

THE OSLO EXPRESS

Written by

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A note on the World of THE OSLO EXPRESS:

Although set at the end of the 19th century, the height of the luxury railway era, racial prejudices of the day are largely ignored and characters speak in a modern dialect.

COLD OPEN

INT. PARIS TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Whistles. Steam. The roar of an endless crowd.

Rich women in petticoats walk among poor families, street vendors, criminals, and noblemen.

This is the center of the world.

An impressive maroon passenger train prepares to depart. The name painted on its side: OSLO EXPRESS

TITLE OVER: Paris, 1890

NATALIE MARTINEAU (18, rebellious) leans off the train and takes a deep breath, gulping down the polluted air like a morning coffee. *This is the life.*

Though she wears the standard navy blue uniform of a porter, her perfectly-manicured hands are free of callouses. Her hair is skillfully tied in an intricate bun.

A wealthy man, FAIRBANKS, is standing on the platform next to a large pile of heavy-looking bags.

FAIRBANKS

You there! Porter! Do you expect me to carry these onto the train myself? Let's go.

Natalie is taken aback. She almost forgot she had a job.

NATALIE

Yes, sir, I can do that!

She scurries over to the pile and examines the bags. They are very big. She is very small.

FAIRBANKS

Is there a problem?

NATALIE

Not at all, sir. I'm just new to this. But I've got it.

Taking a deep breath, she wraps her arms around the first bag and manages to heave it off the top of the pile.

Exerting a comically huge effort, she tries to lift it towards the train, moving it only an inch or two.

While her back is turned, another PORTER approaches from behind with a cart and quickly takes one of the bags away.

FAIRBANKS

Porter...

NATALIE

I'm working on it, sir!

FAIRBANKS

No, it's just -

NATALIE

Sir, I know you can't carry these bags yourself. I promise I will get them on the train, I just need a little space. Can you give me that?

While Natalie is talking, another two porters grab another pair of bags and cart them away.

FAIRBANKS

...yes, of course.

NATALIE

Thank you.

Natalie turns back to the bag, now at the edge of the platform. With a herculean effort, she begins lifting it up.

As she does so, an entire TEAM of porters appears to quickly and effortlessly cart the rest onto the train.

With a triumphant grunt, Natalie manages to push her single bag barely onto the lip of the train car. Huffing and puffing, she turns around.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

There you go. Now -

She's surprised to see the other bags are gone.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Oh. Well. Another job well done.

Natalie's bag slips off the train and breaks open against the ground.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

...I've got that.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. BAGGAGE CAR - MORNING

Porter WILL COOPER (20) flings suitcases onto the luggage racks. His uniform is shabby, his hair unkempt, stubble nagging at his chin. But he holds himself with a defiant pride, as if you're the weird one for owning a sponge.

WILL
(to himself)
Red suitcases on top -

He throws it, not even looking to see where it lands.

WILL (CONT'D)
Leather left.

Throw.

WILL (CONT'D)
And - hey, this is nice. Wow. Is
this what tuxedos are made from? Is
this...is this stocks?

He's admiring the bag as Natalie walks in.

NATALIE
Good morning.

WILL
Well well well, nice of the rich
girl to show up. You know if you
didn't want to work, you shouldn't
have run away from your parents,
the duke and dukess.

NATALIE
(as if correcting him)
They're actually the duck and the
ducks. And I'm here, aren't I?

WILL
Yeah, two hours late. We start at
seven AM.

NATALIE
What, every day? And we're just
supposed to pretend like that's
normal?!

WILL

Listen, maybe this isn't the life for you. I mean, come on, you're just a rich girl.

This cuts Natalie.

NATALIE

No! I'm a normal poor girl now. I am going to build a normal poor life for myself like a normal poor person.

WILL

Well we're glad to have you! But if I was born rich, I wouldn't be here. I'd be on a beach, eating a caviar, talking to a fancy horse named Albert.

NATALIE

Oh really? Would you enjoy being force-fed every detail of who you are, how you act, where you go? Having no achievements, no choices, no say in your own future? Not even who you marry.

WILL

What about Albert?

NATALIE

Albert is a delight.

WILL

I'd say it's a toss up for me then.

NATALIE

I'm sure. Now what are we doing?

WILL

Nothing, I'm done here.

The room is in shambles.

NATALIE

In what way?

WILL

Wow. That's embarrassing for you. Don't worry, you'll catch on. There's a system. Blue goes...

