

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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So This Is Paris (1926)

Ernst Lubitsch (1892-1947)

OVERVIEW

Auteur: Ernst Lubitsch was a German-American film director, producer, writer, and actor. He is famous for urbane comedies of manners. With the growth of his prestige, his films came to be known as having *the Lubitsch touch*. Lubitsch was born in 1892 in Berlin, as the son of Simon Lubitsch, a tailor, and Anna (née) Lindenstaedt. His family was Ashkenazi Jewish. He did not enter his father's tailoring business, and by 1911, he was a member of Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater. Lubitsch was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Director three times for *The Patriot* (1928), *The Love Parade* (1929), and *Heaven Can Wait* (1943). In 1946, he received an Honorary Academy Award for his contributions to the art of motion pictures. His best-known works are *Trouble in Paradise* (1932), *Design for Living* (1933), *Ninotchka* (1939), *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940), *To Be or Not to Be* (1942) and *Heaven Can Wait* (1943). Lubitsch died of a heart attack on November 30, 1947, in Hollywood at the age of 55.

Film: *So This Is Paris* is a 1926 American silent comedy film. It stars Monte Blue, Patsy Ruth Miller, Lilyan Tashman, and Andre Beranger. The film is based on the stage play *Le Réveillon* by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. The screen adaptation is by Hans Kraly. Cinematography is by John J. Mescall. The film was voted by The New York Times as one of the ten best films of 1926. It is preserved in many archival holdings including the Library of Congress and the Turner Entertainment Company. Mordaunt Hall writes in his review of the film (Aug. 16, 1926) that: 'It is a farcical yarn that keeps one amused from the start, and obviously Hans Kraely, who furnished the scenario, deserves his share of the credit, for his delightful humor evidently provided an inspiration for Mr. Lubitsch'. Regarding the actors and actresses, he adds that: 'Monte Blue, again inculcates life into a part that might easily have been a dull or mediocre characterization. Patsy Ruth Miller is much more impressive than she has been in the past. Lilyan Tashman is extraordinarily prepossessing and natural in the role of a frivolous dancer, and André Beranger imbues his part with all its comical possibilities'.

Historical background: *So This Is Paris* is based on *Le Réveillon* which is a comedy in three acts, written in 1872. This play also served as a basis for the operetta *Die Fledermaus* the music of which was composed by Johann Strauss II. Henri Meilhac, writer of *Le Réveillon*, was a French dramatist and opera librettist, best known for his collaborations with Ludovic Halévy. Meilhac met Ludovic Halévy about 1860, and their collaboration on the stage lasted twenty years. In terms of Lubitsch's career, *So This Is Paris* is one of the stylish films, alongside *The Marriage Circle* (1924), and *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1925), that helped 'establish his reputation for sophisticated comedy'. But his films were not very profitable for Warner Brothers with whom he had previously signed a three-year, six-picture contract. So, Lubitsch's contract was eventually dissolved by mutual consent.

CHARACTERS

Doctor Paul Giraud: A physician whose love for his wife who ends up with lies and deceit on his part
Suzanne Giraud: Wife of Paul, who reads sheik novels and losing herself in fantasy
Maurice Lalle: A talented dancer, who does not see a problem with wearing revealing outfits
Georgette Lalle: Wife of Maurice, an old friend of Paul, who likes to meet and have fun with Paul
The Detective: An official who comes to the house of Girauds to arrest Paul

SYNOPSIS

Doctor Paul Giraud and Suzanne Giraffe are a happily married couple. Suzanne loves reading romance novels about sheiks. One day, after finishing a sheik romance, she looks out the window and sees the figure of a sheik who is a dancer. Noticing his revealing outfit, Suzanne demands her husband Paul speak to them about their lack of morality. When he goes to their neighbor's house, he discovers that the wife of the male dancer is Georgette, an old friend of his. Georgette is very affectionate toward Paul. Later, he meets her husband and speaks very kindly toward him instead of chastising them. Back at home, Paul lies about having chastised the Lalles and broken the cane on Maurice which confuses his wife as Maurice returns moments later to bring back the cane that Paul forgot in their house. Suzanne and Maurice behave flirtatiously toward each other which is overheard by Paul. The renewing of the acquaintance between Paul and Georgette causes more cases of lying and deceit on the part of Paul. One time, Paul speeds up to pay a visit to a man called Mr. Moreau as the man is said to be gravely ill. However, this is in truth a secret meeting with Georgette. Paul is stopped by a police officer for speeding. After insulting the officer, Paul is sentenced to three days in jail. Back at home, he convinces Suzanne that he is going to serve in jail when he dresses up for a night out at the Artists' Ball with Georgette. Paul and Georgette have a good time at the party and dance the Charleston. Meanwhile, Maurice visits Suzanne with whom he grows intimate. Soon, a detective interrupts them who has come to arrest Paul for not serving his sentence. Suzanne makes Maurice pose as her husband and he complies unwillingly. Paul and Georgette win the Charleston contest at the Artists' Ball which Suzanne overhears on the radio. Suzanne goes to the ball to confront her husband who cannot even recognize her because of his drunkenness. She says to him that he will not have to go to jail thanks to her. The couple reunites at the end of the film while Maurice serves the sentence instead of Paul.

