

TRAIN PLAY

Clare Louise Roberts

CHARACTERS:

CONDUCTOR - Quite robotic and sounds like a typical customer service announcement but can quickly get aggressive.

THE TANNOY

WOMAN 1

WOMAN 2

COMMONER 1

COMMONER 2

PASSENGER

KEYBOARDIST

RICH MAN

RICH WOMAN

FOOTBALL CROWD.

CHORUS OF PASSENGERS

***The scenes between Scene 2 and 7 can be moved about.***

SCENE 1: THE TANNOY

SETTING: A LONG LINE OF CARRIAGES BUT WE CAN ONLY SEE INTO TWO CARRIAGES ON THE STAGE - FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE WHICH IS LARGE AND SPACIOUS, WITH OVER-SIZED CHAIRS. RICH MAN AND RICH WOMAN ARE SAT SEPARATELY IN THE LARGE CARRIAGE. CONDUCTOR IS PASSING COOKED DINNERS ON TRAYS TO RICH MAN AND RICH WOMAN.

THE STANDARD CARRIAGE IS SMALLER AND INSIDE IT IS VISIBILITY AND ATMOSPHERICALLY CRAMPED WITH EITHER SEATS WHICH ARE TOO SMALL OR LONG BENCHES FOR PEOPLE TO SIT ON. WOMAN 1, WOMAN 2, COMMONER 1 AND COMMONER 2 AND CHORUS OF PASSENGERS ARE ALL SAT HERE. EVERYONE EXCEPT CONDUCTOR IS SAT DOWN. THEY ARE ALL USING DEVICES OR READING OR ADJUSTING THEMSELVES READY FOR THE JOURNEY. AS THEY SIT WE HEAR THE TANNOY. THE TANNOY IS TO BE READ AS A TANNOY ANNOUNCEMENT/CUSTOMER SERVICE VOICE.

TANNOY: Good afternoon passengers, I am your train conductor and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing 'Lamnidae Trains' for your journey today. We wish you a pleasant journey. Just a few health and safety notices: Please be mindful of the passengers around you and refrain from eating smelly foods, also there will be no alcohol consumption before 9pm. May I remind all passengers to please keep shoes on at all times. Feet found on seats will result in a fine of 147 pounds. An extra 'Smell Charge' will be added if your feet are bare or are particularly putrid to cover the cleaning and administration costs. If you are traveling with children; why? (PAUSE) We would like to inform you that the refreshment trolley will be going past you on this journey, you will have two chances on this journey to buy a refreshment, the bidding starts at 2.99 for bags of crisps and just 4.93 for an instant hot drink. You can order yourself a meal deal which includes, drink, sandwich, and crisps with a starting price of just 8.99. Please speak to myself or another member of staff if you would like to hear the sandwich menu and arrange this brilliant deal for yourself. Prices include the administration costs and tax. If you see anything suspicious, please remain calm and before you start live streaming it onto social media, please report it to a member of staff. The thing which is suspicious I mean. Also, on that note, please do not film or take

photographs of other passengers without their written and signed consent. Failure to do so will result in a 67 pound fine and you will be escorted off the train at the next stop. May I just remind you all that abuse against staff members will not be tolerated and I will taser you with no regrets. For now, sit back, relax, and enjoy your journey.

SCENE 2: STANDARD CARRIAGE - TWO WOMEN NEEDING THE TOILET FIASCO

WOMAN 1: Ooohh I need to go so bad but those toilets will be disgusting!

WOMAN 2: Why didn't you go at the station?

WOMAN 1: They were closed remember?

WOMAN 2: Oh yeah.

WOMAN 1: And I didn't need it then.

TANNOY OVERHEARD: 'For now, sit back, relax, and enjoy your journey'.

WOMAN 2: (SIGHS) It's so hot.

WOMAN 1: (SIGHS) Yeah (ADJUSTS HERSELF IN HER SEAT.) Does heat make you want to pee even more? I think it does.