NATALIE
...on the luggage wrack with its
carriage number?

WILL
Below. Blue goes below the other
colors. Right here.

NATALIE
What about these plaid ones?

WILL
Plaid isn't part of it.

NATALIE
What?

WILL
Yeah, we just get rid of those.

NATALIE
Wow. Who invented this system?

WILL
You're not going to believe this.

NATALIE
Uh huh.

WILL
It's a Will Cooper original.

NATALIE
You're kidding.

WILL
You elites just don't get it.

Will yanks an old suitcase from the bottom of the rack,
triggering a small AVALANCHE of luggage!

Natalie and Will both jump back. After the commotion settles,
a large CRATE, previously hidden behind the endless bags, has
been revealed.

NATALIE
What's that?

They get closer to discover...the crate is filled with wine!

WILL
Oh my God. It's alcohol.

NATALIE

A Pomerol bordeaux! I usually prefer a claret but these are deliciously dry.

WILL

Like I said, it's booze! I prayed for this. The angels are listening.

NATALIE

A passenger must have left it behind. Who knows how long its been back there.

WILL

This is a miracle. Oh! I know what to do. We should throw a party. An epic party. The kind that would break a lesser man.

NATALIE

But...aren't parties against the rules? We should report this.

WILL

Report it?! Natalie. You want to be one of us, right?

NATALIE

Of course. I am one of you.

WILL

Then help me throw a secret party.

NATALIE

But we could get fired! If I get thrown off the train, I've got nothing. I don't even have the skills to earn a meal.

WILL

Who cares? Risk everything for one fleeting moment of joy. Be one of us.

Natalie is conflicted. Will waits with bated breath.

NATALIE

...ok, fine. What do we do?

Will shoots a quick air pump. Yes!

WILL

We talk to Ginger! Come on!

Will leads the way out, Natalie following hesitantly behind.

INT. SLEEPER CAR - DAY

GINGER GOODWIN (16, polite), holding a clipboard, signs a wealthy couple, the PEWTERS, into their compartment. Her uniform is a bit too large and she's a few years short of figuring out her hair, but make no mistake: if anything gets done on this train, it's because of her.

GINGER
You're all signed in. Dinner is at seven. Just hang this sign on the door if you need some "alone time."

She winks. The couple is horrified.

MR. PEWTER
This is my sister!

GINGER
Oh! I don't think that's allowed.

They slam the door. Ginger turns away, confused.

Will and Natalie sidle up to her.

WILL
Hey Ginger, how are you?

GINGER
Oh no! No way!

WILL
No way what?

GINGER
I can't break the rules anymore.
You think I want Dalton mad at me?

WILL
No one's asking you to break the rules. We're just saying hi.

GINGER
Oh sure. Well hi. How are you?

WILL
We're throwing a secret party.

GINGER
See?! I knew it. It's always the same.

WILL

Ginger how could you say that after all I've done for you? Who taught you how to smoke a cigarette without throwing up?

GINGER

...you.

WILL

Who covered for you when Chef Herschel's cooking chocolate went missing?

GINGER

You did.

WILL

Who let you watch the boy's shirtless wrestling contest?

Ginger, embarrassed, looks over her shoulder nervously.

GINGER

Will you keep it down?!

WILL

Come on, Ginger, we need help to make this party happen.

Ginger sighs, considering.

GINGER

Maybe I could close the dining car early and organize some porters to help set up.

Natalie celebrates. Will settles her: *Just wait for it.*

GINGER (CONT'D)

If...

WILL

Here we go.

GINGER

If someone could teach me how to ballroom dance.

Ginger looks to Natalie, who's surprised.

WILL

That's no problem! Natalie, weren't you born in a ballroom or something?

NATALIE

It was a promenade I'll have you know, but ballroom dancing is as boring as it is pompous.

GINGER

I think it's elegant.

NATALIE

Ginger, every minute I've spent ballroom dancing is a minute I wish I could get back. It's one of the top six things I'm running away from. Can't I teach you something else? Like how to pee standing up?

Will shoots Natalie a look like *uh...what?*

GINGER

I guess you don't really want your party.

Ginger starts to walk away.

NATALIE

Yes, alright fine! I'll teach you tomorrow. But we party tonight.

Ginger turns back to them, making a note on her clipboard.

GINGER

The dining car. Midnight.