SCENES

Paris where a good time is had by all \The film begins with the theatrical play and dance of Maurice and Georgette who are dressed as Arabs. Maurice is dressed as a sheik who puts a dagger through the heart of Georgette. As they are playing, an old man is playing the piano.



M. and Mme. Lallé rehearsing the dance of 'Forbidden Fruit'

The old man starts playing a piece called The Dance of Despair. Maurice starts making comical hand movements as the dance begins. His movements are ritualistic and rigid which creates a comical effect on the viewers of the film. Next, he tries to lift Georgette. However, he cannot do so because she is too heavy for him. He says to her: 'You're too heavy for an artist like me.' Georgette looks shocked and resentful: 'No other man ever complained of my weight— and some of 'em were pretty weak!' Then she proceeds to lift Maurice. She says: 'If all week-end were like you—there would be no parties.' Next, she throws him to the bed.



The piano player is fully entertained \Meanwhile, the piano player is watching this scene with great enthusiasm and enjoying it. He bursts into a peal of laughter. Georgette brings Maurice eggs and a cup of milk with the intention that they might help him. The piano player keeps on laughing. As he is about to go, he shakes the hand of Maurice. He says to Maurice: 'After seeing you as a sheik—I've gained back my lost confidence.' After the piano player leaves, Maurice sits near the window.



In the opposite building, Suzanne is reading a novel sitting by the window *Mme. Suzanne Giraud was 'simply crazy' over those hot Arabian romances— — the books our wives read when we are away.*



Suzanne looks deeply engrossed in the adventures of the book. We see the ending sentences of the book where a desert lover draws a woman to his breast and kisses her and the woman called Yvette murmurs: 'My sheik!' After having read the last lines about this great love, Suzanne looks like she has caught a fever. She breathes heavily.

Suzanne notices Maurice sitting by the window

Looking out the window, her eyes catch the sight of her neighbor Maurice who is sitting by the window, still dressed as a sheik. She only sees his head. Suzanne looks at the man with great interest and curiosity.



Suzanne's husband Paul is concerned about her Her husband Paul arrives at home. *Dr. Giraud tried hard to keep up with his wife's 'foolishness', but he was always just one foolishness behind.* Paul looks at his wife who is looking out the window. His wife notices that he has come and goes near him to kiss him. As she embraces her husband, she utters the words: 'My sheik!' Meanwhile, Paul seems concerned over this behavior. He takes out his thermometer to measure his wife's temperature. Suzanne gets suddenly angry: 'I'm not sick—I'm just a normal woman.'



Suzanne demands that Paul talk to his neighbors about their unacceptable behavior

Paul wonders what his wife has been looking at, so he goes near the window and sees the shirtless Maurice. He cannot believe what he saw. Seeing his wife lying as if she has caught a fever, he brings together the pieces of the puzzle and closes the curtains of the window. Suzanne does not understand why he closed the curtains. As they fight over the curtain, Paul accidentally opens the curtains and Suzanne sees that Maurice is standing near the window shirtless. She gets shocked, and angry and shouts to her husband: 'Do you intend to stand for that? Go over at once and demand satisfaction!' She pushes her husband and demands that he correct his neighbors' unacceptable behavior.

Suzanne gives Paul a cane to beat his neighbors Paul gets excited and carried away: 'I'll come back with the naked truth!' Before he leaves, Suzanne gives him a cane to beat his neighbors up. She looks at the windows once again and sees Maurice in his shirtless state: 'He at least might wear a hat!' Then she closes the curtains.



Paul and Georgette happen to be two old, close friends

Paul goes to the house of his neighbors. A servant accepts him into the house. Meanwhile, Georgette is stretching. As she notices that someone has come, she says: 'Come in!' As she sees who has come, she shouts: 'Paul!' Paul shouts: 'Georgette!' They shake their hands laughingly. They look like they have been best friends for a long time. They sit on the sofa and start reminiscing about their early days. Georgette asks him: '—do you remember the time my first husband went away on a trip—' They burst into a peal of laughter as if they are children. Georgette continues: '—and do you remember that other wonderful day in the forest—' As Georgette tells the stories of what has occurred, Paul looks a bit puzzled as he cannot clearly remember that it was him who did all those things: 'Are you sure it was I?' Georgette gets angry at his response and assures him that it was indeed him. Then he breaks into a burst of laughter to not

create an awkward moment. They all laugh once again: '—too bad it rained!' They start laughing neurotically.

Paul meets Maurice and kindly asks him to correct his behavior Maurice comes into the room. Paul smiles widely when he sees him. Georgette tells him to put on his clothes. She introduces him to Paul as her husband. Paul says that he is amused to meet him: 'After seeing how wonderful you looked at the window— —I came over to tell you how wonderful you looked at the window.' Paul looks flattered and smiles. Georgette slightly smiles too. Paul continues: 'I hope we shall see more of each other.' As Maurice is going to the other side of the room, Paul goes before him and closes the curtains so his wife does not see him in his shirtless state anymore. Before he goes he says to Maurice: 'Whenever you appear at the window couldn't you put on a shirt?' They seem to have come to an agreement. Paul crosses the street to go back to his house.

