

Side
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COUNTESS. Excuse me, but you have asked to see me – *oh dear God.*

POIROT. Forgive me, countess, but I understand you were trained as a physician, so I thought perhaps you could help me with the body.

COUNTESS. I am happy to help.

(Without hesitation, she strips off her jacket and rolls up her sleeves.)

POIROT. I'm afraid it is not a very pleasant sight.

COUNTESS. I have seen worse, believe me. I volunteered in the war.

(The COUNTESS begins examining the body.)

POIROT. *Regardes.* The left side of his face is slightly red, do you see?

COUNTESS. I do. It has been slapped.

BOUC. How do you know?

COUNTESS. Because I slapped it. I count eight separate wounds.

POIROT. That was my count also. Can you estimate the time of death?

COUNTESS. I would say it is between eight and ten hours ago, which puts the time between midnight and two o'clock.

POIROT. I am in accord.

COUNTESS. It appears that the killer was wild – in a frenzy of some sort.

POIROT. *Regardes.* See this. Of the eight stab wounds, five appear strong and three are mere scratches. And wait, do you see, the wounds are from different directions. Do you see it? I need a pencil.

BOUC. Here.

POIROT. *Bon.* Now watch. We place the pencil inside each wound and push it gently...

BOUC. Ugh! Is this necessary?

COUNTESS. Perhaps the man changed hands during the stabbing.

BOUC. Or there were two assailants. One right-handed and one left-handed.

COUNTESS. One strong, one weak.

POIROT. It is not impossible. But now another question presents itself: why did Mr. Ratchett not fight back when all the while he had this gun under his pillow?

(POIROT pulls the revolver out from under the pillow.)

COUNTESS. *Oh là là.*