

Dr Bessner, Louise, Simon & Smith

(Simon has been shot in the leg. The voices of Dr Bessner and Smith are heard off from the left deck. As they approach Louise exits)

Dr Bessner:

Where is he, then?

(He sees Simon and hurries over)

Ach!

(Louise re-enters right. Smith watches her with interest)

Louise:

Monsieur, what is it? What has happened?

Simon:

Damn!

Louise:

I hear a shot; I run here as fast as I can –

(Dr Bessner pens his case and kneels by Simon. He examines his leg and applies an emergency dressing during the following)

Smith:

Now keep calm. There's just been a little accident.....

Louise:

An accident? To monsieur?

Simon:

I don't want a fuss Louise, understand. Ouch!

(Simon winces as Bessner handles him)

Dr Bessner:

Nasty..... Very nasty –

Louise:

Shall I fetch madam?

Simon:

(Emphatically)

No!

(Smith takes Louise familiarly by the arm)

Smith:

Now look here, my dear girl. There's absolutely no cause to get upset. See? You've got to be sensible. I'm sure you're a very sensible girl.

Louise:

Oh, Monsieur! I was so afraid! I thought perhaps it is a rising of the Arabs! They come to murder us all. My heart it was in my mouth!

Smith:

There, there! It's all quite simple. We were just – er – playing about with a pistol, not realising it was loaded. Stupid us, but there it is.

Louise:

Oh, but they are so dangerous – pistols.

Smith:

They certainly are.

Dr Bessner:

Yes, it is a nasty wound. The bone is injured, and there has been loss of blood. It will be best, I think if Mr Mostyn is moved into my cabin. There is a second berth there, and can look after him. The wound must be properly dressed.

(He turns to Smith)

You will have to get for me boiling water so that I can sterilise my instruments.

(He finds the bullet in the chair)

Ach! Fortunately, we will not have to extract the bullet.

Simon:

Sounds alarming! Like a major operation!

Dr Bessner:

Not so. Much cannot be done here. I have not the means. I can but patch, you understand? It is to hospital you must go. But have no fear. For two, three weeks you lie still and after that you walk as well as ever.

Simon:

Nice way of spending your honeymoon! Thank goodness Kay hasn't woken up. She needn't know anything about it till the morning.

Dr Bessner:

I did not hear the shot myself – or rather, there are so many shots on the shore – and the jackals and the drums. Ah, but it is noisy here in the desert.

Louise:

Can I get monsieur his things from his cabin?

Simon:

Yes, do. Pyjamas and my washing things. Be careful not to wake up madam next door.

Louise:

I understand. I will be very quiet, monsieur.

Simon:
How is Jackie?

Dr Bessner:
I have given her a sedative injection – a strong one. Already she has calmed down. In half an hour she will sleep.