Paul pretends to be beating his neighbor Paul stands up and looks out the window. He shakes his hands in laughter. Meanwhile, Suzanne has opened the curtains of the window and looks at Lalle's house. She sees her husband moving his hands forcefully and believes him to be beating his neighbor when in fact he is merely laughing neurotically. His facial expression changes the moment he sees his wife looking out the window. He pretends to have beaten his neighbor.



Paul makes up a story about how he handled the neighbors As soon as Paul enters his apartment, he asks Suzanne not to ask him anything. He goes into another room and sits on a sofa. His wife insists that he tell her something. Finally, he makes up a story for Suzanne. And the viewers witness how he concocts a story of how he beat up his neighbor Maurice. As he tells Suzanne how he punched Maurice, his wife kisses him. Suzanne asks him about the cane. He remembers that he forgot it in his neighbor's house but he adds one more lie to his stack of lies and tells her that the cane is smashed to bits! Lastly, he says: 'I can't talk anymore—let me *lie* in peace.' Suzanne puts a blanket over her husband and closes the door of the room.



Maurice brings the cane back to his neighbors As she is sitting in the main room, her servant comes and notifies her that a guest has arrived. She accepts the guest. It turns out the guest is Maurice who has brought the cane that was forgotten by Paul. She looks at the cane in a surprised state as the cane looks perfectly intact: 'Didn't my husband hurt you with the cane?' Maurice looks delighted at this question: 'Oh no, he killed me with kindness.' She tries not to look disappointed and smiles. She opens the door of the room where Paul is sleeping and throws the cane at him, then she closes the door once again.



Maurice flirts with Suzanne Paul wakes up and sees the cane near him. He looks at the cane with wide-opened eyes suggesting to us his astonishment and shocked state. Meanwhile, Maurice is telling Suzanne about how good a person her husband is: 'Your husband is wonderful—a peach of a fellow.' Paul overhears their conversation and goes to the bed to pretend to be asleep. Maurice starts flirting with Suzanne: 'But you're a much sweeter peach than he is.' Maurice looks at her face and says: '—and what a lovely profile!'



Paul thinks Maurice is praising him when Maurice is flirting with Suzanne Paul overhears this also and thinks Maurice is talking about him. He looks near the window to look at his profile: 'Well—I can't help it!' Maurice goes further with the flirtation and kisses her hand several times but Suzanne has had enough and calls out to Paul who immediately jumps into bed to pretend to sleep.



Maurice use the cane as an excuse to visit Suzanne When she looks behind, she sees that Maurice has hidden behind a wall near the end of the room. He is relieved as Paul does not come in: 'Your husband needn't know I was here. If your husband gets suspicious, tell him it was the iceman.' Suzanne remembers that she forgot the cane in the bedroom. She goes to take it and gives the cane to Maurice to erase any evidence that Maurice has come to her house. Maurice says: 'I'll bring it back—when you are here alone.'



Paul is Suzanne's hero After Maurice has left, Paul opens the door and his wife Suzanne looks at him with judging eyes. Then she says to him: 'My hero', and hugs him.



Georgette plays a game Next, we see Georgette looking at the telephone book and calling the Girauds. Suzanne picks up the telephone. Georgette says: 'My husband is very ill. Can the doctor come immediately?' When Suzanne asks for the address, Georgette has to make one up and reads one of the advertisements that are on the wall near the phone: 'Moreau Cafe. No. 5 Rue Catalan.'



Paul dreams of a cane Meanwhile, Paul is asleep. In his dream, he is dreaming of a cane that is hanging upon him. He dreams that the cane is going through his mouth and wakes up. At that moment, his wife comes in and shows him the address where the supposed patient is waiting for him. He wears his coat and goes out.



Maurice is opportunistic Maurice is looking out the window at his neighbors. He sees Paul getting in his car and leaving. So, he sees this as an opportunity to be able to visit Suzanne. He smiles mischievously.



Paul is stopped by an officer for speeding up Because he has to go to his patient immediately, Paul speeds up. A police officer sees him and asks him to stop. Paul tries to explain his situation: 'I am a physician— called to a very sick man!' However, he cannot show the officer his license. Things escalate between the two men: 'I'll hold you responsible if the man dies!' The officer finally lets him go.



Paul insults the police officer The officer grabs Paul's arm and asks what is going on. Paul and Georgette come up with an excuse but the officer does not believe their lies. The situation gets very tense between the officer and Paul. He starts insulting the officer who gets infuriated by his remarks. The officer writes down Paul's insults. Paul cannot stop himself: 'You insulted me first!' The officer responds: 'I've a right to insult you—I'm an officer!' Paul keeps on with his insults while the officer notes everything down. This scene creates a comical effect as the officer asks Paul to slow down as he cannot write everything so fast. The officer even asks Paul how one spells a certain word. Thus, the tense situation transforms itself into a comical scene. At the coffee shop, Paul says to Georgette: 'Oh, I wish I'd had my cane with me!'



