with Topaze as he leaves his stand, and now takes in a section of students.

Several students wave their hands. Topaze speaks!

TOPAZE

(indicating with his pointer)
Mr. Tronche-Bobine. (138)

CLOSE UP Mr. Tronche-Bobine, age ten.

BOBINE

(rises)
In order to succeed in life, one has
to be... (139)
(pauses, falters)

71

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

(prompting)
Hon -- hon-- (140)

BOBINE'S VOICE

Honest. (141)

72

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MED. SHOT of Topaze, the children in background.

TOPAZE

Quite right. And what else must one
be? Honest and what more?
(he points with his pointer)
Mr. Durand. Honest and k-k-k-k... (142)

DURAND'S VOICE

Kind. (143)

SOUND

A snatch of the undesirable music sounds again.
The smile leaves Topaze's face but he continues
as if he has heard no music. He moves among the
pupils, the CAMERA HOLDING him.

TOPAZE

One must be honest and kind. Now, gentlemen, let us suppose by some freak of nature a dishonest man has become wealthy. He is well dressed, he lives in a very fine room, he has servants and an automobile. Yet has this man any friends?
(in the background we see Charlemagne wave his hand)
Mr. Latour-Latour. (144)

CHARLEMAGNE

Yes, lots. (145)

TOPAZE

(sternly)
Oh, you think he has friends. (146)

CHARLEMAGNE

I know he has. (147)

TOPAZE

(moves toward Charlemagne)
And why, pray, does he have friends? (148)

73 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

To ride in his automobile. (149)

The class titters.

LH

74

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

No, Mr. Latour-Latour, those are not friends. Such people if they existed would be no more than vile parasites. The man we describe has no friends. Those who have known him before, on learning that his fortune is not legitimate, flee from him as they would from a plague. What does he do? (150)

75

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

He moves into another mansion. (151)

76

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Possibly. But will he be any happier in his -- let us say, mansion? (152)

LH

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

Yes, if it's a nice neighborhood. (153)

78

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MED. SHOT. Topaze in foreground, children facing him.

TOPAZE

No, my dear sir. He would not be happier in any neighborhood because wherever this dishonest man goes and whatever he does he will be troubled by the disapproval of his con -- con --
(all the students wave their hands and are popping with the true answer)

One moment, gentlemen. I give you an opportunity to redeem yourself Mr. Latour-Latour.

(he levels the pointer at Charlemagne)

79

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

Troubled by the disapproval of his con -- con -- (154)

CHARLEMAGNE

Concierge. (Constipation) (155)

FULL SHOT. The class roars. Topaze taps on the desk with the pointer.

81

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Mr. Latour-Latour, I choose to think that that idiotic reply was not a weak attempt at humor but a definite lack of intelligence. Zero.
(he makes this notation in his book)

82

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne. He sits down.

83

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT of classroom.

LH

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

(he warms again to his
Socratic discourse)

This dishonest man would be troubled
by the disapproval of his conscience
and so, worried night and day, pale,
ill, fatigued, in order to find peace
at last he distributes to the poor all
of his fortune as a sign he has now
understood that -- (156)

(he levels his pointer at one
of the wall mottoes)

CLASS

(the whole class intones)
That ill-gotten gains are not worth
while. (157)

TOPAZE

And --

(he levels at another motto)

CLASS

(chanting)

Money does not bring happiness. (159)

SOUND:

(the music box lets go a
bit of melody)

TOPAZE

Exactly

(he controls a frown, stirred by
the music)

Now let us turn to a brighter picture.
What is the fate of the honest man?
Mr. Durand...

LH

CLOSE UP Durand as he rises.

TOPAZE'S VOICE

What is the state of the honest man's
mind at the end of a day's work? (160)

DURAND

He's exhausted. (161)

86

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

(sternly)

Have you forgotten what I have told
you so often in this class? Is work
tiring? Mr. Cordier. (162)
(he aims the pointer at
Charlot Cordier)

87

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlot.

CHARLOT

(rising)

No, sir. Work tires nobody. Only
laziness is tiring. Laziness is
the mother of all vice. (163)

MEDIUM SHOT Topaze and kids.

TOPAZE

Excellent. Mr. Cordier, you shall have a hundred. Allow me, gentlemen, to illustrate. Let us presume that our honest man is a cashier in a great bank. He will render his account with scrupulous care. He will be diligent and courteous and his delighted chief will raise his salary once a month.

SOUND

(the music sounds again. As Topaze speaks, he walks slowly backward toward the sound of the music)

If he is a business man he will refuse to misrepresent his product, will scorn unmerited profit, and will be rewarded by the esteem of all those who know him. If a war breaks out he will at once enlist in the army of his country, and if he has the good fortune to be wounded his government will reward him with a decoration. . .

SOUND

(music sounds)

. . . which will make him the admiration of his fellow citizens.

TWO SHOT of Charlemagne and Topaze. At this point Topaze turns and swoops down on Charlemagne. That youth struggles but Topaze opens his desk. He finds a small music box. He takes it out of the desk, looks at it, and addresses the culprit.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Sir, you were foolish enough to mistake my kindness, for weakness, my patience for blindness. My friend, the velvet glove conceals a hand of steel.

(he raises his fist)

You see that hand? If you resist it, it will break you; Mr. Latour-Latour, go and stand in the corner.

(Latour exits from the shot, and the CAMERA MOVES with Topaze towards his platform; as Topaze moves, he points to a corner of the room)

Stand there with your back to the class. You are now an object of derision and shame to your comrades.

(he mounts his dais. The door is now in the background, as is Latour. Latour standing in the corner)

Gentlemen, do not be depressed by this painful incident. We will go on with the class as if nothing had happened.

(he turns to Charlemagne)

As for you, Mr. Latour-Latour, I will not yet pronounce sentence. I condemn you to a state of uncertainty. (164)

A messenger enters the classroom. The messenger is a stooped old man who looks like the grandfather of all broken down old pedagogues. He toddles over to Topaze and cackles at him.

MESSENGER

Doctor Topaze.

(Topaze turns inquiringly)

Doctor Topaze, bring your December report cards to Dr. Stegg's office at once. (165)

(having spoken, the messenger toddles to the door)

TOPAZE

But does Dr. Stegg know I am in the middle of my class? (166)

CLOSE UP of Messenger. He turns to Topaze and cackles again.

MESSENGER

At once! (167)

31 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MEDIUM SHOT Topaze at desk.

TOPAZE

(somewhat confused by this
peremptory order but true to
his troops to the last, turns
to the class)

Gentlemen, I wish you to take advantage
of my absence by discussing among
yourselves this question of good and
evil and the problems of civilization. (168)

Topaze gathers the report cards and starts for
Dr. Stegg's office. As Topaze goes, THE CAMERA
PANS with him. It takes in the class and, as
Topaze goes out, the classroom erupts. Charlemagne
rushes to the desk and retrieves his music box.
We see this childish pandemonium, books flying,
little behinds being kicked, and, alas, not only
the question but the conduct of civilization being
forgotten.

FULL SHOT. The door is in the background, and the desk in the foreground. Stegg sits behind his desk, and the Baroness sits nearby, her hands folded and bristling like an Ojibway Indian. She is grim, silent, and ready to explode. Silence reigns.

The door opens and in comes our gentle and unsuspecting educator. He bows with dignity.

STEGG

Close the door, sir.

(Topaze turns around and closes the door, starts toward Stegg)
You have the records? (169)

TOPAZE

Why yes, I brought them here as you asked. I was in the middle of my class and -- (170)

STEGG

Silence!

(Topaze, for whom all commands are to be obeyed, stops in the middle of the sentence and bows. He stands thus while Stegg thumbs through the report book. Stegg, coming upon something)

Ah-ha! Hmm. Seven zeros!

(he turns to the Baroness)
Madame, I am dumbfounded. (171)

BARONESS

(stiffly)
Proceed. (172)

STEGG

You have been with us a long time, Dr. Topaze, and I am willing to give you the benefit of the doubt. So I am not blaming you for this error, but your secretary. I hope you understand me. (173)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

(bewildered)

Why, sir, I have no secretary. Those are the marks I myself gave Mr. Latour-Latour. You can see that is my handwriting. (174)

94

INT. DR. STEGG'S OFFICE - DAY

TWO SHOT - Stegg and Baroness.

BARONESS

(with a snort)

Ha! (175)

STEGG

(quoting the Baroness)

You want me and the Baroness to believe that this descendant of an illustrious line of statesmen and heroes is an idiot? (176)

The CAMERA BACKS to include Topaze.

TOPAZE

(nervously)

The Baroness?

(he turns and bows and smiles gently)

How do you do, Madame? You see, I do not consider your son an idiot, for I have marked him thirty for general knowledge. This is because I have decided that he knows things which perhaps he is unable to communicate to me. Also, I have taken into consideration the fact that he is able to find his way to school and home again. However -- (177)

(the Baroness interrupts)

CONTINUED

BARONESS

Proceed, Dr. Stegg. (178)

She refuses to look at Topaze, who becomes a little unnerved and begins another ill-timed address to the headmaster.

TOPAZE

Allow me to explain, Doctor Stegg, the meaning of those zeros. The child is totally unconcerned with education. He oscillates between two characteristic states. At certain times he chatters and jingles coins in his pocket. He giggles or jibbers without cause, confuses himself by playing music on a miserable little instrument, throws spitballs and other missiles. That is what I call the active state. (179)

BARONESS

(with a snort)

Ha! (180)

95

INT. DR. STEGG'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

(turning to her)

Then again, he will look at me with a kind of thick myopic expression, and though he appears to be listening attentively and his eyes are wide open, he is asleep, Madame, and if I ask him a question suddenly, he falls off his seat. That is what I call the passive state. (181)

THREE SHOT of the group.

STEGG

Sir, you have said enough. You have convinced me that Madame is right in every one of her accusations. Dr. Topaze, you have been guilty of favoritism. (182)

TOPAZE

(with dignity)
Sir, I have been honest. (183)

BARONESS

Hah! (184)

TOPAZE

(turning to her)
Madame, believe me, there has been no favoritism. (185)

STEGG

Topaze, consider well your answer. You stand convicted of gross misconduct. Are you willing, if I allow you to continue in this school, to alter your ways and curb your hatred of the rich? (186)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

I have no hatred of anybody. My
ways are honest and cannot be altered. (187)

TWO SHOT of Baroness and Stegg.

BARONESS

Either you act at once, Dr. Stegg, or
I go straight to the Minister of
Education. I will lay before him the
fact that you are employing a Communistie
rascal for a teacher. Either this
creature is dismissed or I withdraw my
son and bring the forces of the government
to bear. (188)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

Madame, I beg you, listen. (189)

BARONESS

Sir, you are a vile radical. (190)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Madame, my sympathies are with the
capitalists. (191)

THREE SHOT on Topaze's face and the backs of Stegg and the Baroness.

STEGG

Topaze, you are a fool. Return to your class, pack your belongings, and leave the faculty you have dishonored. You are no longer a member of my academy. (192)

The Baroness's purse has fallen to the floor. Topaze stands staring first at Stegg and then at the Baroness. His eyes then lower and he sees the ornate purse, symbol of the power that has struck him.

INSERT

OF BARONESS'S PURSE.

Dazedly, Topaze takes a step forward and picks the purse up, wiping the dust from it solicitously, and then, with a gesture of a man whose kindliness functions automatically in a crisis, he hands her the purse. He walks backward to the door as if he were about to say something in his own defense but the words fail to come, extends his hand as if indicating the beginning of this unuttered speech. In the doorway, he pauses again to deliver his Parthian shot and again it fails to materialize. He leaves the office, his silence unbroken.

FULL SHOT of classroom shooting toward the glass window. The students are playing leapfrog, and several of them spying through the instructor's papers on the desk. Charlemagne and two of his cronies with a pack of cards, are quarreling over some francs before them as they play, and the hullabaloo is general. The door opens and a spectre of what was Prof. Topaze enters. He stands surveying the disorder for an instant. A silence has quickly fallen, the children return furtively to their desks.

The children sense something amiss with their professor. They watch him as he walks with a strange abstraction toward his closet, removes his worn teacher's coat, puts it in a newspaper, wraps it up, puts on his equally worn outdoor coat and muffler, removes his umbrella, returns to his desk, picks up four books over which he hesitates, and restores one.

We INTERCUT the above with SEVERAL FLASHES of the pupils regarding Topaze wonderingly and furtively.

Such a silence as prevails has never been known in this classroom. Charlemagne is in his passive state.

CLOSE UP Topaze. Standing on his platform in his overcoat, muffler, books under his arm, umbrella hanging from his hand, his hat dangling from his fingers, Topaze seems about to deliver some farewell. Instead, he picks up the pointer.

LONG SHOT of classroom with Topaze in the distant background.

TOPAZE

(he can say no more in good-bye than to discharge his duty by the young to the last)

Gentlemen, I wish to assign your lesson for tomorrow. You---you will come prepared for a further and more exhaustive discussion of the question of good and evil, guiding your course of inquiry by these noble philosophies.