WILL

Yes! Perfect! We'll do food and wine. Wait, do you have food? We'll do wine. And that's plenty.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. DINING CAR - DAY

Two last PASSENGERS are leaving the empty dining car after lunch, chatting happily.

Just as they're about to walk out, one of them hears a THUMP and stops for a moment. *What was that?*

After a silent moment, he shrugs it off and leaves.

As soon as the door closes behind him, Natalie, Will, and two PORTERS emerge from beneath a table.

They quickly drag out the large crate of wine. Will and his two helpers hoist it into the galley, out of sight.

Natalie tries to help but can't find room on the box. She uselessly runs around them, realizes she won't fit, and desperately looks around the dining car before diving back under the table.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

On the backdoor of the lounge, Ginger hangs a sign that reads: DINING CAR CLOSED AT 11PM FOR CLEANING

A passenger walks up and looks at the sign, a bit confused.

Ginger, panicking, holds her nose and waves like *pee-yew!*

A little grossed out, the passenger walks away, leaving Ginger alone regretting how she handled that.

A PORTER emerges from the dining car. Ginger stops him and whispers in his ear.

Excited, he smiles and immediately walks to another porter, passing the whisper.

INT. SLEEPING CAR - CONT.

Word of the party is passed in hushed tones from porter to porter, traveling back through the sleeping car.

Two PORTERS help a family pack their luggage into their room. The whisper reaches one of them and he gets very excited. Without looking, he leans over to tell his partner but accidentally whispers to one of the passengers.

PORTER
(whispered)
Party at midnight.

PASSENGER
What?

PORTER
Oh. I said...I said great dress,
ma'am.

The woman retreats, confused, and the excited porter leans over to his partner as if nothing happened.

The whisper continues to spread...

INT. CREW CAR - CONT.

...until it finally arrives in the crew car, a glorified club house whose very dirt and grime has become a protected landmark. Common space in the front, bunks in the back, a weird smell everywhere.

A porter receives the whisper at the front of the car and walks towards the back door.

But instead of walking out, he leans down and opens a small cabinet attached to the wall.

Inside, a crouching porter smokes a cigarette, blowing the smoke out an open vent.

The first porter whispers in his ear. The porter in the cabinet smiles and does a tiny fist pump as the door closes.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Natalie and Will lean over the bar, talking with MEL HAWKINS (22, jaded). She mixes drinks with the masterful skill of a woman with serious problems, a wolfish grin never far from her lips.

MEL
Wine glasses? I didn't think they
let people like you drink wine.

WILL
First off, I'm a high class
gentleman. I've stayed at a hotel.

NATALIE
We only need them for the night.

MEL

I don't know. The higher-ups won't be happy if glassware goes missing.

NATALIE

Really? There's hardly any flair on the lip of these noir glasses.

MEL

What?

Realizing she's slipped up, Natalie corrects course:

NATALIE

The real question we must address is: who cares what they think?

Mel laughs.

MEL

Good point. I wasn't expecting you to be so chill, rich girl.

NATALIE

I'm exceedingly chill. I'm like not even a rich girl, these guys suck.

Mel laughs again. It catches the attention of a nearby passenger, an elderly man in a very nice coat, CYRUS ROCHEFORT (70), who sees Natalie and recognizes her.

CYRUS

(calling out)

Marty?

Natalie stops in her tracks, pretending not to hear. Mel and Will both look to the guy calling over.

CYRUS (CONT'D)

Little Marty? Is that you?

MEL

Do you know that guy?

NATALIE

Of course not.

CYRUS

It's me, Cyrus! That must be you.

Mel and Will look to Natalie questioningly.

NATALIE

Excuse me.

Taking a deep breath, Natalie walks up to Cyrus. He speaks to her more quietly. The others can't hear.

CYRUS

Ah, yes, little Natalie Martineau.
I knew it was you! But shouldn't
you be preparing for your big day?

NATALIE

I'm sorry sir, but I'm not who you
think I am.

CYRUS

What? No, it's me, Cyrus. Don't
tell me you've forgotten our
paddleboat adventure with your
father.

NATALIE

(louder)

I don't know you, old man. Get your
eyes checked. Seems like you've got
the money for it.

This cuts Cyrus deep. Natalie turns and walks back, hiding
her own guilt.

Will catches it though. He frowns.

MEL

Wow! You told him.

NATALIE

Classic bourgeoisie, am I right?
They're all the same.

MEL

Well, consider me impressed. You've
got your glasses. Just be careful
Dalton doesn't notice they're gone.