Paul finds out about Georgette's game Paul is greatly surprised when he reaches his destination, Moreau Cafe, and sees Georgette waiting for him. Georgette tells him what she has done and they both break into a burst of laughter. At that very moment, the police officer comes and sees the couple laughing.



Maurice spends time with Suzanne After this event, we see Maurice crossing the street with the cane in his hand suggesting to us the viewers that he spent this time in the house of Suzanne while Paul was away.

Dr. Giraud gets a 3-day sentence It is published in the newspapers that Dr. Giraud gets a 3-day sentence. He is charged with speeding and insulting officers. Suzanne and Paul are at the breakfast table. Suzanne is reading the newspaper with a concerned and angry look on her face. Paul says: 'Don't worry, dearie, a lot of things can happen before I'm called to serve sentence.' Suzanne is still very angry: 'You are permitted to hurry on emergency cases. Why didn't you call Monsieur Moreau as a witness?' Paul responds: 'Call *him*? Why he was so sick he couldn't even pay me.'



A beggar interrupts Suzanne and Paul's arguing Suzanne goes to the telephone to call 'Monsieur Moreau'. Paul tries to stop her from doing that: 'Don't talk to him dear, his sickness is contagious.' While they are arguing over that, the doorbell rings. Suzanne thinks that it might be Maurice and tries to stop her husband from opening the door. It turns out the man at the door is a beggar: 'Any old clothes, vests, or balloon pants? When you come outa jail, *those* won't fit you.' Paul sends the man away.



Monsieur Moreau is dead Meanwhile, Suzanne is phoning Monsieur Moreau. A middle-aged woman answers the call. When Suzanne asks for Monsieur Moreau, the woman says: '*Monsieur* Moreau? My husband is dead.' Suzanne is shocked. When Paul comes, she gives him the news. Paul looks very relieved. When questioned by Suzanne, he says: 'The poor man!—what a blessing! I tried to save him—but his wife talked him to death.'



Nothing can break Paul's spirits! As he is leaving, he bumps into the servant. However, he is so happy that nothing can break his spirits. He says to the servant: 'Don't you care. Moreau is dead, and everything is hotsy-totsy!'

Paul and Georgette have a drink to celebrate M. Moreau's death

Georgette is reading the newspapers on the street. Paul walks toward her enthusiastically: 'Moreau is dead—let's have a drink!' They get in a taxi.



Mme. Lallé and Dr. Giraud felt it their duty to celebrate M. Moreau's fortunate death at the Artist's Ball

We see Georgette preparing herself for the ball. Paul looks out the window at his neighbors and sees Georgette. He tries to say to her he cannot come because of his wife. At that moment, the servant brings a piece of paper to Suzanne who is shocked to read it. She shows the paper to her husband. In the paper, it is written: 'We ask you to present yourself at our Office[...]to serve a three-day sentence for speeding 65 miles an hour on Boulevard Clichy.' Paul is delighted to read this news: 'What can I do? When my country calls I must go.' Suzanne is very worried but Paul looks very calm and collected while talking to her. They kiss and he goes to another room to change his clothes. In the bedroom, he starts dancing out of happiness.

'One meets the best people in jail'

When Georgette sees Paul in his best clothes, she is very much surprised. Paul makes up an excuse immediately: 'One meets the very best people in jail now-a-days.' Next, he puts a flower on his jacket: 'There's nothing so welcome as a flower in jail. It takes a man of my genius to go to jail dressed like this.' Suzanne looks astonished: 'You wonderful fellow! Anybody would think you were going to a ball.' Then she hugs him.



Paul informs Georgette that he is coming to the ball

While Suzanne is hugging him, he opens the curtains of the window and notifies Georgette that he will go to the Ball.

Maurice pretends to be sick to not come to the ball

Georgette goes near her husband who is lying sick on the bed. She says to him: 'I'm sorry, dear, that you are not feeling well this evening.' Maurice responds: 'Have a good time, sweetheart, and don't worry about your little baby.' As soon as Georgette leaves, Maurice stops pretending to be sick. He takes the cane from under the bed and smiles as he plans to visit Suzanne once again.



Georgette and Paul enjoy themselves at the Ball

Suzanne is listening to the Artist's Ball on her radio while her husband and Georgette are dancing to their hearts' content. Everybody is dancing wildly and celebrating. The dance that people are dancing is called the Charleston which takes its name after the harbor city of Charleston in South Carolina.



Suzanne has had enough of Maurice's flirtatious behavior

While Suzanne is listening to the Artist's Ball, Maurice comes to visit her with the cane in his hand. Suzanne seems bored and overwhelmed by his insistent flirtations. She even slaps his face because of his unending flirtatious behavior. However, he continues his unacceptable behavior and tries to tightly hug her. Suzanne pushes him forcefully away. Maurice starts throwing roses at her which are in a vase. After she tells him to get out of the house, he still is insistent on staying and jumps onto a bed, behaving like a 5-year-old child insisting on getting what he wants.



