

# Monologues

**POIROT (Belgian / French accent)** From the beginning it was an odyssey of deception and trickery. One minute, I could see the light, like the beam of a train engine hurtling past. The next minute, all was darkness and the thread that I pulled came away in my fingers and led to nothing. I believe it was the greatest case of my career, but who am I to say? Modesty forbids it. It was certainly the most difficult I have ever encountered, and it made me question the very deepest values that I have held since I was a young man.

A young girl named Daisy Armstrong was kidnapped from her home in Long Island, New York. The ransom was set at two hundred thousand dollars and it was paid. But Daisy was not returned to her parents. Three days later, they found the little girl - dead, murdered - in the woods not far away from her home. The police caught the man who did it but he had ties to organized crime and they got him off by changing the evidence. He would have been lynched if he had been found by the public, but he gave them the slip and disappeared. Mr. MacQueen said that Ratchett was fleeing from something in America and that he succeeded until the letters began arriving. It is clear that Samuel Ratchett's real name is Bruno Cassetti, the man who murdered little Daisy Armstrong.

**Monsieur BOUC (Belgian / French accent)** Just think what a Yugoslavian police inquiry would do to my company! People would say "oh no, I cannot travel on the Orient Express, I could be murdered in my bed!" and our sales would suffer and I would lose my clients! Only you can solve this. You are a magician, I have seen you work! You listen, you look, you pester, you make yourself a pain in the backside, then suddenly poof!, the case is solved like that! The Yugoslavian Police Department? They are like the Three Stooges in the movie house. They poke each other in the eyes by accident! Please old friend, say you'll take the case and find the murderer before the police arrive.

**MRS.HELEN HUBBARD (American accent)** 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 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.

**SAMUEL RATCHETT (American accent)** Mr. Poirot, I'd like to discuss that proposition I mentioned. I want you to take on a job for me because I'm talkin' big money here. I have an enemy. 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 but I'll pay you five thousand dollars. How does that sound?

**GRETA OHLSSON (Swedish accent)** I have to confess to you Princess, that I am not liking trains since I am little girl. They are feeling very tight to me, like clothing that is made wrong size. I am also not liking the strangers and the clackety-clackety. But ve vill be sitting next to each other, ja? That part is good. In Africa once I am on a train and there is noise and crying and animals. And I look up from my book and sitting there next to me, right on the seat, is a very old goat! 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?

**PRINCESS Dragomiroff (Russian accent)** No, my dear, his name is Bruno Cassetti, and what I pray is that his soul is damned and that he burns in hell for all eternity. He murdered a little girl named Daisy Armstrong and her grandmother is my dearest friend. You know her as the actress Linda Arden. And when her five year old granddaughter was murdered by this monster Cassetti, it took her years to recover, indeed she has not yet recovered! And it wasn't just that sweet little girl that was taken from us. First little Daisy, and then her mother, who was pregnant, died in childbirth, and the baby died too. And the little girl's father, Colonel Armstrong, who could not live with what happened and ended his own life. There is no forgiveness in a case like this. That Mr. Cassetti should have been flogged to death and his remains cut up and thrown onto a rubbish heap!

**HECTOR MACQUEEN (American accent)** My father was the District Attorney for the state of New York and he brought the case against that ... son of a bitch. I'm sorry, but you have no idea what he did to that family. And they were so kind to me. And there was a governess and a baby nurse, and then poor Suzanne. She was a French housemaid - she came from Paris - and my father's office thought she might be implicated, and ... and she was so distraught from the accusations that she - she killed herself. Only it turned out that she was innocent. My father was shattered. He never recovered.

**COLONEL ARBUTHNOT (Scottish accent)** I'm married! All right?! I'm in the process of getting a divorce - which I deserve because my wife is seeing another man - but I'll lose my case in court if it's known that I'm seeing a woman socially. When the divorce is behind us we can stop hiding, which is why we've been trying to keep things private, no thanks to you! Some of us have emotions, Poirot! I'm sure you'd sacrifice your own mother if it led you to one of your damn solutions, and I don't think you know what the hell you're doing.

**COUNTESS ANDRENYI (Hungarian accent)** But I didn't kill him! I should have but I didn't! I didn't even know who he was until you discovered it. But then I realized that if you knew who I was, you would think that I killed him because he was a blackmailer. And a swine! And the murderer of a darling, sweet, innocent, child who deserved to live! It's the truth, I swear to God! But I'll tell you this; if I had known who he was - that he was Bruno Cassetti - the man who stole two of the people I loved most in this world - I would have pushed the dagger through his chest myself, and believe me, no other would have been necessary!

## **Callbacks**

**POIROT (Belgian / French accent)** Every time I find a piece of the puzzle, there is a suspect who has an alibi. Colonel Arbuthnot? He could have a grudge against Casseti from a business dealing - but then MacQueen gives him an alibi from 12 to 2, they are chatting on the Observation Deck! What about Miss Ohlssohn? She is strange, there is something not right about her - but she swears that she and Miss Debenham are up all night chattering in the room they are sharing. And so it goes with Mrs. Hubbard and the Princess and now Miss Debenham is shot and I am out of suspects!

**Monsieur BOUC (Belgian / French accent)** Monsieur Poirot! It is not a mere train that will carry you tonight, it is a legend. It runs like no other vehicle on the earth. The fittings are from Paris, the paneling; Venice, the plates are from Rome and the taps are from New York. The best food, the best beds, the best pillows, the best feathers inside the pillows. It is poetry on wheels, and Lord Byron himself could not write it better. Monsieur, prepare yourself. In one hour, I will meet you on the platform of the Orient Express.

**MRS. HUBBARD (American accent)** There was a man in my room! He ran off! I'm sure of it! 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. One second he was there and then he was gone. He was like a phantom! And I wasn't dreaming. I know when I'm dreaming! My door was locked, but people have keys, don't they? He could have strangled me in my bed, or shot me or something!