

Michel + Bouc

POIROI. *Non, non, cest tout. Would you now be so kind as to remove your tunic, please?*

(MICHEL, confused, looks to BOUC for guidance, and BOUC nods. MICHEL removes his tunic and hands it to POIROI.)

I see that none of your buttons are missing, and moreover, the thread for each button is old, so nothing was sewn on recently.

POIROI. Mrs. Hubbard found this button in her room this morning.

MICHEL. *(Examining it.)* It is not mine, *monsieur*.

POIROI. So I see. But it matches yours exactly.

MICHEL. It does.

POIROI. Michel, are there other attendants on this train at the moment?

MICHEL. There is one in second class. A ticket taker I have known for years.

POIROI. Is he large or small?

MICHEL. Quite large, I'm afraid. Shall I ask him to see you?

POIROI. *Non, non*, that is quite all right. And what other passengers, besides the ones in this coach, are on the train?

MICHEL. There is hardly anyone at the moment. It is the off-season. There is a mother and child on the Belgrade carriage and that is all.

POIROI. And could there be a second conductor on this train wearing a uniform like yours?

MICHEL. Oh no, *monsieur*, there is no such thing. I had to earn this uniform with many years of service. However...

POIROI. *Oui?*

MICHEL. Well, frankly, I am not sure I trust her word, but Miss Ohlsson says that last night she saw what she calls a second conductor on the train.

Pairoi

POIROI. *(Suddenly alert.)* Miss Ohlsson?

MICHEL. *Oui*, she told me this morning.

~~BOUC.~~ She did not tell us this morning.

MICHEL. She said he was wearing a uniform like mine and when she spoke to him he did not respond. In fact...

POIROI. What? *Tell me quickly!*

MICHEL. The princess tells me that she also saw this man last night.

POIROI. *Oh la la, oh la la, oh la la.*

~~BOUC. What is it?~~

POIROI. It is just the kind of clue that I have been waiting for.

(He springs into action.)

Michel, come with me. I will need your help quickly.

BOUC. But where are you going?

POIROI. You will see in a moment!

(POIROI hurries out with MICHEL behind him - jostling MRS. HUBBARD, who is just entering.)

MRS. HUBBARD. Ah!

POIROI. Pardon, *madame!* We will be right back!

MRS. HUBBARD. I thought you wanted to question me.

POIROI. I do! Just stay where you are!

(POIROI and MICHEL run out of the room.)

MRS. HUBBARD. Well that was exciting - as if we needed any more excitement around here. Now listen, I want my passport back.

(She goes through the passports on the table, looking for her own.)

What if there was another shooting and we had to make a run for it? Can you imagine me wandering through Yugoslavia without a passport? They'd shoot me on sight and ask questions later. "Who are you?!"