A detective comes to the house and Maurice has to pose like Dr. Giraud

At that very moment, a detective enters the house. He enters the room where Suzanne and Maurice are and says: 'Good evening, Dr. Giraud.' Maurice does not know how to behave but Suzanne nudges him to pretend to be Paul. Maurice unwillingly complies.



Maurice has to come with the detective to serve a 3-day sentence

The detective says: 'I am extremely sorry to have interrupted this charming domestic scene.' Maurice smiles widely and puts his hands on the shoulders of Suzanne. He seems to be enjoying his role. The detective adds: 'Dr. Giraud, we've been waiting for you at the prison for two hours. Please bid your wife goodbye.' Maurice cannot believe what is going on but keeps playing his part. After having kissed Suzanne multiple times, he leaves with the detective to serve *his* sentence.



Mme. Lallé and Dr. Giraud are the winners of the Charleston contest.

Suzanne cannot believe what she hears on the radio that is broadcasting from the Artist's Ball. She listens to the congratulatory speeches and the responses of Suzanne and Paul.



Suzanne chooses her outfit for the Ball

Suzanne decides to go to the Ball herself. She thinks about what she can wear to the Ball and finds a box inside of which is a beautiful and extravagant dress appropriate for the Ball.



Paul becomes drunk

Paul has drunk so much that he has become drunk. He has a big bottle of champagne in his hand and sees a bald man, aims at the head of the man. Suddenly he realizes that it is not a gun that is holding in his hand. His confused and drunken state creates a comical effect. He goes to slap at the head of the bald man.



Paul vaguely remembers his jail-duty

Meanwhile, Georgette is dancing on the table. After she is finished her dance, she goes on to pour more champagne for Paul and herself. She shouts: 'Here's to LOVE and LIBERTY!' At that moment, Paul remembers that he has a sentence to serve. He wishes to check his clock but instead takes out nail clippers and looks at them. 'It's Tuesday', he says to himself. Further, he adds: 'I'm going to jail—this right life is killing me.' Georgette does not seem to notice what he says as she is becoming romantically close to another man sitting man on the table with them. Paul repeats: 'I said I'm going to jail—to jail I said I'm going to go.'



Suzanne arrives at the Ball to take Paul home Paul takes the steps downstairs. Meanwhile, his wife Suzanne has arrived at the Ball. Suzanne puts on a mask so Paul does not recognize her. Paul bumps into her but does not recognize her as he is too drunk to perceive his environment. He goes up to her and says: 'My name's Giraud— —but don't tell anybody.' Next, the staff helps him put on his coat. Suzanne takes his arm and they go out together. During this, Paul is shocked as he does not understand who the mysterious woman is. They get in a car and arrive home.



Paul cannot remember anything until Suzanne slaps him When they arrive at their house, Paul looks at the building and says: 'I've been here before.' He can barely stand upright. When they come to their apartment, Paul says again: 'I've been here before, too.' He keeps on blabbering and laughing by himself. Suzanne finally takes off her mask. Paul looks at her and says: '—and I know you, too! You're the girl with the green garters.' Suzanne has had enough. She slaps his face. Paul is still not fully conscious and his head keeps spinning. He seems to have come to his senses, but we very soon learn that he is still very much drunk as he goes up to Suzanne and asks: 'What do you mean by coming in at this hour? You were going around having a good time while I was suffering in jail.' As he asks this question, he realizes that he has not gone to jail to serve his sentence.

Suzanne makes up a lie about how she saved Paul Suzanne starts berating him. Paul sits on a sofa and takes one of the roses that are on the ground. He gathers the roses one by one and puts them back into the vase. As Suzanne is keeping on shouting, Paul also orders the room by putting the pillows that are scattered on the ground back to their original places. Suzanne says: 'And while you were cutting up at the ball I fixed it so you wouldn't have to go to jail. I can't tell you how hard it was to get you pardoned.'

Paul becomes the *short-end* of the marriage Paul is so happy and joyful to have received this news, he jumps into the bed. He tries to apologize to Suzanne for what he has done. Suzanne says: 'From now on *I'm* the Big Boss, and you'll be the short-end of this marriage.' We see Paul's size getting smaller and smaller which creates another comical effect.

Georgette learns that Maurice won't be home for three days When Georgette enters her apartment, she cannot see Maurice but finds a note from him on the bed. In the note, it is written: 'Doctor has ordered me to a sanatorium for three days nothing serious don't worry love and kisses Maurice.' Georgette is elated to have read this news. She calls the man she got close to during the Ball. She bursts into a peal of laughter while talking on the phone.



Suzanne and Paul are on good terms again *It's always fair weather when good liars get together.*

We see that Suzanne and Paul are now on good terms. They look at two birds inside the cage and smile at them. Paul says: 'Tweet-tweet!' Then they go to their breakfast table. It seems like they have fallen in love with each other for a second time. They kiss each other.