(he levels the pointer at the mottoes)

Class is dismissed for a brief recess.
(193)

The children leap to their feet and tear toward the school yard. They rush past Topaze, who looks at them tenderly, and without moving. The room is empty in a jiffy. The CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY UP to Topaze. Topaze looks around his desk and finds his spectacles, which he has almost forgotten. Holding them in his hand, he walks down from the platform and goes to the door, the CAMERA FOLLOWING. At the door he pauses, realizes he has forgotten something, and turns. He looks at the ceiling.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF A BLURRED ELECTRIC LIGHT.

104

INT. CLASSROOM - DOOR - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze at the door. He extends his hand to the switch and turns the light out. As the door closes behind Topaze.

FADE OUT

105 INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of the Baron in his favorite chair, slippered and at work on his solitaire.

106 INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT on door as Coco enters. She has a fancy apron on as though she were preparing things in the kitchen.

The CAMERA MOVES with Coco as she crosses to the Baron. She speaks as she walks.

COCO

How late can you stay? (194)

BARON'S VOICE

Just for dinner. (195)

COCO

Oh, I just baked a cake. I thought that --
(196)

BARON'S VOICE

Darling, you will be tired of me before we reach the dessert. (197)

The CAMERA now holds them in a TWO SHOT.

COCO

It being an anniversary, I thought you might celebrate it by not going home to your wife. (198)

CONTINUED

BARON

(busy with his solitaire)
Anniversary? Of what, my dear? (199)

COCO

Of the first time you promised to marry
me. It's a year precisely. (200)

BARON

(sentimentally)
Ah, how time flies! (201)

COCO

Oh, you're a rascal. (202)

BARON

But not without charm. (203)

COCO

(is taking off her apron and
tidying up a bit)
I must be an imbecile to believe you. (204)

BARON

Don't be so harsh on yourself. Speaking
of imbeciles, has that creature I
recommended for Alphonse turned up yet?
(205)

COCO

Professor Topaze? He's coming this
evening. I spoke to him. He sounded
very sweet on the phone. (206)

CONTINUED

BARON

(stopping his solitaire)
Coco, after leaving you yesterday, I
investigated this man Topaze. I strongly
advise against his employment -- (207)

COCO

But he's coming here this afternoon. (208)

BARON

Give him his bus fare and tell him that
Alphonse has the measles. Ha - better
make it scarlet fever. (209)

The butler enters.

107 INT. COCO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP entrance door.

BUTLER

Is the Baron in? Doctor Bomb to see
the Baron. (211)

TWO SHOT Coco and Baron.

COCO

(to the Baron)

Please, no business this evening. (212)

BARON

My dear, that's the chemist from our bottling works. I am naming the new water after him -- Sparkling Bomb.

(to the butler)

Send him in.

(Baron rises; butler exits)

I must be nice to him, Coco.

The CAMERA MOVIES with the Baron and includes Bomb when he enters.

BARON (cont'd)

Doctor Bomb lends his name to this concoction of ours and he makes it possible for the public to believe in it. He baptizes the water, so to speak.
(213)

Bomb enters. He is a short, squat man with bristling eyebrows and the face of a continental Gyp the Blood. He enters all a-bristle, his diction is curt.

BOMB

Baron, good evening. Madame, good evening.
(214)

COCO'S VOICE

Doctor, good evening. (215)

The Baron meets Bomb in the center of the room and motions him into a small den off the living room. CAMERA PANS them toward the door.

MED. TWO SHOT. The Baron motions Bomb toward a chair and sits down. Bomb remains standing and glowering.

BOMB

Baron, I have some here to make one last appeal to your better nature. (216)

BARON

You mean you have something unpleasant to say? (217)

BOMB

Very. (218)

BARON

(reminiscent of the Baroness)
Proceed. (219)

CLOSE UP Bomb.

BOMB

I am not going to allow my name to be placed on the water we are inflecting on the schools of France. Point number one, you obtained the concession by bribery and corruption. Point number two, this liquid has no value of any sort. It teems with microbes. Baron, I cannot lend my scientific integrity to a swindle. My conscience refuses. (220)

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

(smiling)

You are being paid handsomely for that spiritual discomfort. (221)

112

INT. DEN - NIGHT

TWO SHOT Bomb and Baron.

BOMB

As long as you confined your deception to reasonable limits I was willing to condone matters. But now -- (222)
(he makes an expressive gesture)

BARON

In other words, you are not an honest man but a nervous one. (223)
(he rises and crosses to pick up a silver humidor;
he returns to Bomb and proffers the cigars)

BOMB

(takes one and gestures with it)
Sir, I am a normal citizen. (224)

BARON

(taking a cigar and setting down the humidor)
Exactly. (225)

BOMB

I ask you to reconsider this swindle against the schools of the nation. (226)

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

(lighting his cigar)

You are also asking me to throw away some millions of francs, my dear doctor, as a sop to your cowardice. I grant you we are misrepresenting our product and that it is a liquid totally unbeneficial to its consumers. On the other hand, our advertising will convince people that it is good for them and once convinced they will be improved by its consumption. (227)

114

INT. DEN - NIGHT

TWO SHOT Bomb and Baron.

BOMB

Sophistry :

(he puts his cigar in his pocket)

Baron, I resign. I will not allow my name to become a symbol of corruption. (228)

The Baron starts toward the living room, Bomb following, CAMERA PANNING them toward the door.

BARON

I hope you will not regret your sacrifice. (229)

mcl

MED. SHOT at door of den, shooting from living room.

BOMB

Never, Baron, good evening.
(a bow)

Madame, good evening.
(a bow)

I leave this house an honest man. (230)
(he exits from shot)

BARON

(bowing)
Ah, then let me be the first to
congratulate you. (231)

116

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP at door. Bomb slams it behind him.

117

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of Baron. He taps his teeth with a
meditative forefinger, seems a little concerned.
He walks toward Coco, CAMERA MOVING with him.

TWO SHOT of Coco and Baron. Coco regards him from her jig-saw puzzle which, table and all, she has moved before a settee by the large window.

COCO

Well -- you didn't handle that very successfully. (232)

BARON

I could have induced him to stay in a minute by offering to double his thirty pieces of silver. (233)

COCO

Why didn't you? You can't sell the water without some sort of scientist endorsing it, can you? (234)

BARON

I dislike and distrust men who are always offering to resell their honor. Bomb is a fool. (235)

COCO

But you've always said that was the sort of man you wanted. (236)

BARON

I was wrong. What I want is an idiot, either a thorough scoundrel or a complete idiot, and I don't like scoundrels. They're too competitive. (237)

mcl

CONTINUED

COCO

But idiots are hard to find, I should think. (238)

BARON

Not in the scientific world. Give me a kiss, darling, and let's pray that Providence sends us an idiot. (239)

119 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP at door.

BUTLER

Professor Topaze wishes to be announced.
(240)

COCO'S VOICE

Oh! What shall I do? (241)

Topaze, still with his umbrella, coat and three books under his arm, drifts gently into the room, smiles a bit nervously at its occupants.

120 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of Topaze.

TOPAZE

I am a half hour late and I apologize.
(242)

TWO SHOT Coco and Baron. Topaze comes into the shot. There is a CLOSE UP CAMERA on Topaze throughout the following scene.

He looks at the Baron and Coco, a little confused by the lie she has to tell and the man's obvious simplicity, allows an awkward pause to ensue, during which the visitor seems to be waiting for something and Coco fancies it is an introduction.

COCO

Professor Topaze, the Baron Latour-Latour.
(Topaze opens his eyes wide
at this)

I am sorry to tell you, Professor, that
my nephew -- (243)

TOPAZE

(finally finding his tongue
and addressing the Baron)
How do you do, sir? I had the honor of
having your son in my class until this
morning. (244)

Coco sits before her puzzle again.

BARON

Did you expel him? (245)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

No. To the contrary, it was I who was
expelled. (246)

THREE SHOT of Baron, Coco and Topaze.

BARON

I take it you were dismissed for refusing
to improve his marks. (247)

124

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Yes. That seems to have been the chief
trouble.

(he looks around him for a
place to put his umbrella)

It's been a day of misunderstandings.

(he puts the umbrella against
a chair and it falls down;
as he bends over to pick it
up he continues)

I must confess I am a little confused.

(he transports his umbrella
to a chair and lays it down on the
chair as if giving it a seat,
speaking the while)

You see, Doctor Stegg's Academy has been
virtually my home for many years, and now
that I am put in the world naturally I am
somewhat startled -- for the time. (248)

(he smiles gently at his
host and hostess)

125

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TWO SHOT Baron and Coco.

BARON

Sit down, Doctor Topaze. Will you
have a cocktail? (249)

ncl

Topaze enters the shot.

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

I am not a drinking man, but this being
rather an occasion, I would be glad to.
Thank you. (250)

127

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

THREE SHOT Baron, Coco and Topaze.

COCO

(to Butler)
Joseph, make some cocktails, please.

128

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of butler. He bows to Coco's request
and then comes forward to remove Topaze's wet
umbrella from its chair. He exits.

129

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

THREE SHOT Baron, Coco and Topaze. Topaze, a
little alarmed, watches his disappearing umbrella,
hoping for the best. The Baron has been watching
this by-play, amused and thoughtful.

COCO (cont'd)

Do sit down, Professor. (251)

TOPAZE

(taking a precarious seat on
the edge of a large armchair)
Thank you. I hope your nephew is well,
Madam. (252)

COCO

He has the measles -- I--- I don't think
he will be able to use a tutor for some
time. (253)

TOPAZE

What a pity! I mean about the measles.
(254)

130

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

I have something else I'd like to
talk to you about. (255)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

-- (abstractedly)
Has he broken out in spots yet? (256)

COCO'S VOICE

--
Yes, all over. (257)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

I remember when I had the measles, one
suffers dreadfully. (258)

BARON

(shakes his head)
Doctor Topaze, I can see--a great--injustice
has been done you. You are not at all
what I expected. You are really a man
after my own heart. (259)

THREE SHOT Baron, Coco and Topaze.

TOPAZE

I am afraid you flatter me, Baron de Latour-Latour. (260)

BARON

Not at all. Tell me, are you particularly anxious to go on teaching? (261)

TOPAZE

Teaching? Why, yes, of course. That is my profession. Teaching clarifies the mind. Teaching and chemical research, if you will pardon my boasting, come very naturally to me. (262)

BARON

It is obvious. But why continue? (263)

TOPAZE

Why? Well, it's a respectable occupation, not unduly strenuous, and fairly well paid. (264)

BARON

Hmm. May I ask, what do you hope to earn by giving lessons as a free-lance? (265)

TOPAZE

That's a little hard to compute, exactly, but I know one free-lance tutor, who earns as much as twelve hundred francs. (266)

CONTINUED

COCO

(immersed in her jig-saw)

A week? (267)

TOPAZE

(laughing genuinely at
this witticism)A week! Oh, that's very good! No,
Madame, a month, unfortunately.(and here the Baron laughs, for
Topaze is not only a simple but
an infectious spirit)Well, as you know, that's pretty good,
isn't it? Of course, it's true a tutor
has to dress well, but after all, when
one earns twelve hundred francs! (286)
(he laughs)

BARON

One almost becomes a dandy. (269)

TOPAZE

Exactly . . . I am afraid the question
of salary is rather vulgar, but it is
important, don't you think? Of course,
money does not bring happiness, I know,
but one is glad to have it all the same.
(270)

BARON

Delighted! Professor Topaze, our little
talk has convinced me that you have been
the victim of excessive mother love. (271)

TOPAZE

I? (272)

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

My wife was unjust to you.

(he rises)

I wish to repair her offense. I have an offer to make you. I manufacture a curative water. My firm desires to improve upon the medical formula, and at this very moment we happen to be looking for a scientist whose brain and whose name we can use. Do you think you could rise to such an opportunity? (273)

THREE SHOT. Baron, Coco and Topaze.

TOPAZE

(rising)

I am, sir, the author of "First Steps in Chemistry."

(he hands one of his books to the Baron)

May I ask you to read the introduction?

(he looks at Coco, who seems to be left in the cold; it turns out he has another copy of this book, which he gives to Coco, opening it and remarking)

Begin there on page three. (274)

(he picks up the third book and himself studies for a moment the introduction with a pleased smile)

BARON

This is splendid.

(he sits)

Doctor, before we talk business, may I ask you a few questions? (275)

The butler comes in with the cocktails.

CLOSE UP Topaze. The butler brings the tray to Topaze, who nervously picks up a glass. He drinks it at once and puts back the empty glass, and blinks his eyes at the unaccustomed heat in his stomach.

TOPAZE

Indeed, Baron. (276)

THREE SHOT Baron, Coco and Topaze.

BARON

Do sit down.

(Topaze backs into a chair)

To begin with, have you a family? (277)

TOPAZE

Alas, no. I am quite alone in the world. My father and my mother are both dead. (278)

COCO

(sympathetically)

Ah ... (279)

TOPAZE

Thank you, Madame. But I have grown quite used to being an orphan. (280)

BARON

And women? What about women? (281)

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

Women? Women, sir? You mean sisters
or aunts? (282)

BARON

I mean, have you some wife, or -- or --
what not? (283)

136INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

No, no, no, my dear sir! No wife, and
no -- no what not, I assure you. (284)
(he achieves a somewhat
roguish smile)

BARON'S VOICE

Then with whom do you usually associate?
(285)

TOPAZE

Why, sometimes I see an old army friend.
He's a waiter in a cafe now, poor chap.
(286)

CLOSE SHOT of the Baron.