NATALIE

Psh. Who's worried about Dalton?

INT. DINING CAR - DAY

DALTON THACKER (25) inspects his own reflection in a polished
knife. Uniform immaculate. Eyes narrowed. Acutely aware of
his own superiority.

DALTON

Rosemary, what is this?

He shows the knife to ROSEMARY (27), a spacey, mellow porter who looks at it as if she's never seen a knife before.

ROSEMARY

I mean, if you're not sure then I don't want to say.

DALTON

It's a smudge, Rosemary. A water mark. And if there's one on this knife, who knows how many knives have been rendered useless by your disgusting display of laziness. You know what must be done.

ROSEMARY

Oh yeah, definitely.

He hands it to her. She casually throws it out the window.

Dalton turns back, furious. Rosemary smiles, ignorant.

DALTON

You will re-polish every piece of silverware before dinner tonight.

ROSEMARY

Oh what? That's like...way more than twenty knives.

DALTON

You will polish them or you will answer to me, Head Porter Dalton Thacker. Am I clear?

Rosemary nods with a shrug. Dalton walks away.

As he passes the galley, he sees one of Ginger's signs hanging on the door.

He's suspicious. *Closed tonight? What?*

Laughter rings out inside the galley. *That's odd.*

INT. GALLEY - CONT.

Dalton bursts through the door to find HUGO (25), a tall, sketchy looking porter who'd prefer to be as far from "the radar" as possible. Hugo is stowing away the wine alongside another PORTER. They go quiet when Dalton enters.

DALTON
What's with all the laughter in here.

HUGO
Oh you know. We're just happy.

DALTON
Well I'm here now so you can cut that out.

HUGO
On it, sir.

DALTON
Why is there so much wine?

HUGO
I don't think that's polite to ask.

DALTON
Har har. Do you know about this?

He holds up the sign.

HUGO
Oh I try not to clean if at all possible.

DALTON
...do you find this amusing? Are you being "funny" right now? Are you the funny funny joke guy?

HUGO
...no?

DALTON
I didn't think so. I don't know what's going on here, but Conductor Krauss will hear about this. I guarantee it.

Dalton storms back the way he came. Hugo looks to the other porters. After a shrug, they continue what they were doing.

INT. CABOOSE - DAY

Ginger nervously walks into a small office at the rear of the train. Books and papers are meticulously arranged in polished wooden bookshelves. Oil paintings hang on the walls.

At the center of the room is a desk. Dalton is leaned over it in a full boil.

DALTON

They're up to something, Ms.
Krauss, I just know it! You have to
do something or all will be lost.
It will be chaos!

KRAUSS (O.S.)

Oh my. Ginger?

Ginger, gulping, steps forward.

She's being summoned by conductor MARIELLA KRAUSS (50), who sits behind the desk wearing a perfectly-ironed white shirtwaist with blue jacket, modest skirt, and pristine white gloves. The world is running on her schedule.

KRAUSS (CONT'D)

(always dry)

It's come to my attention the
dining car is being closed for a
cleaning tonight. I wasn't aware of
that.

GINGER

Oh yes, ma'am, it was due to be
swept and polished.

KRAUSS

And the large shipment of wine Mr.
Thacker discovered in the galley?

GINGER

Would you like some?

KRAUSS

More with each passing moment. But
I'm primarily concerned with its
origin.

GINGER

Uh we must have picked it up along
with our last food shipment.

KRAUSS

Is there any reason why there's so
much?

Ginger makes a big show of checking her notes.

GINGER

I believe the passengers...really like wine.

KRAUSS

I see. Would you be so kind as to fetch Mr. Cooper and Ms. Martineau?

Ginger nods and exits.

DALTON

Do you see what I'm dealing with here, Ms. Krauss? They're planning some sort of big, fun party or something.

KRAUSS

Well of course we can't have that.

DALTON

Ms. Krauss. Your skills as a conductor are obviously beyond compare. But you don't know how it is out there. On the battlefield. An endless struggle between the forces of good and evil with the very soul of the train at stake.

KRAUSS

That has been worrying me.

Natalie and Will walk in followed by Ginger.

NATALIE

Hi Dalton! How are you?

DALTON

Did you hear how she said that, Ms. Krauss? They're conspiring!

NATALIE

Am not!

WILL

I've been trying to stop.

DALTON

They're always planning something, Ms. Krauss. Did I tell you they replaced my mattress with bread?