WOMAN 2: You should have just paid the platform's Pee Fee to use the toilets they have in the first-class lounge.

WOMAN 1: I'm not paying three quid just to pee when there's a toilet on the train!

WOMAN 2: I know but a poop on the train is a poop of faith isn't it? They only clean them once a week or so.

WOMAN 1: And there's just never any soap or any proper water afterwards.

WOMAN 2: Yeah, hmm. Don't worry I packed anti-bacterial gel anyway.

WOMAN 1: (RUMMAGES IN BAG) Yes! I remembered to pack the tissues for the loo roll.

WOMAN 2: Yeah don't count on there being any in there.

WOMAN 1: Ok...

(WOMAN 1 GETS UP, SLIGHT 'I NEED TO PEE DANCE' AS SHE HURRIES TO THE CUBICLE. ENTERS CUBICLE. PAUSE. POPS HEAD OUT)

It doesn't lock! Please can you keep watch for me?

WOMAN 2: (AS SHE GETS UP AND GOES OVER TO THE TOILET) Yeah Of course!... Are you sure it doesn't lock?

WOMAN 1: It's one of those, touch-screen buttons, I can't tell if the door is locked or not when I'm in here.

WOMAN 2: Okay, I'll stand by the door for you.

WOMAN 1: Thank you!

### SCENE 3: VESTIBULE - THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

KEYBOARDIST GETS ONTO CARRIAGE WITH A KEYBOARD THAT IS BADLY WRAPPED IN A MAKESHIFT BAG. THEY STOP AT THE ENTRY TO THE STANDARD CARRIAGE WHEN THEY SEE THE CROWDEDNESS OF IT, THE OVERFLOWING LUGGAGE RACK AND THE FULL OVERHEAD LUGGAGE AREA. KEYBOARDIST LOOKS OUT THE AT CROWD, BACK TO THEIR KEYBOARD, BACK TO THE CROWD. THEY ARE UNSURE WHAT TO DO AND WORRYING FOR THE SAFETY OF THEIR INSTRUMENT. CONDUCTOR ENTERS THE SAME VESTIBULE COMING FROM THE FIRST CLASS CARRIAGE AND STOPS AT THE KEYBOARDIST WHO IS BLOCKING THEIR WAY. KEYBOARDIST HAS THEIR BACK TO THE CONDUCTOR AND HASN'T NOTICED THEM.

CONDUCTOR: Passengers need to remain seated in their carriages.

KEYBOARDIST JUMPS STARTLED.

Which carriage do you belong in?

KEYBOARDIST: Oh! Err I belong in - I mean, my ticket's for the Standard Carriage here but -

CONDUCTOR: Can I help you get there?

KEYBOARDIST: No, err I mean - I have my keyboard with me, here and it's really fragile.

PAUSE. CONDUCTOR STARES AT KEYBOARDIST.

There's no space for it in the over-head or racks or anything...Erm... What do I do? (PAUSE) Could you help me find somewhere, please?

CONDUCTOR LOOKS LIKE THEY ARE ABOUT TO REFUSE.

KEYBOARDIST: I had it with me and it was safe when I was on the other company's train.

CONDUCTOR IS VISIBLY ANNOYED AT THE COMPARISON. STARES AT THE KEYBOARD.

CONDUCTOR: Give it to me, I will put it somewhere for you.

KEYBOARDIST HANDS THEIR KEYBOARD OVER TO THE CONDUCTOR, WHO TAKES IT INTO THE FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE, PUTTING IT IN THE OVERHEAD LUGGAGE RACK OF FIRST-CLASS.

KEYBOARDIST: (CALLING TO CONDUCTOR WHO IS RETURNING) Oh wow, thanks, thank you so much!

KEYBOARDIST TRIES TO STEP INTO THE FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE AS WELL BUT IS HALTED BY THE CONDUCTOR.

