

A

(At this moment, MRS. HUBBARD blows onto the platform.)

MRS. HUBBARD. Is this that Orient Express I keep hearing about? It doesn't *look* that impressive, at least not from here.

MICHEL. You are Mrs. Hubbard?

MRS. HUBBARD. Mrs. Helen Caroline Peabody-Wolfson-Van Pelt-Hubbard, if you please, from the beautiful garden state of Minnesota. Mr. Peabody, my first husband, was a very good soul but the poor man had no talent for longevity, and I shouldn't say poor because he did very nicely for himself, thank you very much. My second husband was a Mr. Wolfson who I loved rather dearly, but he loved a lot of women and so I traded up and got a Van Pelt, but I caught him in bed with that redhead from the Waldorf who did his nails. Then at last I found Mr. Hubbard and I call him my little white knight for saving me from a life of bridge games and watery cocktails at the Minneapolis Country Club.

BOUC. And is Mr. Hubbard joining you?

MRS. HUBBARD. No, Mr. Hubbard is not joining me. Mr. Hubbard and I traveled together once and he said it raised his blood pressure. I don't know why. So now I do it for both of us. (To MICHEL.) Do you like to travel?

MICHEL. I travel every day.

MRS. HUBBARD. Then you and I should exchange notes some time.

MICHEL. Compartment three.

MRS. HUBBARD. Is that yours or mine?

MICHEL. Yours, *madame*.

MRS. HUBBARD. I hope it's comfy.

MICHEL. I have never had a complaint, *madame*.

MRS. HUBBARD. I'm sure you haven't.

(She exits.)

~~BOUCOR. She is quite the character.~~



Scene Eight

(Lights up on MRS. HUBBARD 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?