KRAUSS

They what?

DALTON

I can't prove it was them. But
someone opened my window and I woke
up covered in birds trying to peck
my pillows out from under me!

Natalie snickers.

KRAUSS

I'm sure all of that is water under
the bridge, isn't it, Mr. Thacker?

DALTON

No!

KRAUSS

Yes.

DALTON

Ok!

KRAUSS

Mr. Cooper, Ms. Martineau, I have
heard rumors there may be some sort
of party being prepared for
tonight.

The both act shocked.

WILL

That's absurd!

KRAUSS

I'm glad to hear you think so.
Because anyone caught throwing a
party will no longer work on this
train. Truly a fate worse than
death. Am I clear?

They all nod.

KRAUSS (CONT'D)

Ms. Martineau, I felt your time
among high society would make you
an asset to this team. But this is
the reality of blue-collar life:
it's work. Hard work. And it's not
too late for either of us to
reconsider.

NATALIE

Yes, ma'am.

KRAUSS

I can see I've made a real impact on you. Mr. Thacker, you can monitor the cleaning of the dining car at midnight tonight and hold the excess wine shipment in your room until further notice.

NATALIE

But ma'am - !

DALTON

Trust me, Martineau, I'm doing you a favor. You are from an honorable, wealthy family. You're not one of these riff-raff.

He shoots a meaningful look at Will. Natalie is seething.

NATALIE

Your high opinion of me means the world, Dalton.

KRAUSS

Enough, Mr. Thacker. On this train, we are all equals who do whatever I say. Now, back to your duties.

Natalie leaves, more determined than ever.

INT. DINING CAR - DAY

Dalton stands with Natalie, watching as porters unhappily march bottles of wine out of the galley.

DALTON

Not so long ago, I wouldn't be caught dead socializing with people like these. As soon as my family regains its financial standings, I'll be returning to real civilization. You'd be wise to do the same, Martineau.

Natalie just barely manages to contain her rage.

NATALIE

Well I hope you find your way out of here as soon as possible.

DALTON

Thank you.

Natalie smiles as the bottles of wine are carried out...

INT. CREW CAR - CONT.

...into the crew car, where Will is hastily uncorking them and pouring the wine into random empty bottles. He puts the new bottles (secretly filled with wine) onto a dining cart.

Hugo takes the emptied wine bottles, fills them with water, and hands them back to the line of porters taking them to Dalton's room.

The last of the wine switched out, Will throws a sheet over the cart and wheels it back towards the dining car.

INT. DINING CAR - CONT.

Will enters from the back of the car, casually pushing the cart into a corner before approaching.

DALTON

Well that's that. We've narrowly avoided a descent into madness.

WILL

Shame. But the better man won.

Will shakes Dalton's hand for too long. Eventually, Dalton pulls away.

DALTON

Yes I did. Both of you back to work. If you need me, I'll be here.

Natalie and Will nod as if they've been beaten and exit towards the front of the train.

All alone in a boring, empty room, Dalton smiles.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Another win for Dalton Thacker.

INT. BAGGAGE CAR - CONT.

Will follows Natalie as she storms through the baggage car.

NATALIE

"Not one of these riff-raff!" Who the hell does he think he is?

WILL

So are we sure going through with
this party is a good idea?

NATALIE

Don't tell me you're getting cold
feet now, William.

WILL

(scared)

...no. I'm excited. I can't wait.

NATALIE

That's what I thought.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - CONT.

A hot, sooty, dirty space covered in levers and controls.

In the driver's seat sits a thin, silent young man covered in
grime, Engineer PHILLIP PEACHEY (20). Despite his youth and
clear discomfort around others, he manipulates the mechanisms
of the train with perfect confidence.

Natalie and Will enter. He turns to them.

NATALIE

Phillip Peachey, master of the
train, our savior!

He waves off the compliment, bashful.

WILL

What does Phillip have to do with
this?

NATALIE

I've taken the liberty of
formulating a new plan which is
already in motion.

As Natalie talks, she gathers engineering gear (overalls,
gloves) from around the room.

WILL

What? When?

NATALIE

When you went to the bathroom.

WILL

That was like five minutes!

NATALIE

Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, Clausewitz,
I've read them all and they agree:
tactics must be swift and decisive.
Phillip has already sent a note to
Krauss asking for a routine safety
check of the train later tonight.