BARON

Professor -
 (he rises)
Providence sent you here. I will not
take no for an answer. I engage you.
Your salary will be four thousand
francs to start with. (287)

138 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

 (stunned)
Four thousand francs -- a month? (288)

139 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron. He smiles and slowly nods.

140 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Coco. She smiles.

141 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze. He stares at the Baron for a
moment and then draws himself up to his full height.

THREE SHOT. Coco, Baron and Topaze.

TOPAZE

(speaks with dignity)
Baron de Latour-Latour, I see through
your little plan! (289)

BARON

(amazed)
Sir? (290)

TOPAZE

You cannot take me in with that offer!
I may be a simple man but I am not blind.
I refuse your offer! (291)

Coco stands in alarm.

BARON

May I ask why? (292)

TOPAZE

Because, sir, it is not in my nature
to accept charity. (293)

Coco and Baron sit down in infinite relief.

BARON

(with a smile of relief)
My dear Professor, charity is the furthest
thing from my mind. You see, not only
will I derive a handsome profit from the
chemical formula you invent and endorse,
but I shall also be using your name as a --
slogan. The beverage shall be known as
Sparkling Topaze.

~~INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT~~
CLOSE UP Topaze. He is transported. As the idea penetrates, the smile of a sleeping child dawns on his face.

144 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

THREE SHOT Baron, Topaze and Coco.

BARON (cont'd)

Splendid! No more nonsense, Professor,
you are my consulting chemist and
head of the Latour Chemical Works. (294)

He exits from the shot. Coco follows the Baron.
We remain on Topaze, who looks after them dazedly.

TOPAZE

Oh! This unaccustomed drink has made
me a bit dizzy. (295)

BARON'S VOICE

We'll draw up a contract immediately. (296)

TOPAZE

(to nobody in particular)
The war interrupted my researches. (297)

COCO'S VOICE

You will be able to resume them now-- (298)

BARON'S VOICE

Yes, we expect a fine medicinal formula
from you. (299)

TOPAZE

Have you any particular disease in mind?
(300)

TWO SHOT Baron and Coco. The Baron is at his desk in the den. Coco is looking over his shoulder as he writes.

BARON

(from the desk without
stopping writing)

No. Just a general laxative, tonic and health-builder. For the school children of France. (301)

146

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Oh, that is something worth while.
(as he shakes his head
in wonderment)

A few hours ago I was a complete failure in life and now I am -- (302)

147

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT, Baron and Coco. They enter the living room.

BARON

(coming forward with the document)

A consulting chemist at four thousand francs a month and the creator of Sparkling Topaze. (303)

(hands him the paper and a pen)

148

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT Topaze. Coco tenders him a pen.

TOPAZE

(an awed whisper)

Sparkling Topaze! (304)

FADE IN

149

EXT. STREET - DAY

FLASH - We see a bill poster on top of a ladder, sloshing paste on a wall and unrolling a poster which reads: "DRINK SPARKLING TOPAZE." In smaller type, "The great scientific elixir." In smaller type, "Discovered by Professor A. A. Topaze, B.S., Sc.D."

LAP DISSOLVE

150

INT. CAFE - DAY

FLASH - Next we see a flash of a diner pouring Sparkling Topaze out of a bottle into a glass.

LAP DISSOLVE

151

EXT. STREET - DAY

FLASH. - Next we see six men walking in the street bearing aloft sandwich signs labelled "Drink Sparkling Topaze, the New Scientific Discovery."

LAP DISSOLVE

152

EXT. STREET - DAY

Next we see a street corner vespasienne with men's shoes protruding from beneath its walls, surrounded with "Drink Sparkling Topaze" posters.

LAP DISSOLVE

153

EXT. EIFFEL TOWER - DAY

We last see a shot of the Eiffel Tower with a slogan down its side, "DRINK SPARKLING TOPAZE."

LAP DISSOLVE OUT

The Baron and Henri have finished lunch and are sipping brandy. Empty coffee cups are by their sides. There is a small table supporting a bottle of Topaze water. One seat, obviously Coco's, is vacant. The butler is functioning in the background.

BARON

(to the butler)

Where did Madame go? (305)

BUTLER

Into the workshop with the professor, sir. (306)

HENRI

You allow that? (307)

BARON

When you see this genius, Henri, you will understand my lack of jealousy. (308)

Butler exits.

HENRI

(looking around and lowering his voice)

But how do you manage to keep him fooled? (309)

BARON

Doctor Topaze is a phenomenon. I leave him alone. He performs by himself in so completely idiotic and absurd a manner as to leave nothing to be desired. (310)

CONTINUED

HENRI

But doesn't he know you have been selling tap water to the whole of France under his name and with his endorsement? (311)

BARON

He knows nothing. He fancies we are distributing a sparkling water invented by him. He's in there now puttering around with improvements on his formula. Here is his last creation. I have to have the stuff made up --

(he picks up a bottle and pours a drink for Henri)

Taste it if you wish. Poor Coco has to drink it day and night. As for Topaze, he swills it. (312)

HENRI

(dubiously)

Is it any good? (313)

(he smells it)

BARON

Topaze assures me it does amazing things to the kidneys and other vital organs.

(Henri drinks and nods approvingly at the taste)

It should. It costs exactly forty francs a bottle. I prefer our own Sparkling Topaze at two francs.

(he smiles sarcastically)

Topaze, alas, has no eye for profits.

(he starts to get up, Henri rises also)

Come and see his playground. It's a veritable inferno. (314)

(they exit)

155 INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

CLOSE UP of a framed motto on a wall. It reads:
"Ill gotten gains are not worth while."

CAMERA PANS DOWN to a FULL SHOT - It is a maze of chemical retorts, test tubes, and glass measuring jars. Coils of smoke, generated in these several hundred containers combine with the glassware to present a spectacular set-up, worthy of the Baron's "inferno." In left foreground is a door leading to a small hallway. Topaze and Cocc are at a small table in the foreground. They are fiddling about with fuming retorts and the usual paraphernalia of a laboratory.

156 INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

CLOSE SHOT at door shooting toward laboratory. The Baron and Henri enter. They look around the room, smiling, and cross to Topaze and Cocc as CAMERA PANS WITH THEM. The Baron speaks as he crosses.

BARON

Professor Topaze, this is my friend Henri de Faireville. He is a very prominent politician. (315)

157 INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

We now rest on a GROUP SHOT of the four.

TOPAZE

(shaking hands)

I have never met any politicians, but I have always admired them from afar. (316)

BARON

You have seen them at their best. (317)

HENRI

What's this thingamabob? (318)

TOPAZE

The germicide, sir. (319)

BARON

That little invention of the professor's is what we sell to the city for the sprinkling wagons, and thanks to Professor Topaze, we can all roll in the gutters today without fear of infection. (320)

158 INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Even more important than that -- it lessens the danger of epidemics. (321)

159 INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

CLOSE UP Coco.

COCO

(who has been listening without sympathy to this twitting of the professor)

Why don't you go outside where you belong? We were quite happy without you. (322)

THREE SHOT - Henri, Coco and Topaze.

HENRI

You do seem very happy here, Professor
Topaze. (223)

TOPAZE

I do not wish to boast, but I think I am
on the whole the happiest man in the world.
You see, during the many years I spent as
a teacher I always dreamed of something
like this to work for -- for humanity.
(he looks at Coco without meaning to)
And the surroundings are more than I ever
dared to fancy. (324)

The CAMERA MOVES over to include the Baron,
eliminating Coco.

BARON

Your name, Doctor Topaze, has become a
household word. (325)

TOPAZE

I -- I hope you have noticed no change
in my bearing, sir.
(he fidgets for a second and turns
in embarrassment to his microscope)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Look through here, sir. This is a drop
of the former water manufactured for the
Baron. Notice the abundance of animal
life. (326)

Topaze moves out of the CLOSE UP and Henri moves in,
and looks through the microscope.

CLOSE UP of a teeming drop of water.

HENRI'S VOICE

Promiscuous little devils! (327)

The CAMERA BACKS to include Topaze.

TOPAZE

Seven million in every drop!
(he arranges a new slide under
the microscope)

Henri looks through the slide.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF A CRYSTAL CLEAR DROP
OF WATER.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

Now this is the new water, distilled
three times, containing iron, phosphate,
and innumerable vitamins. (328)

TWO SHOT - Henri and Topaze.

HENRI

(looks up)
Like a diamond. (329)

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

Thank you, sir. Let me now give you an even more fascinating proof. I have here a specially prepared paper. Watch me, gentlemen. I dip it thus in ordinary water. You notice it turns purple and curls up. That is due to the acid imperfections. Now observe. I dip it in our new grade of Sparkling...

(he lowers his eyes as he pronounces the title)
..Sparkling Topaze. It remains unaffected, white and pure. (330)

HENRI

Marvelous. (331)

164

INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

FULL SHOT of Coco, Henri, Baron and Topaze. They crowd about Topaze.

TOPAZE

Now I will show you the improvement I have made on the germicide.

(eagerly picks up a graduating glass and begins to pour its contents into another glass jar)

INSERT

CLOSE UP TOPAZE'S HANDS.

165INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

SOUND

FULL SHOT of room. There ensues an explosion -- a chorus of alarmed cries, and smoke fills the screen. When it clears away Topaze is alone, his face blackened. Topaze, holding the exploded vessel, looks about confused.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

What a pity! That was unexpected. (332)

Coco enters the shot.

COCO

(as she crosses)

Oh dear, that was my fault. I left some of those bromides in the jar. (333)

SOUND

THERE IS OFFSTAGE SPUTTERING AND COUGHING.

166INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT doorway leading into entrance hall. Butler enters.

BUTLER

Some gentlemen from the press to see Dr. Topaze, sir. (334)

TWO SHOT - Henri and Baron near door to laboratory.
The Baron is patting Henri on the back.

HENRI

My lungs are ruined. (335)

BARON

(calling into the laboratory)
Dr. Topaze. (336)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

Yes? (337)

BARON

The press, professor. They've come for
an interview about the new germicide. (338)

168

INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - Coco and Topaze.

TOPAZE

The press! Oh, no, no, no. (339)

COCO

Quick! Put your coat on. (340)
(she exits to get his coat)

TOPAZE

(stands alone, protesting)
But I have done nothing to deserve this.
Just a few germicides. Gentlemen, there
are more important people than myself for
the press to interview, don't you think?
(341)

Coco has come back and is helping him into an old-
fashioned frock coat, straightening his tie and
rubbing his face with a towel.

CLOSE UP Baron and Henri in doorway.

BARON

You owe it to me. Come now, no more false modesty. (342)

170

INT. TOPAZE'S LABORATORY - DAY

TWO SHOT of Topaze and Coco.

TOPAZE

Just a minute. Where are they? (343)

COCO

Who? (344)

TOPAZE

My spectacles. I am at a loss without them in a crisis. (345)

Coco dashes around the laboratory in quest of them and Topaze fumbles through his pockets. He locates the glasses, suspended from his neck. He puts them on and starts for the door. Coco comes into the shot and watches him, smiling, as he walks out of the shot.

BARON'S VOICE

Gentlemen, Professor Topaze, chief of the Latour Chemical Works. (346)

SOUND There is a babble of voices as we

FADE OUT

FADE IN

171

INT. CAFE - DAY

FULL SHOT of a Viennese string orchestra tuning up.

172

INT. CAFE - DAY

CLOSE UP of the first violinist who is also the leader. He holds up his bow to signal commencement and the orchestra swings into a Viennese valse.

THE CAMERA BACKS AWAY from the orchestra and PANS to the double doors that are the entrance of the restaurant. We are in the Restaurant Larue. This is a rendezvous for the celebrities of Paris. Success and elegance dominate the place. Very few of the diners look to be less than prime ministers.

There is a bustle of headwaiters, cloak room attendants, doormen, etc., and, as the doors swing open, the Baron enters. He is accompanied by Coco and followed by Topaze. This latter wears an air of wonderment, a horrible hat, and a long nondescript black coat. It is a compromise between a Prince Albert and a coffin.

One of the attendants helps the Baron out of his fur-lined, fur-collared overcoat. Another approaches Topaze, relieves him of his umbrella, and, going behind him, starts to take off his coat.

173

INT. CAFE - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze and attendant.

ATTENDANT

Your coat, sir. (347)

Topaze looks dopyly at the Baron who is taking off his coat, and then starts to undo a long series of buttons. The attendant has the coat half off Topaze, revealing him in shirtsleeves and a vest of curious design. The attendant hurriedly shoves back the coat onto Topaze's shoulders. Topaze, confused but content, rebuttons his garment as:

The CAMERA BACKS to include the group. A headwaiter bows to the Baron and escorts them triumphantly to a corner table. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS.

They are seated, the waiters exit and the CAMERA COMES FORWARD to a CLOSE THREE SHOT.

Topaze is staring about him, a bearded little Alice in Wonderland. He is astonished, transported, and as simple as an uncle from the country. Life seems to our gentle-hearted hero something quite fabulous as the music plays.