Suzanne is relieved as Paul does not believe the news At that moment, the servant comes and brings them the newspaper of the day. On it, it is written: 'Dr. Giraud Arrested. Officer witnesses touching farewell scene. Madame Giraud breaks as Doctor is taken to jail. Heart-rending love scene enacted as officer is forced to duty [...]'. Suzanne's face changes suddenly as she realizes that her



husband might catch her lie. However, Paul starts breaking into a burst of laughter: 'That shows how much you can believe in the newspapers.' They kiss each other.

Maurice serves his sentence his sentence in a bad condition.

Meanwhile, Maurice is serving



CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Maurice Lallé:

Maurice is the husband of Georgette. He is a dancer and is thus part of the entertainment industry. He does not get along well with his wife. His appearing shirtless at the window starts the chain of comical events in the film. The scenes where he behaves flirtatiously toward Suzanne comprise an important part of the film.

Artistic: Maurice is an artistic character as he is a dancer. His dance at the beginning of the film and dressing up as a sheik shows us his expressive and imaginative side.

Flirtatious: As Maurice does not get along with his wife, he starts flirting with Suzanne. When he first brings back the cane from his apartment, he quickly begins to flirt with her. He praises her profile which Suzanne seems to enjoy to some part too. However, Maurice's flirtatious behavior gets at times out of control for instance when he tries to tightly hug her and throws roses at her. He is quite childish in his insistence for his flirtatious behavior to be returned by Suzanne. This causes Suzanne to push him away.

Opportunistic: After he flirts with Suzanne, Maurice makes up a plan to come to Suzanne's house anytime she is alone with the excuse of bringing the cane. Indeed, when he sees from the window that Paul is getting in his car and leaving the house, he goes to visit Suzanne and spends time with her. He is thus an opportunistic person who is on the lookout for any chance to flirt with other women.

Liar: Maurice, like other major characters, is also a frequent liar. He pretends to be sick so that he does not attend the Artist's Ball. Instead of going to the Artist's Ball, he visits Suzanne as always. Nevertheless, his opportunistic behavior causes him to put himself in trouble.

Georgette Lalle:

Georgette is the wife of Maurice. She is a dancer and is part of the art/entertainment industry like Maurice is. Georgette does not have a good relationship with her husband. When she encounters her old friend, Paul, she becomes elevated and joyful as she gets a chance to reminisce about the old memories and build new, fun memories with him.

Artistic: Georgette is artistic as Maurice. She is a talented dancer. Her parts at the very beginning of the film and the Artist's Ball show us how elegant, successful, and talented she is as a dancer and an artist in general.

Fun-loving: Georgette thinks Maurice is not a fun person. As she says to him at the beginning of the film when he cannot lift her, 'If all week-ends were like you, there' be no parties'. Her fun-loving, carefree, and childlike character also comes to the forefront as she reminisces about her early days with Paul. Her playing with Paul's hair indicates once again how a fun-loving and rather immature character she is. Georgette's fun-lovingness can be best seen in her happiness and exuberance at the Ball. She is so talented that she and Paul become the winners of the competition.

Mischievous: Georgette is a mischievous and playful character. She pretends to be the wife of a sick man so that Paul can come to visit her. Through this game of hers, Paul heads to the Moreau Cafe which

at the end of the film causes him to be sentenced to jail for speeding up and insulting the officer. Thus, it can be said that Georgette's behavior is indeed mischievous as it playfully causes trouble.

Disloyal: Georgette is disloyal. When she reads the note that Maurice will visit a sanatorium for three days, she is elevated and full of joy. This stems from the fact that she does not get well along with her husband and has become close with another man at the Ball whom she later phones to talk.

Suzanne Giraud:

Suzanne is Paul's wife. She first strikes the viewers as a rather foolish character but we soon learn that she also has a clever and intelligent side to her. She loves reading romances and is a morally gray character as can be seen in her frequently telling lies.

Obsessive: Suzanne is 'crazy' over Arabian romances as can be seen at the beginning of the film. She loves imaginary worlds, thus reading is an escapism and distraction for her from the environment surrounding her.

Curious: She is also quite a curious character. Her curiosity is brought to the forefront when she realizes that there is a man dressed like a sheik, sitting by the window in the opposite building. She becomes excited about the possibility that what she has just read about is actualizing in front of her eyes. Another scene where Suzanne's curiosity plays an important role in the development of the storyline is when she phones Monsieur Moreau to learn about what happened to him.

Morally pretentious/ambiguous: Suzanne is someone who pretends to be morally upright. However, we see throughout the film, that she engages in behavior that can be called rather morally ambiguous or gray. For instance, when Paul and Suzanne first see Maurice in a shirtless state, Suzanne demands that her husband goes to the neighbors to correct this unacceptable behavior. Thus, she behaves as if she is a very morally upright person. Nevertheless, she accepts Maurice's flirtatious behavior later on in the film, and she also does not confront her husband with the cane that he had supposedly 'smashed to pieces' in his neighbor's house. Suzanne is also a liar. She lies by saying that she saved Paul from going to jail: 'And while you were cutting up at the ball I fixed it so you wouldn't have to go to jail. I can't tell you how hard it was to get you pardoned'. But she does not explain that it is now Maurice who will have to serve the sentence. So, she hides information from her husband so as to not appear immoral.