INT. CABOOSE - DAY

Ginger walks up to Krauss and hands her a note. Krauss reads it.

NATALIE (O.S.)

Foolishly, her number one concern
is safety.

INT. DINING CAR - DAY

Krauss approaches Dalton. He immediately straightens up.

NATALIE (O.S.)

She'll inform Dalton of the check
and tell him to -

NATALIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(bad impression)
-follow the engineers'
instructions to the letter.

KRAUSS

Follow the engineers'
instructions to the letter.

Dalton nods his head ferociously.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Natalie now has a nice pile of engineering gear.

WILL

Who was that?

NATALIE

That was Krauss.

WILL

Sounded kind of like a bird
pretending to be a bear.

NATALIE

Psh. I know voices. Meanwhile,
you'll be rallying the cavalry.

INT. CREW CAR - NIGHT

Will whispers to a small huddle of train workers, including Mel.

WILL

The party is still on. Spread the word and be ready to move at midnight. And never stop believing in your dreams. Now get out of here.

Excited, the porters dissipate. Mel lingers.

MEL

You're going to quite the lengths for this rich girl, aren't you?

WILL

What? No. I just want to party.

MEL

Uh huh. Sure.

She exits with a knowing smile. Will glances over his shoulder to make sure nobody heard that.

NATALIE (O.S.)

While you're doing that, Phillip will be clearing the lounge car.

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

Silent, sooty Phillip stands in front of a packed car full of drinking guests.

NATALIE (O.S.)

Phillip, you have to get them to leave. And you'll have to be convincing because the lounge must be empty for the plan to work.

Phillip gulps.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

NATALIE

Are you sure you've got that?

Nervous but determined, Phillip gives a thumbs up.

WILL

Phillip can do anything because he believes in his dreams. Here's my question: what is this?

He points down at the pile of engineer clothes.

NATALIE

This is the easiest part! We'll pose as engineers and get Dalton out of the way.

WILL

Yeah, I can do that for sure.

NATALIE

What's that supposed to mean?

WILL

There's not a chance in hell that you can pass for a salt-of-the-earth coal shoveler.

NATALIE

This old chestnut again! Natalie, you're not a grizzled old man. Natalie, you have the voice and mannerisms of a wealthy young woman. I've heard it a million times.

WILL

It's weird you keep needing to be told.

NATALIE

Don't worry, I've got this.
(engineer voice)

Hey, got some coal here. I love coal.

WILL

Phillip, do you think Natalie would fit in among your colleagues?

Phillip, withering under Natalie's stare, avoids her gaze and returns to work at the controls. *That's a no.*

WILL (CONT'D)

Maybe you ought to wait here and I can get Dalton out of the way.

NATALIE
(forceful)
No! It's my plan, I can do this,
I'm going!

WILL
Jeez alright! We'll just have to
make this disguise damn convincing.

EXT. LOUNGE CAR - EVENING

Will and Natalie walk briskly, each carrying a bag of
engineer clothes.

Natalie spies Cyrus sitting nearby. He hasn't seen her. She
quickly averts her eyes and hides slightly behind Will.

WILL
(quietly)
You do know that guy, don't you?

NATALIE
He's an old family friend. One of
the few I actually liked.

WILL
You should go say hi.

NATALIE
No. I'm not like him.

A bit confused, Will shrugs. They exit the car.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. DINING CAR - NIGHT

Dalton is alone in the empty dining car. He's falling asleep.

His arm slips off the table and he startles himself awake. Immediately alert, he looks around with suspicion before returning to his comfy pose.

INT. CREW CAR - NIGHT

The employees of the train wait quietly in the common area, not-so-subtly watching the door for the signal to move.

The door opens. Everyone gets excited, starts leaping up...only to be disappointed by the sight of Hugo walking in.

HUGO

Hey hey!

MEL

Gah. It's only Hugo.

Hugo deflates as they all return to their waiting.

ROSEMARY

Oh hey! It's Hugo!

INT. SLEEPER CAR - NIGHT

Natalie and Will scurry through the sleeper car, adjusting their disguises. They look like engineers - wearing overalls, covered in soot.

When the door to the lounge flies open, they jump into the bathroom, out of sight.

Natalie, closely pressed against Will, glances briefly up at him...then quickly refocuses on the task at hand.

The passengers file into their compartments.

MR. PEWTER

What a well spoken young man.

The passengers are followed by Phillip, looking pleased with himself. Natalie and Will emerge from the bathroom.