SOUND:

There are several menus lying on the table. The Baron picks one up, turns it over and hands it to Topaze.

INSERT

CLOSE UP of menu. Its back carries a large, gaudy ad, featuring the words "SPARKLING TOPAZE SERVED HERE."

174

INT: CAFE - DAY

THREE SHOT of group. Topaze is delighted. He looks around. No one is looking. He folds the menu and slips it in his pocket. He looks up happily.

Coco is looking at him with the delight of a sophisticate in the impressions of a child.

COCO

(gesturing toward the rest of the room)

Do you like it? (348)

TOPAZE

(breathless)

Oh, my. Yes. Very much. I - I presume it is very expensive here. (349)

CONTINUED

BARON

Don't allow that to spoil your appetite.
(350)

TOPAZE

(simply)

Oh no. Not as long as I am being
treated. That - that spectacle
is very interesting. (351)
(looking in a definite direction)

175INT. CAFE - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of George, the headwaiter. The Baron's table is in the background. George has arrived at General Magoliani's table in charge of a troop of three waiters wheeling on an itinerant kitchen range on which a large chafing dish looms. The three waiters under George's explosive direction proceed with a great ritual. They pour three different wines and two cordials over the fowl in the dish. They baste it. They set fire to it. They scrape orange peel over it. They light candles under its head and candle its brains.

The General sits stoically by during these Aztec-like operations. George exits in the direction of the Baron's table.

176INT. CAFE - DAY

THREE SHOT at the Baron's table. George comes bowing into the shot.

CLOSE UP George.

GEORGE

Gentlemen, the venison steak with
chestnut sauce is perfect today. (352)

178

INT. CAFE - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

I - I like chestnuts. (353)

179

INT. CAFE - DAY

GROUP SHOT at Baron's table.

BARON

Nonsense, we're not slumming. Have you
another snipe, George? (354)

GEORGE

(proudly indicating the
chafing dish)
It has a mate.
(more proudly)
Dead three weeks. (355)

TOPAZE

Indeed! (356)

CONTINUED

BARON

Fine. Let's have the wine list,
George. (357)

GEORGE

(exploding to a fourth assistant)
Barschubanga, akaramunti! VINO!

Fourth assistant produces a wine card which the
waiter snatches from his hand and tenders the
Baron. The Baron studies the card.

GEORGE (cont'd)

A nice bottle of Chateau Yquem? (358)

BARON

Topaze - have you any favorites? (359)

Topaze, staring at the flaming chafing dish,
looks up in confusion.

180

INT. CAFE - DAY

THREE SHOT-Coco, Topaze and Baron.

COCO

Phillipe wants to know if you have
any favorite wine you'd like... (360)

TOPAZE

Oh, yes. Indeed. I have...

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Well, not exactly. But I remember one occasion when I was a student. A friend of mine went to an affair. It was somewhat in the nature of a revel - and he drank a certain Romanee wine that he told me about... (361)

GEORGE'S VOICE

We have Romanee 1911, sir. (362)

TOPAZE

What a coincidence! That was the year he drank it. It was in the spring - the latter part of May. He - a - he was in the habit of saying that this particular wine tasted like a - like a sunset. He was a poet at the time but he later became a silk merchant in Lyons... (363)

THREE SHOT Baron, Topaze and Coco.

BARON

We shall have Romanee 1911 - sunset and all. (364)

GEORGE'S VOICE

Very well, sir. (365)

TOPAZE

I am very excited. (366)

COCO

Phillipe, tell him about the palms... (367)

TOPAZE

(stunned)
The palms... (368)
(he moves his chair closer
to Coco)

BARON

There you go, Coco - that was supposed
to be a secret. (369)
(he leans closer to impart
this confidential news)

COCO

Oh, let him know - please... (370)

TOPAZE

The palms... (371)

BARON

Coco, I was hoping to keep it a surprise.
Well,
(he looks around to make sure
no one can overhear)
Topaze, next week you will be awarded
the Academic Palms. (372)

TOPAZE

Im-impossible. (373)

BARON

Nothing is impossible to genius. The
palms will be in your lapel by Friday. (374)

COCO

Next Friday. (375)

TOPAZE

(bewilderedly)

Next Friday. (376)

183 INT. CAFE - DAY

THREE SHOT of Coco, Topaze and waiter. The waiter brings the wine in a basket.

WAITER

(putting the wine beside Topaze)

Romanee 1911. One of the last three bottles. (377)

TOPAZE

(putting on his spectacles)

Romanee. Oh, yes.

(waiter exits and CAMERA PANS to include Baron)

Next Friday.

(caresses the bottle as he speaks)

This - this seems more and more like a dream. I wouldn't be surprised if I were to wake up and find myself still behind my old desk. (378)

COCO

Where will he be presented with the palms? (379)

BARON

I will arrange for the Academy to decorate the professor in his laboratory, in a fitting ceremony. (380)

TOPAZE

I would like Miss Coco to be there. (381)

COCO

Of course. (382)

BARON

You can invite whomever you wish. (383)

TOPAZE

(excitedly, his voice rising)
Well, I think I would like to have
Doctor Stegg there.

(cackles and rubs his hands,
overcome with pleasure at the
thought of this vengeance)

And my friend from the army -- I
mustn't forget him.

(looks suddenly at the Baron
with a serious face)

But what am I talking about? Am I
really to receive the palms? (384)

The Baron nods; he removes a large handkerchief from
his pocket and with emotion blows a bugle note with
his nose.

MED. SHOT of the entrance of the restaurant. Here we see our old friend the politician, Henri de Faireville, squiring the redoubtable Baroness.

BARONESS

(to Henri)

Why, there's Philippe! (385)

HENRI

(innocently)

Where, my dear? (386)

The chill silence of the Baroness and the dotted line flowing from her eyes are a sufficient answer. He stands staring with guilty confusion at his friend and Coco.

BARONESS

Do you know that woman? (387)

HENRI

(a superficial villain, he starts, swallows hard, and blinks)

Who, me? Why, no! No, indeed!

(he endeavors to outwit the Baroness by seating her with her back to her husband's table; moving out a chair he continues)

Shall we face the music, my dear? (388)

BARONESS

No! Phillippe shall! (389)
(exits from the shot)

MED. SHOT of Baron's table. The Baroness enters.

BARONESS

Well, Phillippe, you look somewhat surprised. (390)

BARON

(rising)

Surprised? At what? I am delighted. This -- this is an unexpected pleasure. You are lunching here? (391)

BARONESS

With Henri. (392)

The Baroness continues to stare at Coco. The Baron, as if aware of a sudden social remiss, smiles fatuously.

BARON

Permit me. My wife, Doctor Topaze... and Madame Topaze. (393)

The Baroness nods at the Professor and smiles at Coco, some of the grimness leaving her face. Topaze has risen.

BARONESS

Madame Topaze... delighted! (394)

Topaze has been acting a bit strangely since the appearance of the Baroness at the table. At first he lowered his eyes and then stood staring into space. Now hearing somebody say "Madame Topaze," he starts.

TOPAZE

Who -- who did you say? (395)

BARON

My wife, Professor. (396)

TOPAZE

Oh, yes. How do you do? (397)

BARONESS

(thoughtfully)

Topaze?... Topaze?... The name is familiar. Haven't I seen you somewhere? (398)

BARON

(interrupting any reply Topaze might have made)

Doctor Topaze is the head of my laboratory. You saw his photograph in the paper this morning, dear. (399)

BARONESS

Of course. Well, pardon my intrusion. Dinner at eight, Phillippe. (400)

BARON

(bows)

Tight sharp, my dear. (401)

CONTINUED

BARONESS

Delighted to have met you, Professor.
And you, too, Madame Topaze. You have
a very talented husband. At eight,
Philippe. (402)

BARON

(bowing)
Exactly) (403)

The Baroness exits from the shot.

186 INT. CAFE - DAY

CLOSE-THREE SHOT at Baron's table.

TOPAZE

(hoarsely)
She didn't recognize me. (404)
(he mops his forehead with
a napkin)

COCO

(quietly)
Will you excuse me? (405)

BARON

(detaining her with a hand
as she starts to rise)
Please, my dear. (406)

COCO

Don't worry. I'm not going to make a
scene. (407)
(she rises and Topaze again
stands up)

TOPAZE

(bewildered)

Why, what is it? (408)

COCO

Nothing. Please sit down, Doctor.
The music is charming and -- (409)
(she walks away)

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER to Topaze and the Baron.

TOPAZE

I think her feelings are hurt, Baron.
You should not have called her Madame
Topaze even in jest. (410)

BARON

(acting for his wife's benefit)
Goodbye, my dear Professor. Go with her.
(he shakes hands with him and
gives him a surreptitious push
in the direction of the restaurant
door; takes Topaze's arm and they
both start toward the door,
CAMERA FOLLOWING)
We must lunch together again, soon.

The Baron goes toward his wife's table. Topaze,
stranded, hesitates a second, and then starts after
Coco.

We FOLLOW the Baron to his wife's table.

CONTINUED

BARON (cont'd)

(to his wife)

A charming couple! As inseparable as Siamese twins. And what do you think we had for lunch!

(they look interested;

the Baron continues

impressively)

Snipe flambee, and Romanee 1911. (411)

BARONESS & HENRI

Ah! (412)

187 EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

MED. SHOT. It is raining. We see Coco under the restaurant canopy. Topaze comes through the turning doors. A liveried doorman appears with a big umbrella.

COCO

(to the doorman)

A taxi, please. (413)

SOUND The doorman whistles.

TOPAZE

(coming quickly to her side)

Madame, I am very sorry. You must overlook it. (414)

COCO

(tensely)

I can't. (415)

They move forward, the CAMERA FOLLOWING them.

TOPAZE

But you are needlessly alarmed. Nobody looking at you could believe for a minute that you were Madame Topaze. Why, it's ridiculous! (416)

A taxi has drawn up and Coco gives her address to the driver.

COCO

Seventy-two Rue de Lille. (417)

188

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

ANGLE SHOT at taxi. She enters the cab and Topaze stands in front of the open door speaking to her; and the doorman, taking his elbow, assists him inside.

TOPAZE

And nobody heard it, I am certain, except the Baroness.

The door is closed behind him.

CLOSE TWO SHOT. Paris streets can be seen through the rear window. Coco, her face averted, is looking out of the cab window. There are tears in her eyes. The cab starts and Topaze is astonished.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

(after a pause)

Wait a minute! My hat! And that duck!

The cab continues. Coco refuses to look at him. Topaze looks out of the back window of the cab at the disappearing restaurant. He then turns to the girl.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Where - where are we going?

(Coco shrugs; Topaze looking at her with stricken eyes)

It was a dubious jest, calling you Madame Topaze, and I can sympathize with you. There have been times when I myself have almost wept to be called Mr. Topaze.
(418)

COCO

(is irritated by his stupidity and innocence)

Please stop it. (419)

TOPAZE

But you are crying. I must do something.
(420)

COCO

I think you are really out of your head!
(421)

TOPAZE

I? (422)

CONTINUED

COCO
(almost hysterically)
Yes, You're just insane, completely insane.
(423)

TOPAZE
(shyly)
I - I think you misjudge me -- a little.
(424)

COCO
(turning to him)
Do you want to know why I left the table?
You had nothing to do with it! Good heavens,
I wasn't even thinking of you! (425)

TOPAZE
Now - - now you are just being kind. (426)

COCO
Oh! Stop babbling like a child. (427)

TOPAZE
I am as -- as sensible as ever. (428)

COCO
Professor, you are deaf, dumb and blind.
The Baron introduced me to his wife as
Madame Topaze because he was frightened
out of his wits. (429)

TOPAZE
(meekly)
Of what? (430)

CONTINUED

COCO

Of his wife's finding out. Of her even suspecting something. The way he turned pale and shivered in his boots. Palming me off as Madame Topaze. (431)

TOPAZE

(meekly, but unable to control his wonder at this novel diagnosis)
He -- he was shivering in his boots? May I ask why he should do that? (432)

COCO

Professor, you're almost too much for me.
(stares at him as if doubting such stupidity is possible, then she realizes it probably is; she blurts out)
Because he's my lover! (433)

TOPAZE

(he is looking at her stunned)
Madame, you -- you are jesting. (434)

COCO

About what, for heaven's sake? (435)

TOPAZE

About your relation with the Baron. (436)

COCO

(incredulously)
Do you mean to tell me you haven't known?
(Topaze is silent; he turns his head away and it is now he that is looking out of the window at the rain; she asks him nervously)
What's the matter? (437)

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

(in a small voice)

Nothing. (438)

COCO

(annoyed and unhappy at this turn
of affairs)But what did you think our relations were?
You must have thought something. (439)

TOPAZE

(weakly)

It -- it is not my habit to think evil
of people whom I -- whom I admire. (440)

COCO

Evil? Auguste, you are really a little
balmy. (441)

TOPAZE

I -- I am confused. Nothing else. (442)
(his face is still averted)

COCO

(almost tenderly)

Don't sit that way with your nose out
of the window. Look at me, please. (443)

TOPAZE

(meekly)

I can't -- forgive me. (444)

COCO

Have I become so horrible in your eyes...?
(445)CONTINUED

TOPAZE

(interrupting)

Oh no, no! Please don't think badly of me. It is not your fault that I am a simpleton - and that I had - some curious misconception of you. (446)

COCO

(looks at Topaze closely)

Auguste, you are crying... (447)

TOPAZE

No, no! Heaven forbid. (448)

They ride for a moment in silence, Topaze with his "nose out of the window." Coco moves a few inches closer to him and touches his arm with her hand.