Clever: Even though Suzanne is presented as a foolish character at the beginning of the film, she is quite clever as can be seen when she nudges Maurice to pretend to be her husband. That way, she saves herself from being seen as an immoral woman, and with the help of luck on her part, she also saves Paul from a 3-day sentence.

Paul Giraud:

Paul is the husband of Suzanne. He is a physician, a practical and down-to-earth man who has had a rather adventurous past. His fun-loving character comes to the forefront when he encounters his old friend Georgette. They not only reminisce about their old, fun days but also make new memories together.

Practical: Paul is a practical man who does not understand all the interests and behavior of his wife. When his wife Suzanne embraces him as 'my sheik' near the beginning of the film, he takes out a thermometer to measure her fever. This comic scene shows us that he is far removed from the imaginary, escapist world of his wife. He represents the rational and practical approach of the medical world.

Fun-loving: Even though he has become a rational and practical doctor by the beginning of the film, he used to be a very fun person who has had many adventures with Georgette. This fun-loving side of him becomes pronounced when he is together with Georgette where he becomes like a child.

Pathological liar: When Suzanne sees him at the window when he has gone to the neighbor's house, he pretends to be beating his neighbor so his wife believes him that he is doing what she told him to do. This pathological lying and story concocting goes on throughout the rest of the film where Paul comes up with new lies to tell Suzanne. For instance, when he is at home, he makes up a story about how he beat his neighbor. He even says that he used the cane on his neighbor such that it is now smashed to pieces. Paul's pathological lying continues as he makes up stories regarding Monsieur Moreau that he was so sick he couldn't pay him and so on. When Paul learns that Monsieur Moreau is dead, he is relieved. But even then he keeps on lying saying that he tried to save him. His pathological lying is witnessed throughout the rest of the film when he pretends to be going to jail when in fact he attends the Artist's Ball with Georgette.

Kind: Even though Paul pretends to be beating up his neighbor, in actuality, he is too kind to engage in such behavior. Thus, he does not beat Maurice as he is too much of a gentleman to do that. Rather, he kindly asks him whether he could put on a shirt whenever he appears at the window.

Naive: Paul is a rather naive man whose naiveté can be seen in several different scenes of the film. First, when he hears Maurice praising Suzanne's profile, he thinks Maurice is praising him, looks at himself in the mirror, and says: 'I can't help it'. This creates a comical effect as the viewers know well that he is not the one being praised but his childlike innocence and sympathetic narcissism come across as amusing and diverting. Paul's naiveté and childlike behavior is more highlighted when he becomes drunk and engages in silly and foolish behavior which creates comical effects. Another scene where his childish innocence and naiveté become emphasized is at the very end of the film where he is having breakfast with Suzanne and he reads in the newspaper that there was 'a touching farewell scene in his house as *he* was taken to jail and Madame Giraud broke in a heart-rending love scene', but does not believe the truth of it.

Responsible: Paul is a physician who is aware of his responsibilities. That is the reason he speeds up while driving so that he can save his patient. This is one of his positive characteristics that is highlighted in the film.

THEMES

CRIME

Punishment Punishment is the infliction or imposition of a penalty as retribution for an offense. In *So This Is Paris*, there is a punishment imposed on Paul Giraud because of speeding up and insulting an officer. However, he does not have to serve the sentence at the end of the film as Maurice does so in his place. From an objective standpoint, we can say that it was Paul who deserved the sentence as he not only sped up—which can be forgiven because he was trying to get to a 'sick man'—but he also insulted an officer. Nevertheless, Maurice is the one who ultimately gets the punishment. Can this be said to be just or is this merely the way this comedy film turned out to be? When we look at the qualities of Maurice, we see that he is a flirtatious and opportunistic man who is a morally ambiguous character, as the other three characters in the film. He looks for ways to see Suzanne and flirt with her. Given that he is married to Georgette, this behavior of his can be considered immoral. Yet, when we look at the behavior of other characters such as Suzanne and Georgette, we see that they engage in the same morally ambiguous and even immoral actions too. So, why is it that Maurice gets the sentence? At the end of the film, we see the 'moral' of the story which is *when you appear at your window put on your shirt*. This seems to be no moral lesson at all, but rather a twisting and mocking of the usual moral lessons that we see written at the very end of didactic stories. Perhaps, the conclusion we can draw is that life is a chancy matter where the wheel of fortune spins differently for everyone. Thus, this time it was Maurice who got the short end of the stick but, next time, it could be others. Life is not fair and does not always work mechanically with moral behavior being rewarded and immoral actions being punished.