NATALIE

Wow, great job, Phillip! You must have been super convincing.

Phillip smiles and gives the ok sign: *nailed it!*

WILL

It's not too late to recognize this is a terrible idea.

NATALIE

Quiet, I'm getting into character. Coal. Coal. I love coal.

WILL

You know there's more to engineering than just coal, right?

NATALIE

Duh! Let's go.

INT. DINING CAR - NIGHT

Dalton, now fully asleep at his post, is woken up by the door of the car slamming open.

Natalie and Will, faces covered by cloth bandanas, enter in disguise.

WILL

(working man voice)
Maybe it's in here.

NATALIE

(worse voice)
I'll check the lighting fixtures.

DALTON

What's going on?

WILL

There's a hadron leak somewhere on the train.

DALTON

What? What's hadron?

NATALIE

A gaseous byproduct of the coal burning process. Similar to carbon monoxide.

DALTON

Wow. Very well said. What's your name, engineer?

Natalie's eyes widen. *Whoops!*

NATALIE

Uh, I love coal!

DALTON

What?

Will swoops in.

WILL

Don't you know hadron is lethal? You won't even smell it then suddenly boom! Dead! You haven't been feeling sleepy have you?

Dalton starts to get scared.

DALTON

Maybe a bit...

WILL

My word. That's not good.

NATALIE

It's here! I found the leak!

WILL

Are you serious? Dear God. Tell me you haven't been in here a long time. Please!

DALTON

I've been in here for hours!

WILL

Stay away from me! Get back!

Dalton is panicking. Will pushes him away.

NATALIE

Wait! We can save him if we just get him to an oxygenated space.

DALTON

Please! Please help me!

WILL

Fine, as long as we all get out of here fast. We'll have to stop the leak somewhere else!

NATALIE

Hurry!

She takes Dalton's hand and drags him out of the dining car, Will close behind.

INT. SLEEPER CAR - CONT.

They head into the sleeper car, dragging Dalton towards the bathroom.

NATALIE

Go in here and no matter what, do not come out until you feel completely recovered.

WILL

Three hours!

NATALIE

Four hours at least.

She throws him into the bathroom and gets ready to close the door.

DALTON

Wait just a minute!

They hold for a moment. *Uh oh.*

DALTON (CONT'D)

(suspicious)

Your hands...they're so soft.

Will cringes. *Are they busted?*

After a tiny hesitation, Natalie spits into her hands and rubs them together with a cheeky smile.

Dalton is disgusted.

They close the door. Natalie runs back towards the food car.

WILL

Stay inside! If this door opens too soon, you could be re-exposed to the Hadron.

He rolls a food cart in front of the door, trapping Dalton inside.

WILL (CONT'D)

We're placing a cart in front of the door for your safety. Don't let anyone move it!

DALTON (O.S.)

Thank you both! Thank you so much!

Natalie runs back towards the dining car, followed by a silent crowd of porters.

NATALIE

Of course! We're just doing our duty, sir.

WILL

We'll be back soon.

Smiling at each other, they follow the crowd towards the dining car. The car is left empty and silent.

DALTON (O.S.)

That was close.

INT. DINING CAR - NIGHT

POP! Natalie yanks the cork out of a make-shift wine bottle.

The entire dining car, filled with porters and engineers, CHEERS! Someone starts playing jazz guitar.

INT. CABOOSE - NIGHT

Krauss stands up from behind her desk, speaking with Ginger.

KRAUSS

Please check the linen supplies before you lock up.

Distant cheers float through the air. Ginger nervously pretends she didn't hear it.

GINGER

Did you need anything else, Ms. Krauss?

KRAUSS

Ms. Goodwin, I'm quite certain I'm going to immediately fall into a deep deep slumber and won't need anything from you until tomorrow morning. Have a good night.

Ginger nods and leaves the car.

With the faintest smile, Krauss turns off her light.

INT. DINING CAR - NIGHT

The party is in full swing! Natalie walks around the crowd of rowdy train workers.

As she passes by each group, many pat her on the back and cheer her on. A group of engineers points at the soot on her face approvingly.

Will is in the corner with Hugo and Rosemary, drinking wine.

WILL

I get that they're just adding grapes to beer, but why isn't it foamy anymore?

Natalie wanders up to an already tipsy Mel and some of her friends.

MEL

There she is! Our hero!