COCO

I suppose now that you've learned the dreadful truth about me -- you won't want me as your assistant any more? (449)

TOPAZE

(gallantly)

Madame, it will make no difference -- in our professional relations. (450)

(pause)

COCO

I wish I could do something about it.

(suddenly)

Oh! Look!

190INT. CAB - DAY

MOVING SHOT through the cab window of a huge electric sign on which an elegant man in electric lights is pointing a finger at the public and holding a bottle in his other hand. The slogan on the sign reads "Drink Sparkling Topaze."

TWO SHOT. Topaze and Coco are looking at the sign.
Coco smiles and gently puts her hand on his arm.

COCO (cont'd)

You forget you are no longer a little
schoolmaster. You are a great man now. (451)

TOPAZE

(stares unseeing at the sign
and it blurs through the tears
behind his glass)

I -- I do not feel like a great man. (452)

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INSERT

CLOSEUP OF CLOCK. IT SAYS SEVEN O'CLOCK

LAP DISSOLVE

FULL SHOT. Baron is walking up and down nervously.

BARON

(calling)

Joseph:

(Joseph enters)

Did you telephone the hairdresser's? (453)

BUTLER

Yes, sir. (454)

CONTINUED

BARON

Well? (455)

BUTLER

Madame has not been there, sir. (456)

BARON

Hmm! I'll have a whiskey and soda. (457)

BUTLER

Yes, sir. Are you staying for dinner? (458)

BARON

I'm staying until she comes back. (459)
(he resumes his pacing)

Joseph exits.

SOUND OF DOOR OFF STAGE and -

COCO'S VOICE

Good evening, Joseph! (460)

JOSEPH'S VOICE

Good evening, Madame! (461)

The Baron tears out of the den.

ANGLE SHOT, shooting toward entrance. Coco's bedroom door is to the right. The Baron comes into shot and stands in left foreground.

BARON

(indignantly)

Well! (462)

COCO

(casually)

You here? (463)

(she starts for her room)

BARON

I have been here for three hours.
Where have you been? (464)

CLOSEUP Coco as she enters her bedroom.

COCO

With Professor Topaze. (465)
(she enters the bedroom
and slams the door)

ANGLE SHOT. Baron stares after her. An unaccustomed emotion disturbs our nobleman's bosom. He is jealous. Topaze enters and is behaving strangely. He avoids the Baron's gaze. It is a new Baron that Topaze will not look at, the Baron who is part of the incredible matter which Coco revealed in the cab. Topaze is embarrassed with the secret he has learned. He would like to say something casual but can think of no words so he coughs as if he were preoccupied and starts for his laboratory, the CAMERA backing before him.

BARON

(calls him curtly)

Just a minute, Mr. Topaze!

(Topaze stops in his tracks, removes his handkerchief and mops the back of his neck. Baron stares at him intently)

You seem a trifle nervous, sir. (466)

(comes toward Topaze)

TOPAZE

I am. (467)

BARON

What's the matter, why do you look at me like that? What have you been doing? (468)

TOPAZE

(staring at this newly revealed Don Juan)

I? Nothing. (469)

BARON

Sit down.

Topaze, still embarrassed, obeys. The CAMERA PANS to face Topaze. The Baron walks up and down in front of him, eyeing him ominously. His jealousy has almost got the better of his manners.

BARON (cont'd)

Until this moment, Topaze, you have seemed
an honorable man. What has changed you? (470)

TOPAZE

I will be frank. (471)

BARON

(grimly and with some rage)
I thought so. You could do this to me
after what I've done for you? (472)

TOPAZE

Why, I have done nothing. (473)

BARON

(sneering)
Oh, now you wish to take it back? Topaze, out
with it! Where have you been with Coco? (474)

TOPAZE

(guiltily)
To the cinema. (475)

BARON

What? (476)

TOPAZE

Yes. (477)

BARON

(sneering and drawling the words)
Very pretty!
(with a prodigious sneer)
May I ask what movie you saw? (478)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Why yes. It was entitled "Women of Passion."

(he rises and goes toward Baron,

THE CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM)

I never imagined that people comported themselves in that manner.

(The shot now includes the Baron,

Topaze is warming somewhat

abashedly to his subject)

Although innocent of any wrongdoing, she was driven into the street, where the Argentinian was waiting, and unaware that he had made this bet she foolishly accompanied him. On the boat, however, she learned her mistake. He was quite despicable. I was very relieved to see him drowned. (479)

BARON

Drowned? (480)

TOPAZE

Oh, yes. The boat was wrecked. They were all lost except Madelon and the lieutenant. I really didn't quite understand how the title fitted unless-- (481)

CLOSE TWO SHOT on the Baron, over Topaze's shoulder. The Baron leans over and takes his hand.

BARON

Forgive me, Professor. You belong in a fable. (482)

CONTINUED

Joseph enters.

BUTLER

(handing the Baron a whiskey
and soda)
Mr. de Faireville and Dr. Bomb to
see you. (483)

BARON

Send them in. (484)

The Baron crosses to the fireplace. THE CAMERA
PANS with him. Henri comes into the shot and crosses
to Baron. He is in a great state of excitement.
He is followed by Doctor Bomb, ex-head of the
La Tour laboratories. Doctor Bomb is quietly and
sinisterly drunk. He makes faces, works his
eyebrows and is full of an enigmatic sneer.
Henri, on reaching the Baron, speaks like a
conspirator fleeing the guillotine.

HENRI

Philippe! You must do something
or we are ruined. (483)

BARON

(pause)

Ruined? I doubt it. Take your hat off,
Henri, and sit down. It will quiet you.

(Henri removes his hat and
sits down. The Baron turns to Bomb)

Dr. Bomb - a seat?

(indicates a chair. Bomb sits down;
the Baron turns to Topaze)

Will you excuse us for a few moments,
Dr. Topaze? (486)

CLOSE UP Bomb. At the name Topaze, Dr. Bomb leaps out of his chair and confronts Topaze.
THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM.

BOMB

Ha! So you are Doctor Topaze?
Let me have a look at you,
you scientific Judas! (487)

The CAMERA now includes Topaze.

TOPAZE

(aghast)
Sir? (488)

BARON'S VOICE

Bomb, you are drunk! Dr. Topaze,
please leave the room. (489)

BOMB

Whiskers and all, eh? Perfect! (490)

TOPAZE

Who are you? (491)

BOMB

I'll tell you who I am! I am an honest
man! Come to send the pack of you to
prison, you and your foul dish-water. (492)

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

(ominously)
Bomb, sit down. (493)

200

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FULL SHOT of group. Bomb is crossing to his seat.

TOPAZE

But he is dangerous. We -- we must
telephone the police. (494)

BOMB

(with a big laugh)
Listen to who's talking about the police!
You swindler! (495)

201

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE TWO SHOT Henri and the Baron.

HENRI

You must deal with him, Philippe. He's
going to expose us to the opposition
press. (496)

BARON

Stop ranting, you fool!
(he turns to Topaze)
Dr. Topaze --

FULL SHOT of group.

BARON (cont'd)

this is my affair. I demand you leave. (497)

TOPAZE

Oh, no; I will not desert you at such a moment, sir. (498)

BARON

(looks at Topaze, shakes his head
resignedly and turns to Bomb)
Dr. Bomb, state your case. (499)

CLOSE UP Bomb.

BOMB

I will be brief, Baron. One hundred thousand francs in cash or I expose your dish-water! (500)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

What! What dish-water are you referring to, sir? (501)

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of Bomb.

BOMB

(whipping out a bottle of the
Sparkling Topaze from his coat
pocket, and darting toward Topaze)
This! This plague-ridden concoction, you
swindler!

(he shoves the bottle into
Topaze's hands)
I would not lend my name to that outrage
on the public, but you -- (502)

TOPAZE

(interrupting)
He is raving! (503)

206

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TWO SHOT Henri and the Baron.

HENRI

Give him the money, Philippe. It is
the only thing to do. (504)

BARON

(sighs and shrugs)
Gentlemen, please be seated.

207

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FULL SHOT of group. They all sit down.

BARON (cont'd)

(to Henri)
Henri, may I trouble you.
(he hands Henri a key from his
vest pocket)
File 3, drawer 12.
(Henri takes the key and
crosses to the den)

208 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Bomb.

209 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze.

210 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON (cont'd)

Your visit, Doctor Bomb, is not entirely unexpected. So you would like a hundred thousand francs - for your good will. (505)

Henri returns to the Baron's side with a dossier.

BOMB'S VOICE

Yes. (506)

BARON

Here, my foolish fellow, are what in melodrama are known as "the papers". (507)

BOMB'S VOICE

I am in no mood for jokes. (508)

CONTINUED)

B'RON

Allow me. It is my turn to be objectionable.
(he studies the papers and talks as
if he were transposing the writing)
In nineteen twenty-four a certain Emile
Winkelman was employed as superintendent
of the Charity Hospital at Marseilles, a
short, squat, peculiar looking fellow with
what is known as an Assyrian beard. Are
you listening, Doctor Bomb?

211 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FLASH of Bomb. He has risen and is staring sullenly.

212 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron.

B'RON (cont'd)

Don't go, I will be brief. We skip to page
eight, and we find that on December fourth,
1925, this same Emile Winkelman, beard and
all, vanishes from the Charity Hospital,
taking with him a magnificent sum of money
belonging to the State. There is a great
hue and cry, but Emile is never seen nor
heard of again. However, on September
twenty-second, nineteen twenty-seven, there
arrives in Paris, a--

CLOSE UP Bomb.

BARON'S VOICE

-- short, squat but smooth-shaven fellow
who soon finds employment as a chemist and
under the name of - (509)

BOMB

(interrupting, grimly)
So you intend to blackmail me? (510)

214

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

With the greatest of reluctance, and
only in self-defense. (511)

215

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Bomb.

BOMB

Baron, I am no match for you. You are
the most impudent scoundrel I have ever
known. (512)

216

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Baron.

BARON

Doctor Bomb, I am impervious to
flattery. (513)

CLOSE UP Bomb. He is stumped. Suddenly he turns to Topaze and crosses to him as THE CAMERA PANS with him.

BOMB

As for you, you sanctimonious swindler, enjoy your ill-gotten gains. Wallow in your sin.

(the Baron comes into the shot)
But the world knows you for what you are - a fake, a thief!

The Baron pulls Bomb out of the shot. THE CAMERA remaining on a CLOSE UP of Topaze.

BOMB'S VOICE

Topaze is a thief! Put that on your signs!
Topaze is a thief! Topaze is a thief! (514

SOUND

We hear a door slam and Dr. Bomb's voice dies out. Topaze has been listening to his outrageous remarks in attitude of paralysis. Now he looks trance-like at the bottle of Sparkling Topaze that he still holds. He looks at the label, turns and hurries with the bottle into his laboratory, the CAMERA PANNING him across the living-room.

MED. SHOT. Topaze comes into the shot and crosses to his microscope. Frenziedly, he adjusts his microscope and places a drop of water from the bottle on the stain. He peers at it.

INSERT

OF WHAT HE SEES. It is a drop full of animal life.

CLOSE UP Topaze. He gasps, and seizes a piece of the litmus paper and dips it into a glass containing some of the water from this bottle.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF GLASS. The paper blackens and curls up.

Topaze stands riveted with horror. He seizes one of his own bottles of Sparkling Topaze, smells it, and then smells the Bomb bottle.

TOPAZE

(in a hoarse voice)

Impossible! No -- no! (515)

(he stands panting and then,
picking up some of his litmus paper
rushes out of the laboratory)

220

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FULL SHOT. Henri, the Baron and Coco are whispering by the fireplace. Topaze enters. He does not utter a sound, but stares at them as if they were three devils in the room. He backs slowly away from them.

BARON

Where are you going? (516)

COCO

Auguste, please, I must talk to you. (517)

Topaze makes no answer but continues backing. When he comes to the door he bolts like a frightened horse. Down the steps clatters Topaze, and into the street.

ANGLE SHOT. Topaze comes out. He is hatless and stands looking up and down the avenue. He dashes out of the shot.

222

INT. RESTAURANT LARUE - NIGHT

SOUND

ANGLE SHOT. Revolving door in entrance. We hear a soft waltz. Topaze comes in like an escaped lunatic and comes to a standstill, glaring about the restaurant.

The CAMERA PANS AROUND the room and then rests on a diner in a corner of the restaurant, General Magoliani, again dining in solitary splendor. The waiter is filling his tumbler with some bottled water.

We zoom to a CLOSE SHOT of the bottle. It is Sparkling Topaze.

223

INT. RESTAURANT LARUE - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze. He acts like a bull about to charge and darts out of the shot.

224

INT. RESTAURANT LARUE - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of General's table. Topaze swoops into the shot and springs at the glass of water. He suddenly stops, looks at the General, who returns the stare.

