

MARY. But the man was a monster, Monsieur Poirot. You know he was.

POIROT. But I cannot.

(Pause.)

I cannot just.

(He is deeply moved.)

MRS. HUBBARD. May a humble actress speak her peace?

PRINCESS. Please do, my dear.

MRS. HUBBARD. Monsieur Poirot, we are in your hands, and we acknowledge it. But would you really have preferred it if Bruno Cassetti had gotten away scot-free? Would that be the kind of justice you are after?

(POIROT turns away.)

Look at it this way: you have a complete solution staring you in the face. You have the button, you have the uniform, you have three reliable witnesses who saw a man in the corridor - and surely you're not calling all of us liars. Because if you did that...

(Her tone changes.)

There would be months of trials, lives would be damaged even more than they have been already, and a great many people would be forced to relive the most terrible moment in all of their lives - more terrible than any human being should ever have to experience. Is that what you want? Examine your heart and tell us what you want.

POIROT. ... You put me to the test, madame, and I am greatly troubled.

(He turns to BOUC.)

Monsieur Bouc, my friend, you are the director of the Wagon-Lit. What do you say?

BOUC. In my opinion, the first solution you put forward is entirely correct: we had a deadly intruder disguised as a conductor, and I believe that is the solution you should offer the police.

SIDE #9

Linda Arden (Helen Hubbard)