Natalie, glowing, is welcomed into the group. *She's one of them.*

NATALIE

I'd like to think we all made this happen in our own small way.

MEL

No, you stop it, this is you! Honestly, I had no idea you were going to be so cool. You don't give a shit about money or status or anything!

NATALIE

I don't!

Everyone cheers and Natalie, surprised, cheers happily along.

MEL

You all should have seen her in the lounge earlier. There was this asshole old man and she just laid into him.

Natalie's smile fades slightly.

MEL (CONT'D)

He kept being like "you there, porter, I know you!" I mean, this guy was absolute trash.

NATALIE

I mean, he wasn't that bad. He just thought he knew me.

MEL

So of course he had to make a scene about it. Because there's no way any of these rich pricks can be wrong about anything. What a piece of shit.

Natalie is deeply uncomfortable.

MEL (CONT'D)

Just like all of them. Arrogant, ignorant, stuck-up jackass.

NATALIE

Stop!

Natalie's sudden outburst takes the group by surprise.

Distraught, Natalie discreetly hurries out of the car.

Will sees her go and follows.

MEL

Was that on me? Oof. My bad.

EXT. BAGGAGE CAR - CONT.

Will finds Natalie sitting alone on the edge of the train, watching the darkness as it zooms by.

WILL

Hey, what's wrong? The party is in progress.

NATALIE

It doesn't matter. I can party with
all of you but I'm not one of you.
I'm still just a rich girl.

Will, recognizing his own words, sighs with regret.

Eventually, he walks over and tries to sit down next to
Natalie. He doesn't quite fit.

WILL

Move over. You gotta move over.

She scootches all the way over and he juuuust manages to get
in. It's very tight.

NATALIE

What are you doing?

WILL

I'm comforting you. You're being
comforted.

He tries to pat her on the back but he can't get his arm
around. He gives up and pats her on the shin.

WILL (CONT'D)

Look, I'm a nobody. Started out
poor. Got poorer. Had some fun,
stole some stuff, got exiled from
Austria. Do I wish I was something
else? Of course not, I rule. But
even if things turned around for
me, somewhere deep inside I'm still
the kid who had nothing. Who you
were, how you grew up...you can't
leave stuff like that behind.

NATALIE

Then how am I supposed to do this?

WILL

So you're not "one of us." So what?
That doesn't mean you aren't one of
us. You're cool. You made this
party happen. You put us all in
danger. You genuinely scare me.
Like I don't know, maybe you're a
psychopath. You have a threatening
aura, it puts people on edge.

Natalie laughs.

WILL (CONT'D)

You'll be fine. Now come on, we might as well enjoy the party right? Why are we out here? What the hell's wrong with you?

NATALIE

Get out of my way and we can go!

They shove each other to stand up. Will finally moves aside, gesturing for Natalie to go in. They're alone in the dark.

She grabs him. He's scared. *What the hell is this?*

She pulls him in to a hug. *Oh. This is fine.*

Then she shoves him against the railing, punches him hard in the arm, and walks away.

WILL

That's what I'm talking about.
Threatening aura.

They re-enter the party, a pinprick of light flying through the shadows as the Oslo Express cuts through the night.

INT. BAGGAGE CAR - MORNING

Natalie and Will are back at it, sorting the baggage.

WILL

I can't believe this is taking you so long. Small bags hide behind the big bags.

NATALIE

Alright, this must be some kind of joke.

WILL

Why would I joke you?! Please follow the system!

Dalton enters, murder in his eyes.

NATALIE

Ah Dalton! Good morning!

He's quiet for a moment.

DALTON

I know it was you.

WILL
Finally you notice!

DALTON
Did you enjoy breaking train
regulations and endangering the
integrity of the company?

WILL
That doesn't sound like us.

NATALIE
Dalton, please, we're trying to
work here.

She flings a bag up onto the rack.

Natalie and Will both smile, having won the battle...but not
the war. Dalton's mouth also curls into a smile.

DALTON
You two are quite the pair.
Adorable really.

NATALIE
(cute)
Thank you.

DALTON
I wonder how the Marquess of Cours
is going to feel about your close
friendship.

Natalie goes white.

NATALIE
...what?

DALTON
Apparently your mutual friend Cyrus
Rocheport mentioned seeing you to
the Marquess. We received word from
down the line. Your fiancé will be
joining us at the next stop. Have a
great day.

Natalie and Will are speechless. Dalton walks out.

WILL
...your what?!

END OF PILOT