TOPAZE

May I? (518)
(without waiting for an answer,
he plunges the litmus paper
into the glass)

G

CONTINUED

INSERT

OF GLASS. The paper curls up and turns black.

Topaze covers his face and exits, leaving the paper behind in the glass. The General rises to his feet and shakes his fist after Topaze.

GENERAL

Porca Madonna! Dio camo! (519)

225 INT. RESTAURANT LARUE - NIGHT

SOUND MED. SHOT on revolving doors. Magoliani's voice is heard screaming. Topaze goes through the doors like a bullet. The doors go on revolving as we -

LAP DISSOLVE226 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A large sprinkling wagon moving along the street. The name "Topaze Germicide" is written on the side.

227 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze. He sees the wagon and dashes out of the shot..

228 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of the rear of the sprinkling wagon, spouting water. Topaze runs into the shot, and walking in back of the wagon, he holds a piece of litmus paper in the stream of water. His feet and lower limbs are, of course, being deluged.

CLOSE UP of the driver of the wagon, the rear vision mirror at his left. He looks into the mirror where the stumbling Topaze is reflected. He smiles and presses a lever.

230

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of Topaze behind wagon. A huge stream of water shoots out and soaks him. He comes to a standstill, although almost oblivious of the wetting. He stares at the litmus paper.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF THE PAPER. IT HAS CURLED
AND BLACKENED.

LAP DISSOLVE

231

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

SOUND

CLOSE SHOT of a window from the interior. It is dark, save for the moonlight. Far in the distance we can see the winking lights of an electric sign, blinking its message in the night - "Drink Sparkling Topaze." A clenched hand appears and strikes at the window pane. It breaks. The hand reaches in and, undoing the catch, pushes open the window.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to include the whole window as it opens, admitting Topaze.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK FURTHER, and reveals Topaze's erstwhile classroom in the Stegg Academy. Topaze stands staring about. His gaze fastens on a corner of the room.

CLOSE SHOT of a corner of classroom. A stand supports a large bottle of water upon which, thanks to the moonlight, we can read the label - "Sparkling Topaze." Topaze rushes into the shot and feverishly fills a glass with water from the jar. He takes a litmus paper from his pocket and dips it into the glass.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF THE GLASS OF WATER. THE PAPER BLACKENS AND CURLS ABOUT HIS FINGERS.

233

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Topaze. His manner is vacant, as though he had exhausted his emotional responses. He stares stupidly at the paper and then lets his gaze wander around the room.

234

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT from Topaze's angle of what he sees. The CAMERA rests on the rows of empty desks. It then moves to the raised desk from which he sees the phantom of an honest Topaze who used to preach the creed of honesty and fairness as codified in the mottoes arranged on the wall behind him. These we now see as the CAMERA lifts and PANS slowly across the room. We read - "Money does not bring happiness," "Ill gotten gains are not worth while," "The honest man is the happy man."

235

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of Topaze, including the water jar and the label. Topaze suddenly looks back at the water jar. The words "Sparkling Topaze" seem more than ever to mock him. He suddenly goes amok, and charges at the water jar. He throws his arms about it, with a gargantuan heave pulls it from its pedestal. Lifting it high in his berserk rage, he dashes it to the floor. There is a resounding crash.

SOUND

CLOSE SHOT of a night watchman winding a time clock in the courtyard. He hears the boom, and runs out of the shot.

237

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT Topaze. He is moving silently toward the window to make his escape. Suddenly the beam of a flashlight whisks past his back. He ducks out of the way.

238

INT. ENTRANCE OF CLASSROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT. The watchman is holding his light with one hand and unlocking the door with the other. Stepping into the room, he lights the flash and moves it about the room.

239

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT following the path of the torch. It moves about and rests on the shattered jar. It hesitates a second and goes quickly to the open window. Below the open window it finds and stops on the crouching Topaze. Topaze darts like a moth toward the light. It illuminates his contorted face for an instant. There ensues a scuffle in which the light falls to the floor. The figures of Topaze and the night watchman are in the dark. Suddenly one of the figures breaks away, goes thru the open door and rapidly down the passageway. The other figure steps into the passageway and, drawing a gun, fires after him.

240

INT. PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

FLASH of Topaze clattering down the passageway.

241 INT. PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of watchman. He fires twice and runs out of shot.

242 EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - NIGHT

Topaze comes out in full flight. As CAMERA PANS with him he slows down. He peers ahead fearfully.

243 EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of two gendarmes walking toward him.

244 EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT Topaze. He slinks into a doorway. The policeman walk through the shot. They are discussing politics.

POLICEMAN

(Line missing) (520)

245 EXT. STEGG ACADEMY - NIGHT

CLOSE UP Topaze. He is terrorized. He looks about wildly and spies something that makes him gasp.

INSERT

FULL SHOT OF WHAT HE SEES. It is the same electric sign advertising Topaze water that we earlier saw through the classroom window. Now, however, it reads, "Topaze is a thief."

SOUND

BACK TO CLOSE UP of Topaze. Under this Close Up we hear a rhythmic whispered refrain - Topaze is a thief, Topaze is a thief. This continues like a reiterated roll of drums, gradually mounting. Topaze runs out of the shot and away from the Camera.

Topaze rushes on. Around him swirls the traffic of Paris at night. He hears in the honk of the taxicab horns the words, "Topaze is a thief."

Dishevelled and dripping, he continues his flight. The police traffic whistles blow the refrain into his ears, "Topaze is a Thief."

He hears the phrase in the music of a cafe orchestra. With his disordered mind, he now reads the accusation on the store windows. All the slogans of Paris seem to change before his eyes into this one sentence, "Topaze is a Thief."

The cats on a roof meow it at him. The feet of a passing horse beat it out to his ears. An automobile almost runs him down; stopping abruptly, its bakes screech and in the sound there is also the cry, "Topaze is a Thief."

He flees on. All Paris is now a symphony of accusation. The night, the lighted windows spelling it out, the Eiffel Tower flashes it at him, all the signs and noises of the city beat down on him with a single cry, "Topaze is a Thief." Cowering, he flees into an alley. He rushes to the stone wall at the end of the alley. Here, his face buried in his hands, his soul racked by the tumult of voices, sounds and signs, all proclaiming his villainy to the world, Topaze finds his crucifixion.

(The above scenes, which will be treated impressionistically, cannot be put into continuity until they have been discussed with the scenic artist.)

FADE OUT

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF A BELL. A HAND COMES IN AND
PRESSES IT.

247 INT. COCO'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

SOUND FULL SHOT. We hear the bell. Coco, who has been
reading, jumps to her feet and runs toward the door.

248 EXT. ENTRANCEWAY - DAY

FULL SHOT. Coco and Joseph appear simultaneously.
Coco opens the door, revealing the Baron with a top
hat and a bouquet of violets. He is very elegant.

COCO

(with great chagrin)

Oh, it's you! Where is he? Did
you find out anything? (521)

BARON

Nothing. He'll come back.

(he walks into the room, Coco
following; he puts his hat
on the table and takes her hand)

Sleep well? (522)

COCO

Philippe, something has happened to
him! (523)

CLOSE MOVING SHOT - as they go into the living room.

BARON

My dear, you are carrying on like an ingenue.

(he hands her the bouquet)
I assure you nothing has happened to him. There is a special providence that looks after simpletons. (524)

COCO

Oh, you make me sick! (525)
(she drops the flowers on a chair; sits down before the fireplace) (525)

BARON

Darling, I am sorry. (526)

CAMERA FOLLOWS HER as she sits down and stares at the floor. The Baron has gone to another part of the room and is out of the shot.

COCO

(rising)
Philippe, we must find Topaze! I kept thinking all night of that look in his eyes when he left. (527)

CLOSE SHOT - Baron.

BARON

What sort of nonsense is this! I
swear you're crying.
(with tenderness, he comes over
to her)

CAMERA FOLLOWS Baron over to Coco and holds them in
a TWO SHOT.

BARON (cont'd)

I never heard of such a thing. Why,
darling -- (528)
(he starts to embrace her, but
she repulses him)

COCO

Don't touch me, please. I can't -
with him lying dead somewhere,
surrounded by - by (Sam) cats. (529)

SOUND The doorbell rings. Both Coco and Baron react.

251 INT. ANTE-ROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT - Joseph opens the door and Topaze is
disclosed. He wipes his feet on the door mat, takes
off his hat and enters.

BUTLER

Good morning, sir. (530)

Topaze, incapable of speech just nods. He is a changed
Topaze, no longer the happiest man in the world. His
head hangs; his clothes are torn; he is sodden and
despairing. He is Lazarus come out of his tomb.

CLOSE MOVING SHOT on Topaze, entering the living room.

COCO'S VOICE

Auguste, you're hurt!

Topaze just stares. He has come to a halt by the fireplace. Coco comes running to his side.

COCO (cont'd)

(excitedly)

Look at your clothes! Poor man!
Where have you been? (531)

Topaze still stares.

CUT TO

THREE SHOT - Baron in foreground, Coco and Topaze by fireplace.

BARON

You're behaving like a child,
Topaze. Sit down and take that
absurd look off your face. (532)

TOPAZE

(with an effort)

I came back to pay for my crime. (533)

The Baron grimaces.

COCO

Oh, don't be silly, Auguste! You've
done nothing. (534)

CONTINUED

. TOPAZE

Nothing?

(with a mirthless little laugh)
It would be very difficult to believe
in my innocence. I don't believe in
it myself. They will say nobody could
be so great a fool - as - as Topaze.
It would be straining the credulity of
the court - (535)

BARON

What court? (536)

TOPAZE

(dully)
The court before which we must stand
trial and be convicted for what we
are. Thieves! (537)

Butler enters.

CUT TO254 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Butler.

BUTLER

Some people to see Doctor Topaze! (538)

BARON'S VOICE

Who? (539)

BUTLER

Quite a delegation, sir. Some are in
uniform. (540)

CUT TO

CLOSE UP - Topaze.

TOPAZE

Ah, the police....

(he smiles pathetically)

Tell them - tell them I am ready. (541)

BARON'S VOICE

Just a moment! I'll see them. (542)

(he hurries through the background)

CUT TO

256

INT. ANTE-ROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT - We find Henri and three strangers; one of them in the uniform of a Colonel; the other two look vaguely like undertakers. However, they are political notables. Behind them is another group of four photographers, with cameras. The Baron enters.

HENRI

Well, here we are! (543)

BARON

(looks at the group and his
face broadens in a smile)

Gentlemen, I am delighted! (544)

FATTER UNDERTAKER

- Sir, Mr. de Faireville insisted upon the ceremony being at the house; so, since Mahomet would not come to the mountain the mountain has come to Mahomet. We have brought the palms. Is Professor Topaze ready to receive us? (545)

BARON

In a moment, gentlemen. I will prepare him.
Be seated, please. (546)

(he starts out of the shot)

TWO SHOT Coco and Topaze.

COCO

(tenderly)

So you came to share our fate? (547)

TOPAZE

Yes. (548)

COCO

You dear man, you're so foolish.
You make me ashamed. (549)

CLOSE UP - Baron at door.

BARON

Well, my fine criminal, are you
ready for the police? (550)

CLOSE TWO SHOT of Coco and Topaze.

TOPAZE

(hanging his head)

I am ready. (551)

MED. SHOT of Baron. He throws open the double doors with a Court Chamberlain gesture.

BARON

Gentlemen!

The delegation, followed by two cameramen, starts to enter. During the ensuing scene the cameramen set up their cameras busily.

WIDE ANGLE SHOT - of Coco and Topaze. The delegation goes through camera foreground. There is a close-up camera on Topaze.

BARON (cont'd)

(standing on one side and speaking
like a train announcer)

Professor Auguste Topaze, the
representatives of the Republic! (552)

The group bows to Topaze, who is too dazed to respond. Henri detaches himself from the group and confronts Topaze.

HENRI

Professor Topaze, I have been
delegated to confer on you all too
tardily that honor which you have
merited by your work in the field of
science - the Academic Palms. (553)

TOPAZE

What? The - the Palms? The Palms?

Henri pauses oratorically. An assistant, carrying a velvet box, steps to his side. Henri turns to get it.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

(in a small, but confused voice)

Please, gentlemen, wait a minute -

I - I have something to say. I -- (554)

262

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

THREE SHOT Henri, Baron and Henri's assistant with the case.

BARON

(Interrupting)

Gentlemen, Doctor Topaze is a man of deeds, not words. He is overcome. Out of respect for his feelings, gentlemen, will you make the ceremony as brief as possible? (555)

HENRI

(in whisper)

What's the matter with him? (556)

BARON

(in whisper)

He's drunk. Hurry up. (557)

263

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT of the group, shooting toward Topaze. Henri steps forward quickly with the velvet box, launches into his speech as Topaze seems about to utter some words. Coco has taken Topaze's arm,

HENRI

Professor Auguste A. Topaze, teacher, scholar, scientist and author, for your diligence, for your learning and for your humanitarian labors as head of La Tour Laboratory, I, Henri de Faireville, in the name of the Republic confer on you the insignia of the Academic Palms. (558)
(he places the Palms in Topaze's lapel and steps aside)

The other officials come forward, one after another, to shake Topaze's hand. The cameras click and the flashlights explode on each handshake.