RELATIONSHIP

Marriage Marriage is an institution that brings both rights and duties to the parties involved in it. It establishes rights and obligations between them. In *So This Is Paris*, we witness two marriages; one between Paul and Suzanne, the other between Maurice and Georgette. Paul and Suzanne are in love with each other even though Paul does not always understand the interest areas of Suzanne such as her love for Arabic romances. Maurice and Georgette have a lot in common as they are both dancers, however, they seem to have a lot of disagreements and do not seem to love each other deeply. Their dysfunctional marriage is one of the reasons why Maurice visits Suzanne frequently and flirts with her as it can be said that he tries to fill the void that he has inside or find affection and love which are almost nonexistent in his marriage with Georgette. So, we can see that the marriage between Maurice and Georgette is dysfunctional, but that is not to say that the marriage between Paul and Suzanne is perfect. Paul lies to Suzanne on a frequent basis. He lies about having hurt his neighbors with the cane he had in his hand which is in truth the opposite of what he did. Suzanne lies to her husband about the visits by Maurice. Paul, once again, lies about going to jail where he goes to the Artist's Ball with Georgette. These can be said to be little white lies but it is debatable whether these supposed white lies are indeed as innocent as they seem to be. Thus, we can conclude that both marriages have their problems and the comedy that we see on the screen is a result of these imperfections in their respective marriages.

Friendship Friendship is a relationship of mutual affection between people. In *So This Is Paris*, we witness the friendship between Paul and Georgette. They have a past where they used to be very close to one another. When they come together, the childlike expressions on their faces and their joy show us how much they like spending time together. Frequently, they burst into peals of laughter. Thus, they are indeed very close friends. They even go to the Artist's Ball together and win the Charleston dancing competition. Theirs is a friendship of fun, joy, and childlike enthusiasm together with a little bit of mischievousness.

Loyalty/Betrayal Loyalty 'implies a faithfulness that is steadfast in the face of any temptation to renounce, desert, or betray'. We can see in the film that Paul and Suzanne are in general and mostly loyal to one another. Even though they tell little white lies to each other, this does not subtract from the fact that they love each other as husband and wife. Maurice and Georgette, on the other hand, have a different relationship dynamic. Maurice tries to flirt with Suzanne because he is not on totally good terms with Georgette with whom he has a lot of disagreements. Georgette also behaves unfaithfully toward Maurice. At the Artist's Ball, she becomes close and intimate with another man. This can be said to be an instance of betrayal on her part. Thus, we can conclude that the marriage between Paul and Suzanne is more stable and founded on faithfulness whereas the marriage between Maurice and Georgette is more problematic.

FLAW

Greed Greed is an intense and selfish desire for something, especially wealth, power, or food. In *So This Is Paris*, we can see that one character that is plagued by a desire for love is the flirtatious Maurice. He is a character who is always on the lookout for opportunities to spend time with Suzanne even though he knows well that she is married. His frequent visits ultimately lead him to be mistaken for the husband of Suzanne and be taken to jail. If he had not been such an opportunistic and flirtatious character, he would not have had to serve the sentence. Thus, this character flaw of his can be said to be the driving factor for him ending up in unfortunate situations such as having to go to jail and serve a sentence instead of the actual offender Paul Giraud.

QUEST

Explore There are various meanings of the word 'explore'. It can mean to search a place and discover things about it; or to think about, talk about, or study something, or to experience it, in order to find out more about it. The characters in *So This Is Paris* are all curious explorers of their environment. Suzanne is curious about her neighbor who is dressed as a sheik and demands that Paul goes to their apartment not only to chastise them but also because she is interested in finding out about who they are. Paul and Georgette are fun-loving, childlike characters who go to the Artist's Ball together to explore the place and they even win the competition which suggests to us their dexterity and skills in addition to their

curious exploration of their environment. Maurice, likewise, is a curious character who is interested in getting to know Suzanne and thus frequently visits her building. We can therefore draw the conclusion that all four characters are investigative explorers of their environment which can be seen in their interactions with each other and the places they find themselves in.

APPEARANCE

Lies/Dishonesty *So This Is Paris* is filled with cases of lies and dishonesty. To lie means to make an untrue statement with the intent to deceive or to create a false or misleading impression. Most characters in the film engage in acts of lying. In particular, Paul and Suzanne are pathological liars. Their lies stem from the fact that they want to appear in certain ways to each other. Paul wants to be seen as a strong man, thus he lies to Suzanne about having chastised his neighbors. Suzanne wants to be seen as morally upright, thus she does not mention Maurice's frequent visits to Paul. Paul, once again, lies about going to jail when he actually goes to the Artist's Ball because he wants to spend time with his friend Georgette. Furthermore, Suzanne lies about having saved Paul from going to jail, again so as to seem morally upright and not to mention that Maurice has come to visit her. These which can be considered white lies, create a lot of comical effects.

Dreams There is one dream in *So This Is Paris*. Paul dreams of a cane that is hanging upon him. He dreams that the cane is going through his mouth and wakes up. This dream can be taken to symbolize his fear that his lie about having beaten up the neighbors and about the cane being smashed to bits will be found out. Thus, his dream is tightly bound to his 'white' lies. The dream turns out to be true as his wife Suzanne finds out that Paul behaved very kindly toward his neighbors rather than beating them up. However, Suzanne does not tell her husband that she knows the truth perhaps because she already realizes how important his self-image is to himself and how he is seen in the eyes of Suzanne.