

Scene Eight

(Lights up on MRS. HUBBARD is in her compartment, screaming for help.)

MRS. HUBBARD. Help! Someone come quickly! Help!

(BOUC runs in.)

BOUC. Mrs. Hubbard. What? What is it?!

MRS. HUBBARD. There was a man in my room! He ran off!
I'm sure of it!

BOUC. Which way did he go?!

MRS. HUBBARD. *That way!* Just this second!

BOUC. But *madame*, that is where I am coming from and I saw no one.

MRS. HUBBARD. Well... Well maybe he ducked into one of the compartments or something! I don't know. I tell you I was lying there in my bed, dead to the world, and I open my eyes, and I see this man going out the door. And he's wearing a uniform.

BOUC. But where would he come from?

MRS. HUBBARD. I don't know. He just suddenly appeared.

BOUC. And he looked like...?

MRS. HUBBARD. *I don't know! I could barely see him!* One second he was there and then he was gone. He was like a phantom!

BOUC. But how is this possible?

MRS. HUBBARD. HOW SHOULD I KNOW!

BOUC. Perhaps you were dreaming.

MRS. HUBBARD. I wasn't dreaming. I know when I'm dreaming. My mouth gets dry. Does my mouth look dry to you?

BOUC. And your door was locked?

MRS. HUBBARD. Of course it was locked, but people have keys, don't they? I'll bet you have keys. Don't you own the company?

BOUC. No, *madame*, I *run* the company. And I will look into it.

MRS. HUBBARD. Well, all right then. But hurry up about it. I don't feel safe!

(**MRS. HUBBARD** closes her door. **POIROT** puts his head out of his room.)

POIROT. She is keeping you busy, our Mrs. Hubbard.

BOUC. You have no idea. She insists that there was a man inside her compartment.

POIROT. Michel perhaps?

BOUC. Impossible. He is helping my engineer at the moment.

(**POIROT** cocks his head. *Something is wrong.*)

POIROT. *Attends.* We are not moving.

BOUC. You are telling me.

POIROT. A snowdrift?

BOUC. *Ovi.* And we are stuck until men are sent from Belgrade to dig us out.

POIROT. *Ah non, non, non, non, non, non, non.*

BOUC. I am sorry, my friend. But I promise, you will be completely comfortable for as long as it takes.

(**MRS. HUBBARD** puts her head out her door.)

MRS. HUBBARD. Bouc! Have you tracked him down yet?!

BOUC. Not yet, *madame*.

MRS. HUBBARD. Well keep trying!

BOUC. (*To POIROT.*) Goodnight, my friend. I hope you get a good sleep tonight, because that will make one of us.

MRS. HUBBARD. And hurry up about it!

(**BOUC** walks away. **POIROT** retreats into his compartment and looks at his watch.)

POIROT. I wonder...

(*Immediately we hear the mischievous passage from Rossini's overture to La Gazza Ladra that begins approximately two minutes in.*)