SOUND

CLOSE SHOT of Topaze. (Another camera on group.)

BARON'S VOICE

Professor Antoine Bouillon, Third Assistant Commissioner of Scholastic Awards and Third Assistant Head of the Bureau of International Awards and Merits.

(Bouillon shakes hands with Topaze and steps out of shot)

Count de Lespinasse, Second Assistant Commissioner of Scholastic Awards and Second Assistant Head of the Bureau of International Awards and Merits.

(Lespinasse shakes hands with Topaze and steps out of shot)

Colonel Robert Chateaufeuf du Pape, First Assistant Commissioner of Scholastic Awards and First Assistant Head of the Bureau of International Awards and Merits. (559)

The Colonel follows suit and exits. Henri steps forward, smiling, and shakes hands with Topaze.

HENRI

My dear Professor, congratulations! (560)
(he drops the hand)

TOPAZE

(finally has found his tongue;
staring at the Palms in his
buttonhole; then looking at Henri)
You - you are the Republic of France? (561)

HENRI

I am a member of the Government,
Professor. (562)

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

(looking again at the Palms in
his lapel; then again at the
three dignitaries)
And you, gentlemen, are friends of -
of the Baron? (563)

BARON

Not only friends, my dear Topaze,
but - er - business associates. (564)

TOPAZE

I see. I understand. (565)

COCO

Aren't you going to thank them? (566)

TOPAZE

Yes....

(pause)

Yes. Thanks. Thanks very much... (567)

265 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

FULL SHOT of group.

CHATEAUNTUF DU PAPE

Speech! Speech! (568)

GROUP

Speech! Speech! (569)

CUT TO

266 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Well - well, all I can say is that I dreamed for many years of this honor. I always thought that this would be the happiest moment of my life when it came, if it ever did come. In fact, I wrote out a speech long ago - it's in my laboratory there - expressing my true feelings... But it wouldn't fit. It would sound too humorous. I - I have outgrown that oration in the last few minutes. So you will pardon me for not making it. I would rather say, merely, thank you, gentlemen. It is more than I deserve. (570)

267 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

SOUND FULL SHOT of group. Loud applause and more flashlights.

BARON

Bravo!

(he begins to shoo the delegates out)

Come, we'll adjourn to the library.

(to butler)

Some wine, Joseph! (571)

BUTLER

Yes, sir. (572)

SOUND The group passes out, chattering.

CUT TO

TWO SHOT Topaze and Coco. They are left alone. He stands staring at the Palms.

COCO

(touching his lapel)

Auguste, you were a great man without them. (573)

TOPAZE

No. Now I am what they call a great man. Yes, something has happened to me. (574)

COCO

(wondering at this - for
Topaze - novel cynicism)

Auguste! (575)

(he turns, regards himself
in the mirror)

269

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of Coco and Topaze, reflected in mirror.

TOPAZE

I am not Topaze! Topaze lies dead in an alley. Look! Can't you see how different I am? I - I am a distinguished scientist. I am a man of honor. I have been rewarded by the Republic. I - I wear the Palms.

(he turns to Coco and calls her
by name for the first time)

Coco! Do you know of a good barber? (576)

She smiles at him, and we

FADE OUT

FADE IN270INT. BOUDOIR - DAY

CLOSE SHOT - of a door in a modernistic boudoir.
The door opens and a maid, bearing a large bouquet
of white roses, enters. She crosses the room as
CAMERA MOVES with her. She halts by the bed of her
mistress.

271INT. BOUDOIR - DAY

TWO SHOT of Coco and maid. Coco is asleep in her bed.

MAID

(putting the flowers roguishly on
Coco's bosom)

Time to get up. (577)

COCO

(staring and opening one eye and
murmuring in her sleep)

What time is it? (578)

MAID

(reprovingly)

Half past twelve. (579)

COCO

Zounds! (580)

(she leaps out of bed and rushes
out of the shot)

FULL LENGTH SHOT - at mirror. Coco comes into shot and surveys herself. The maid comes into the shot, hands her the card from the flowers, and then, crossing to the windows, lets in the morning sun.

The CAMERA MOVES into a CLOSE SHOT of Coco as she reads the card.

INSERT

CLOSE UP OF CARD. It reads:

"Three o'clock. Don't forget."
The card carries the name Auguste
A. Topaze, B.S., Sc.D.

QUICK LAP DISSOLVE

273

INT. BOUDOIR - DAY

Shot of Coco entirely dressed. She is touching a perfume stopper to her ear. She starts out of the shot and we

LAP DISSOLVE

274

EXT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of a huge sign above a factory reading "Drink Sparkling Topaze. Latour Chemical Works." Above the sign is seen a French flag fluttering bravely in the wind.

275

EXT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

MED. SHOT as Coco's smart limousine drives up. She descends to the sidewalk and enters the building.

FULL SHOT of ante room in the Latour Chemical Works. At the end of this anteroom we see a card on a door, "Doctor Topaze, Private." In the room are some eight desks, with stenographers busily at work. We find the Baron walking nervously back and forth.

277

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze's door. It opens and a very elegant youth emerges. We move with him as he approaches the Baron.

YOUTH

Doctor Topaze will see you in five minutes, sir. (581)

BARON

I have been waiting twenty-five minutes. (582)

YOUTH

Yes, sir.

We follow the youth and he approaches a group of people all waiting to see Dr. Topaze. In this group we see Dr. Stegg and two other dignitaries looking sad and provincial in their finery in these surroundings. The youth stops in front of Dr. Stegg.

CAMERA HALTS on a MED. SHOT of these two.

YOUTH (Cont'd)

Doctor Stegg? (583)

STEGG

(rises almost obsequiously)
Yes, sir. (584)

YOUTH

Doctor Topaze will see you in --
er -- seven minutes. (585)

STEGG

Tell him we are quite comfortable. (586)

YOUTH

Yes, sir. (587)

The youth exits from the shot, as Stegg, holding his hat, sits down again.

278 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

LONG SHOT of ante room, taken from the archway entrance. There is obviously no door to this archway. The Baron is standing by the desk of one of the stenographers, reading some printed matter. Coco comes into the foreground, sees the Baron, and halts. The Baron puts down the printed matter and is about to turn around to resume his walk. Coco dodges quickly out of the shot.

279- INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

ANGLE SHOT in a corridor. In the foreground there is a door. Coco approaches; and very surreptitiously opens the door.

REVERSE CLOSE UP of the door. It opens and Coco's head appears.

COCO

(smiling)
May I? (588)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

Of course! (589)

She enters and, closing the door with her back, regards Topaze smilingly.

COCO

Very becoming, Auguste. (590)

FULL FIGURE SHOT of Topaze and a large mirror in the foreground. A tailor is on one knee by Topaze, and Coco is in the background. Our confused little schoolmaster of other days is tremendously transformed. He is clean-shaven and abloom with prosperity. The tailor is fitting him into a gray cutaway.

TOPAZE

(to Coco, over his shoulder)
Do you like it? (591)

COCO

(admiringly)
Ravishing! (592)
(she comes forward)

TAILOR

Perfect . . (593)

TOPAZE
(looks doubtful)
Is the back snug? (594)

TAILOR

Like a glove! (595)

Coco is now beside Topaze.

TOPAZE
(turning to her; he speaks with
a certain reminiscent naivete in
his diction)
For the races. You see, it has a double-
breasted vest.
(he opens his coat to reveal this
asset)

Coco beams and removes one of the flowers from her
corsage, puts it in his buttonhole.

282 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of Topaze over Coco's shoulder. She puts
the flower in his lapel. It covers the palm insignia.
Topaze studies the effect in the mirror and then
frowns. He moves the flower to cover the palms.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

I -- I am a little afraid it won't do.

THREE SHOT of Coco, Topaze and tailor.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

I think austerity is more becoming to me, my dear.

(he removes the flower and turns to the tailor)

I am very pleased with the suit. I will mail you the check. (596)

TAILOR

(beaming, bowing and backing out of the room)

Your credit, Doctor Topaze, is A number 1 with us. All I want is you to enjoy the garment. It was a pleasure making it. Good day, sir! (597)

Topaze walks up and down, swinging his arms and adjusting himself in his new suit.

COCO

I haven't thanked you for the flowers. They were lovely. (598)

VOICE

(coming over the dictaphone)

Dr. Topaze. (599)

TOPAZE

(to Coco)

Excuse me.

CLOSE SHOT Topaze at dictaphone.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

(into phone)

Yes. (600)

VOICE

Department of Agriculture on the
phone. (601)

TOPAZE

I don't want to speak to them -- it --
(602)

VOICE

What about the luncheon in honor of
Professor Richard. (603)

TOPAZE

Ignore it for me. (604)

VOICE

Dr. Stegg is still waiting. (605)

TOPAZE

Splendid. (606)

VOICE

And the Baron de Latour-Latour is still
waiting. (607)

TOPAZE

Marvelous. I will be ready for him in
a moment. (608)

Coco enters the shot.

COCO

What a busy man. (609)

TOPAZE

(leaning back in chair;

Coco sits nearby)

Oh, no. I just pretend I'm busy. I flutter in and out constantly -- and keep barking. If one has time to listen to people they have no respect for one. One must be elusive. I have kept Dr. Stegg waiting twenty minutes already. In another half hour he will be in complete awe of me. (610)

COCO

Dr. Stegg! Isn't that the wretch who -- who -- (611)

TOPAZE

Threw me out of his school? Yes, and now he wants me to honor him by attending his graduation exercises this afternoon and distributing the prizes to the students. Fancy.

(he pauses and muses for a second)

Would you like to come along? (612)

COCO

That'll be fun. But you might have called for me instead of summoning me here like a tyrant. It's better manners -- (613)

TOPAZE

My dear Coco, in a crisis one omits a bow or two. (614)

— CONTINUED

COCO

Oh. You are in a crisis? (615)

TOPAZE

Not yet. But in a few minutes. (616)

COCO

I should love to share a crisis with you. (617)

TOPAZE

(is about to cross to her, but changes his mind; getting behind his desk)

Do you mind if I sit here? I feel more effective. (618)

COCO

Do be effective. (619)

TOPAZE

(he winks at her and then speaks into the dictaphone)

Baron de Latour-Latour. (620)

COCO

Auguste! What are you up to? (621)

TOPAZE

The most frightful villainy. Shh....

285 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of the door. The Baron enters.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (Cont'd)

I am sorry to have kept you waiting. (622)

BARON

(as he crosses, CAMERA following)
I don't mind humoring you, Topaze. But
don't overdo it.
(halts in front of the desk)

286 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

THREE SHOT Baron, Topaze and Coco.

BARON (Cont'd)

(to Coco)
Well -- what are you doing here? (623)

COCO

Vis it ing. (624)

TOPAZE

I sent for her. I have a matter of grave
importance to take up, sir. (625)

BARON

What a man! Always flinging matters of
grave importance at my head.
(he sits down - then to Coco)
You look charming today. What do you
think of our little professor's lair?
The halls of Montezuma, eh? (626)

There is a brief silence in which Topaze looks at
Coco and the Baron and seems a little embarrassed.

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

(still fidgeting)

Ahem -- Baron de Latour-Latour...
You have in the past six months been
kind enough to call me your perfect
disciple.

(catches Coco's eye and seems
embarrassed, interrupting himself)
Please, Coco, would you mind sitting in
that chair --

288

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

THREE SHOT - Baron, Topaze and Coco.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

-- so I can't see you. (627)

COCO

(rising and changing chairs)
Certainly.

(she is seated)
Is -- is this the crisis? (628)

289

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE TWO SHOT of Topaze and Baron.

TOPAZE

It begins... now. (629)

BARON

What sort of charades are these.... (630)

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

Sir, I am just thinking how to start the matter of..... (631)

BARON

A disciple of mine should always come to the point -- immediately... (632)

TOPAZE

Thank you.

(he clears his throat)

I am receiving eight thousand francs a month as chief of the Latour Chemical works. (633)

BARON

(smiling relievedly)

Don't tell me you're demanding another boost. After all, Topaze, there are limits, even for a disciple. (634)

TOPAZE

You misunderstand me, sir. You've been more than generous as an employer. In fact I am being overpaid as head of the Latour Chemical works. Both of us know they are nonexistent. (635)

BARON

Proceed. (636)

CLOSE UP of Topaze.

TOPAZE

Really if I took my job seriously I would have nothing to do. In fact, I would be unemployed. So I have decided I should be more honestly employed -- as a partner. As a partner, it would be my privilege to do nothing without my conscience bothering me. As it is I have to pretend to be busy all the time. (637)

291

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

TWO SHOT of Baron and Topaze.

BARON

(rises)

What are you mumbling about... (638)

TOPAZE

Sir, I am asking you for a third interest in this thriving concern. (639)

292

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE UP of Coco. She is very intrigued and rather delighted.

293

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

TWO SHOT of Baron and Topaze

BARON

(laughing)

Topaze. You delight me. Such effrontery is refreshing. (640)

CLOSE UP of Topaze.

TOPAZE

You - you under-estimate me sir. I
repeat my request - ominously. (641)

295 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

THREE SHOT - Topaze, Baron and Coco.

