

there is noise and crying and animals and oh! And I look up from my book and sitting there next to me, right on the seat, iss a very old goat. Haha. Is true. *Old goat!* He is like my companion. And on this trip that we are taking together right now, I think it will not be so different, *ja?*

*(GRETA exits. The PRINCESS reacts and follows her off as POIROT enters, followed by RATCHETT, who is trying to catch up with him.)*

RATCHETT. Mr. Poirot, slow up! Now I'd like to discuss that proposition I mentioned.

POIROT. *Non, non*, I'm afraid it is not a good time.

RATCHETT. Oh sure it is. Sit down. I'll be quick, I promise.

POIROT. I am afraid –

RATCHETT. Sit down.

POIROT. ... *Eh bien*. Proceed.

RATCHETT. Now I want you to take on a job for me.

POIROT. I take on few new cases.

RATCHETT. You'll take this one on, I guarantee it.

POIROT. And why is that?

RATCHETT. Because I'm talkin' big money here. Mr. Poirot, I have an enemy.

POIROT. I would guess that you have several enemies.

RATCHETT. Now what is *that* supposed to mean?

POIROT. You are successful, *n'est-ce pas?* Successful people have many enemies.

RATCHETT. Right. That's it exactly! You see I've been getting some threatening letters lately and I want an extra pair of eyes to do some snoopin' around. And that's what you do, am I right? Snoopin'? Of course, I can take care of myself.

*(He flashes the gun under his coat.)*

But I'll pay you five thousand dollars. How does that sound?

POIROT. *Non*.

RATCHETT. All right, ten. For a few days' work.

POIROT. I am not for sale, *monsieur*. I have been very fortunate in my profession and I now take only such cases as interest me – and frankly, you do not interest me.

RATCHETT. You want me to grovel, is that it?

POIROT. I want nothing, *monsieur*, except to leave.

*(POIROT exits. RATCHETT is darkly unhappy. He stomps his foot. After a beat, the COUNTESS enters, passing through. She nods as she tries to go past him.)*

COUNTESS. Pardon me. Sorry.

RATCHETT. Hey, you're that countess, aren't you?

COUNTESS. That is correct.

RATCHETT. Well, you're awful pretty. And from what I hear, you were a commoner to start with, just like the rest of us.

COUNTESS. That is also correct.

RATCHETT. So does that mean you'll have a drink with me?

COUNTESS. I am married, *monsieur*. My husband is having business elsewhere. Please excuse me.

RATCHETT. Now not so fast.

*(The COUNTESS looks up sharply, but he's blocking her way. There is something threatening about him.)*

COUNTESS. Move out of the way, please.

RATCHETT. Hey, you don't need to get all high and mighty about it.

COUNTESS. If you do not move this second I will scream.

RATCHETT. *Just wait a minute!* You've said that you're unattached at the moment, and we are on a train, so who the hell's gonna know what happens in some private room on some two-bit piece o' –