CONDUCTOR: Please return to your allocated carriage.

KEYBOARDIST: (CONFUSED) Oh, err - but - erm -

CONDUCTOR: Before you arrive at your destination, please notify a member of staff to go into the First-Class Carriage and retrieve your item for you. Now please return to your place.

CONDUCTOR EXITS INTO THE FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE. KEYBOARDIST TAKES A MOMENT TO LOOK AT THEIR INSTRUMENT SITTING IN THE FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE BEFORE FINALLY GOING INTO THE CROWDED STANDARD CARRIAGE.

SCENE 4: STANDARD CARRIAGE - TICKETS

TANNOY AND CONDUCTOR LINES SLIGHTLY OVERLAP EACH OTHER. VERY PACY. CONDUCTOR ENTERS CARRIAGE AND QUICKLY MARCHES DOWN AISLE AND UP AGAIN, REPETITIVELY - LIKE A WEDDING OR SOLDIER MARCH. APPROPRIATE MUSIC. OCCASIONALLY CONDUCTOR HOVERS OVER A PASSENGER FOR AN AWKWARDLY LONG AMOUNT OF TIME. TICKET MACHINE MAKES HIGH PITCHED NOISES.

CONDUCTOR: All passengers ready please, I want to have a good look at your tickets, so be prepared.

TANNOY: For now, sit back, relax, and enjoy your journey'.

CONDUCTOR: Tickets! Now!

TANNOY: Please have all excuses and railcards ready.

CONDUCTOR: You were given time to buy your tickets on the platform before boarding my - our - the train.

TANNOY: It is now time to show your tickets to our wonderful train Conductor. Any invalid tickets will result in a fine, confiscation of snacks, and aborting the train.

CONDUCTOR STOPS AT SOMEONE AND THE TICKET MACHINE REJECTS THEM, MAKING LOTS OF NOISE.

CONDUCTOR: You purchased an advanced ticket however this is the wrong ticket for your journey, you need to buy a solo-ticket-in-advance, not an advanced ticket. I will give you two options: you can either buy another ticket or you will be thrown off the train. You have 60 seconds to make your decision.

CONDUCTOR WAITS AND THE PASSENGER PANICS. CONDUCTOR GOES TO LIFT THIS PERSON AND THEY FRANTICALLY THROW MONEY OUT OF THEIR POCKETS. CONDUCTOR PUTS THEM DOWN.

CONDUCTOR: Thank you for your cooperation. You may remain seated for the duration of your journey.

CONDUCTOR LEAVES.

PASSENGER: (to bedraggled passengers) Almost, mate. I got on this train just in time, another Conductor almost threw me off my last one because my railcard is going to expire in two days and I haven't had chance to get myself a new one yet.

COMMONER 2 : (mutters to themselves) I'd like to 'em rough up the First Class passengers like that poor sod if they didn't have the right bloody advance or re-vance, bedazzled ticket.

#### SCENE 5: CONDUCTOR Vs. COMMONER 1

DISCREETLY, COMMONER 1 LEAVES THEIR SEAT, ENTERS THE FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE AND SITS DOWN THERE. WHEN THEY MAKE EYE CONTACT THE RICH PEOPLE DUCK OR HIDE. TRAIN CONDUCTOR ENTERS AND SPOTS COMMONER 1.

CONDUCTOR: Excuse me, can I see your ticket? (TAKES TICKET) Sorry but only passengers with a valid first-class ticket can be in this carriage. Your ticket allows you to sit in the standard carriage only (PAUSE) Can I help you get there?

TANNOY OVERHEARD: 'For now, sit back, relax, and enjoy your journey'.

COMMONER 1: (PAUSES. LOOKS AT CONDUCTOR) Yes I know, but you know the standard carriage is full again. I've come to find a seat, I'll move if more people come in though.