BARON

Ominously! Topaze -- do you realize
how much a third interest in the business
would be? (642)

TOPAZE

To a fraction, sir. (645)

BARON

Coco, I am disappointed in our little
professor. He has had a relapse. He
is as absurd as ever. (644)

Coco looks toward Topaze.

CLOSE UP of Topaze at desk.

TOPAZE

(stands)

I see there is nothing to be gained by --
by words. Baron, I am about to be very
objectionable.

(he takes a big key ring from his
pocket and opens a drawer of his
desk and removes some typewritten
pages)

Here, as they say in melodrama, are the
papers. You will find written out here
a complete report of your relations with
Coco --

(he bows toward Coco)

-- dates, doings, and sayings.

297

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE UP of Baron.

298

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE UP of Coco.

299

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE UP of Topaze.

TOPAZE (Cont'd)

Your stock in this firm is in your
wife's name and your wife, if I
may say so, is a very formidable woman.
Once she reads this fascinating data,
her subsequent antics are easy to imagine.
(he smiles) (645)

300 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

THREE SHOT - Topaze stands behind his desk, Coco and Baron on each side. Coco stares at the Baron.

BARON

You are the most impudent scoundrel
I have ever known. (646)

TOPAZE

Sir, I am impervious to flattery. (647)

301 INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

CLOSE MOVING SHOT of the Baron pacing and fuming.

COCO'S VOICE

Is that all you've got to say,
Philippe?
(softly, to the Baron)
You are going to give in? (648)

BARON

To think I nourished and reared that
Frankenstein under my own roof! (649)
(he exits angrily)

Coco watches him.

TWO SHOT - Topaze and Coco.

TOPAZE

(confidentially to Coco,
beside him)

A very difficult situation. Allow him
to adjust himself. (650)

Topaze pours himself a drink of water out of an
ornate thermos bottle. He offers the glass to Coco,
she shakes her head, and he drinks it himself and
sits down.

3030

INT. CHEMICAL WORKS - DAY

MOVING SHOT of the Baron. Coco and Topaze are in the
background. Baron goes toward Coco.

BARON

(exploding)

What else can I do! Coco, a divorce
would ruin me. (651)

COCO

well, that's news. So you're afraid
of her? (652)

(turns her back and there is a
silence)

TOPAZE

I have taken the liberty of drawing
up a partnership contract. (653)

BARON

Blackmailer! (654)

TOPAZE

A pen, sir? (655)

FADL IN304 EXT. PROFESSOR STEGG'S ACADEMY - DAY

SOUND LONG SHOT - There is a little crowd of the curious waiting for the celebrity to arrive. There are a number of automobiles lined up in front of the Academy; there is a red carpet leading from the front door to the sidewalk. We hear the Marseillaise played by a military band. Coco's limousine drives up.

305 EXT. PROFESSOR STEGG'S ACADEMY - DAY

SOUND MED. SHOT - on door of limousine. Doctor Stegg steps out, Coco follows him, and Topaze alights last. As they start up the carpet, the kids hanging around - (not students but street urchins, including the chestnut vendor) -- set up a series of cheers, and the crowd closes in back of them.

The CAMERA PANS with them, "Vive Topaze" is the cry and Topaze bows freely.

The Topaze troupe enters the school and the sight-seers crowd up to peer into the Academy in the wake of the great man.

306 INT. PROFESSOR STEGG'S ACADEMY - DAY

FULL SHOT - of the classroom. It is crowded with students and their relatives. The students, all very dressed up, sit at their desks. As the Topaze group enters, they all stand at attention. Around the walls of the room are camp chairs on which the relatives sit, their faces full of pride over the spectacle of their young ones.

The Topaze group mounts the platform where once we saw Topaze presiding as a teacher. On this desk, flags have been draped. It is covered with several bowls of flowers.

In back of the platform is a semi-circle of chairs in which the professors and school officials sit. Coco is given a special chair adjoining the platform. We see the Baroness, formidably esconced.

MED. SHOT - of platform as Stegg bows Topaze into the chair of honor. The Marseillaise stops and Doctor Stegg steps forward on the platform to address the class as everybody sits down.

STEGG

Gentlemen of the Stegg Academy,
and you, my dear parents. We
are signally honored today in
having with us an old friend.

(he turns with an oily
smile to Topaze)

I am sure we can all call you
friend.

(he turns to the class)

An old friend whom I have induced
to return to this modest little
room which was the scene of his
first success. Yes, my friends,
it was out of this arena that our
hero came.

308

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

REVERSE FULL SHOT - of classroom.

SOUND

APPLAUSE AND CHEERS

STEGG (cont'd)

(becoming stern)

Silence if you please!

MED. SHOT of platform. Stegg in f.g.

STEGG (cont'd)

(picks up piece of paper;
studies it)

Gentlemen, nobody realizes more than I that this is the great day of your lives. There is rejoicing, but there is also sadness. I will not speak of the latter. Let us turn to the rejoicing. I have here a list of those who have been in the forefront of their school in the past year. I wish to announce that, in addition to the prizes to be awarded to the individual students for their diligence and brilliance in individual subjects, the Academy this year has selected for its banner pupil, for its model of French intellectual youth, none other than Mr. Charlemagne de la Tour la Tour!

(Baroness and her three
friends applaud)

SOUND

310 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

SOUND CLOSEUP of Topaze. He takes this last piece of news very badly. (We hear the small applause over this closeup.) Topaze grimaces. His expression of elegance seems to have changed. He looks at Stegg in amazement. What would seem almost a sneer comes to his face as he gazes at the Baroness.

311 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE SHOT Baroness and her two cronies, applauding vigorously.

312 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze. He has a bad taste in his mouth.

MED. SHOT platform. Stegg in f.g. He waits till cheering from the la Tour section subsides.

STEGG

(with obsequious bow to Baroness)
And now for the moment for which you
all have been waiting. It is my great
privilege and high honor to introduce
to you the speaker of the day, the
distributor of the prizes, the beloved
scientific genius of the Republic -
my very good friend..... (656)

(he turns with a pas seul and,
in a grandiloquent gesture,
indicates Topaze)

Topaze rises and steps forward.

314

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

REVERSE FULL SHOT over Topaze. The students rise
and, in which is evidently a carefully rehearsed
sentence, repeat in unison:

STUDENTS

We welcome you back, Doctor Topaze. (657)

SOUND

At the conclusion of this brief address, there is a
burst of applause and cheers from the student body.

CLOSE UP Topaze. He bows and stands surveying his old friends. As he smiles the room becomes quiet.

TOPAZE

(beginning in a gentle voice)
Gentlemen, dear ladies, Dr. Stegg and members of the faculty.... Where is my pointer?...

(it is handed to him by a faculty member; he takes it with a smile)
Well, now I feel more at home. And - and my glasses....

(he fishes in his pocket and produces an old pair, puts them on)

These glasses have seen a great deal of service in this room... Gentlemen, excuse me if I do not begin my speech the way an ex-Professor should. My heart is full. Standing here, looking at you, I recall a great many things that once happened here. I suppose you are all thinking, "That can't be Professor Topaze. My, my how different he looks in his new suit and without his - his whiskers." Well, gentlemen, since that day you saw me last I have been out in the great world which lies beyond this sweet little room, and I have learned a great deal.

(there is tremendous cheering and applause. Dr. Stegg raps for silence)

You have noted, gentlemen, that I have changed. But, standing again on this platform, it pleases me to see that here nothing has altered.

(he indicates with his pointer)

The mottoes - they are all the same.

(he looks up)

INSERT

CLOSE PANNING SHOT OF THE MOTTOES. His pointer rests on each in turn.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

"Ill-gotten gains are not worth while."
"Money does not bring happiness." "The honest man is the happy man."

316 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Like yourselves, I studied them a long time and I learned to know them well. But, my dear children, I have something rather sad to tell you. These mottoes are not very popular in the outside world. Indeed, it will surprise you to know that, unlike the lessons you have learned here, and despite all these excellent mottoes on the wall, in that outside world honesty is not always rewarded.
(there is a stir among the professors)

317 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

ANGLE SHOT of Professors.

318 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

MED. SHOT of platform. Topaze in f.g.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

(turns and wags fingers at faculty, continuing to them)

Very true.

(he addresses Stegg personally)

Yes, Dr. Stegg. I can even say that villainy receives often more applause than virtue and that ignoble enterprises are more acclaimed than high deeds.

(there is a silence. The audience looks worried. Topaze returns to the students)

In fact

STATIONARY SHOT of kids looking at Topaze.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

....gentlemen, this world that lies outside that door is a most upside-down place. You will be shocked some day when you find it out for yourselves - when, full of maxims and mottoes and education, you grow up into men and behold injustice triumphant and wrongdoing receiving the rewards which should be given only to the innocent and the virtuous. (658)

320

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

MED. SHOT of platform. Topaze in f.g. Dr. Stegg rises.

STEGG

(whispers hoarsely)

Doctor, please! You forget yourself! (659)

TOPAZE

Dr. Stegg thinks I am forgetting myself. Alas, I remember myself too well!

(Stegg sits down)

Gentlemen, regardless of what the world outside is like, within these walls, which are still dear to me, injustice shall not triumph nor wrongdoers be rewarded! I have been instructed to deliver the highest school honors for diligence, deportment and talent to one Charlemagne de la Tour la Tour. Mr. de la Tour la Tour....

MED. SHOT of classroom.

TOPAZE'S VOICE (cont'd)

....kindly step forward! (660)

CHARLEMAGNE

(rises and walks proudly to desk)
Yes, sir! (661)

322

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Mr. la Tour la Tour, according to this
report you have received 95 in History.
May I ask you a question? What can
you tell me about the three Punic
wars? (662)
(he cogitates a second)

323

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

There were three Punic wars. During
the first Punic War... the first
Punic war . . . War . . . (663)
(he stops)

CLOSE UP Topaze.

TOPAZE

Well, you don't seem to know much about the first Punic War. Tell me what you know about the Second Punic War. (664)

325 INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Charlemagne.

CHARLEMAGNE

After the First Punic War, came the Second Punic War. . . . Second Punic War (665)
(he looks blank again)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

Let us proceed to the Third Punic War. (666)

CHARLEMAGNE

Well, after the First Punic War came the Second Punic War, and after the Second Punic War came the Third Punic War. (667)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

quite right. (668)

CHARLEMAGNE

During the Third Punic War
They had a war (669)

TOPAZE'S VOICE

Take your time.
(Charlemagne hangs his head)

CLOSE SHOT Topaze, Professors behind him.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Zero, zero, zero! Sit down!

(Charlemagne returns to his seat;
Topaze addresses the class as the
professors behind him stir
indignantly)

Gentlemen, who can answer this very
complex question I asked concerning the
three Punic Wars?

327

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

FULL SHOT of classroom. All the hands shoot up,
cries of "I know!" and snappings of fingers continue
for a moment.

328

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP Topaze. He beams on them.

TOPAZE (cont'd)

Are you sure you all know? (670)

SOUND

The class chants in unison and we hear a jumble of
sounds, with the following phrases partially dis-
tinguishable.

CLOSE UP Baroness, burnt up.

VOICES FROM CLASS

First Punic War -- 264 B.C. . . .
Second Punic War, 218 B.C. . . .
Third Punic War -- 149 B.C. . . .

330

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE UP indignant Stegg.

VOICES FROM CLASS (cont'd)

Rome licked Carthage! . . .
Hannibal crossed the Alps! . . .

331

INT. ACADEMY - DAY

CLOSE SHOT Topaze, professors in background.

VOICES FROM CLASS (cont'd)

Fabius Maximus licked Hannibal!
They burned down Carthage! . . . (671)

TOPAZE

(raising his hands for order)
Excellent! Enough! Silence, gentlemen,
please!

(there is quiet; he turns to Stegg)
Where is the prize, Doctor Stegg?

Stegg is stunned and silent. Topaze picks a bronze medal out of his hand. He holds it in front of him.

CONTINUED

TOPAZE

I award this symbol of learning to all of you, gentlemen! It shall hang beneath this motto. I will send you a frame for it shortly. I give it to you with the request that when you have entered the world and witnessed the strange frustrations of virtue and the evidences of amazing injustice to be found in that place, you will remember that once at least, through the unworthy hand of Professor Topaze, virtue triumphed and honesty was rewarded, as read the mottoes on these old walls! (672)

SOUND The Marseillaise band strikes up; the children yell and applaud; all the parents applaud, and we

QUICK FADE OUT

QUICK FADE IN

332 EXT. MOVIE PALACE - NIGHT

ANGLE SHOT - front of a movie palace, scene of consternation, excitement, etc. Coco's limousine drives up, Topaze emerges and helps Coco out. As he helps her out, he looks up at the marquee.

INSERT OF MARQUEE. We read the name of the picture and see it to be
 "Man, Woman and Sin."

333 EXT. MOVIE PALACE - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT Topaze and Coco. With a chuckle he takes Coco by the arm and they both walk gayly into the movie house.

As the CAMERA RECEDES TO A LONGER SHOT showing them going in; the title, "Man, Woman and Sin" becomes apparent. On each side of it is an electric lighted sign going off and on, reading "Twice Daily."

FADE OUT

LH

END