CONDUCTOR: I understand, however, only passengers who have bought a valid first-class ticket can sit here. You can upgrade to first-class if you like.

COMMONER 1: And how much does that cost?

CONDUCTOR: (CALCULATES ROBOTICALLY, WEIRD SOUND EFFECTS.) It will only cost you approximately 159.67.5 pence. If you cannot pay this price within the next 5 minutes you will be escorted back to



your previous carriage or you will be forced to leave the train.

COMMONER 1: Forced? But I bought a train ticket just like the people in here did (RICH PEOPLE DUCK/HIDE AT THE MENTION OF THEM).

CONDUCTOR: 4 minutes and 45 seconds.

COMMONER 1: (PANICS) Wait, wait! (RUMMAGES IN POCKETS OR BAGS) I have... 11 extra pounds!

CONDUCTOR: 4 minutes.

COMMONER1: (REPEATS SEARCHING ACTIONS, PAUSING AND BRINGING OUT DIFFERENT POSSESSION TO PUT ONTO THE TABLE - CAN IMPROV) And... some bananas and a bottle of water...and my headphones and... (GETTING MORE DESPERATE) my scarf... and - my stress ball and - and - my shoes and -

*Depending on actor sizes this can be done by lifting or grabbing of the arm and escorting.*

CONDUCTOR GRABS COMMONER 1 WHO STRUGGLES WHILST THE CONDUCTOR REMOVES COMMONER 1 WITH EASE. DURING THE STRUGGLE:

COMMONER 1: I'm taking the seat with me!

COMMONER 1 TRIES TO LIFT THE CHAIR OR IF THERE ARE CUSHIONS THEY CAN ATTEMPT TO TAKE THEM OR ANOTHER PROP FROM THIS CARRIAGE. CONDUCTOR TAKES THEM THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE VESTIBULE, THEN THROUGH THE STANDARD CARRIAGE DOOR WHERE THEY THROW COMMONER 1 EITHER TO THE FLOOR OR INTO THE CROWD.

#### SCENE 6: STANDARD CARRIAGE - THE REFRESHMENT TROLLEY

WE HEAR THE TROLLEY BEFORE WE SEE IT; A CLATTERING, METAL, MACHINAL SOUND. OVER IT A DISTORTED (MAYBE SAD) TUNE WHICH SOUNDS SIMILAR TO AN ICE CREAM VAN JINGLE. CONDUCTOR IS MORE ROBOTIC THAN NORMAL WHEN IN TROLLEY MODE.

PASSENGER ENTERS CARRIAGE AND FLOPS DOWN INTO A VACANT SEAT, TAKING DEEP BREATHS. AFTER A

MOMENT THEY PRODUCE A SQUASHED CHOCOLATE BAR/HOMEMADE SANDWICH FROM THEIR BAG AND EAT IT, TAKING BIG MOUTHFULS AND CHEWING SLOWLY (NOT EATING MESSILY). GETS OUT BOOK AND STARTS TO READ. CONDUCTOR WITH TROLLEY GOES PAST.

PASSENGER: Oh uh! Sorry hello! Excuse me, sorry, could I order some ready noodles, please? If you've got any?

CONDUCTOR: (STOPPING) Certainly, that will be 5.99, please.

PASSENGER: (HANDS MONEY OVER) OK, certainly, sorry, thank you.

CONDUCTOR PROCESSES MONEY WITH NOISY MACHINE. QUICKLY HANDS OVER NOODLES AND FORK, BUT DOES NOT PREPARE FOOD WITH HOT WATER. WALKS AWAY. PASSENGER STARES AT POT THEN BACK AT CONDUCTOR, AS CONDUCTOR CONTINUES TO LEAVE WITH TROLLEY IGNORING PASSENGER.

PASSENGER: Um, sorry, um, sorry, excuse me! The - sorry the hot water for it!

CONDUCTOR CONTINUES TO LEAVE WITH TROLLEY IGNORING PASSENGER.