

PROLOGUE:

*A couple of Gendarmes share a cigar on the stoop
of a brownstone.*

FRANÇOIS
Knock, knock.

FRANÇOISE
Qui est lá?

FRANÇOIS
C'est moi. La banane.

FRANÇOISE
La banane qui?

FRANÇOIS
Knock, knock.

FRANÇOISE
Qui est lá?

FRANÇOIS
C'est moi. La banane.

FRANÇOISE
La banane qui?

FRANÇOIS
Knock, knock.

FRANÇOISE
Qui est lá?

FRANÇOIS
C'est moi. La banane.

FRANÇOISE
La banane qui?

FRANÇOIS
Knock, knock.

FRANÇOISE
Alor, Qui est lá?

FRANÇOIS
C'est moi. L'orange.

FRANÇOISE
L'orange qui?

FRANÇOIS
N'orangez-vous pas content que je n'ai pas dit la
banane?

SPUDS and VALKYRIE enter in false mustaches.

FRANÇOISE
Ahah, les Américains.
Papers, please.

SPUDS
Hi, uh, we're here for the bed.

FRANÇOIS
The bed?

VALKYRIE
to SPUDS.
I told you not to mention the bed.

accent.

Ahem. We are exterminators.
Professional exterminators.
This apartment is condemned by the Sûreté.
You must leave now.

FRANÇOISE
Exterminators, but we have not seen bugs.

VALKYRIE
Bugs, no.
One bug.
An gigantic moth,
pink, pompous, and extremely poisonous,
weened on the drink of destruction.
Your safety does not permit that you remain here one
single instant longer than is necessary.

The building must be evacuated and then destroyed.
In that order.
Without fail.
By twelve pm.

FRANÇOISE

But, monsieur, we are charged with the guarding of
this stoop by the Préfet de Police. A very dangerous
subversive lives here, Spuds Hennessey.

VALKYRIE

An subversive, you say.
Well perhaps there is another way.
The moth, you see, is in the bed.

FRANÇOIS

But, monsieur, we did not see a moth.

VALKYRIE

And that, for you, my friend, is most fortunate.
For those who look upon the moth look upon this earth
nevermore.

Now if we can remove the bed, it seems possible that
you two fine officers of the law may be free to go
about your stakeout safe from the moth.

FRANÇOISE

The bed?

VALKYRIE

Not so loud.
If the moth should hear you...

FRANÇOIS

Very well.
Take the bed and leave us to our stakeout.

FRANÇOISE

Hold on a moment.
How do we know that you are exterminators as you claim
and not, in fact, accomplices of the dangerous
criminal, Spuds Hennessey.

VALKYRIE

I beg pardon,
allow me to introduce myself.
I am Pierrot Poisseux, moth-killer extraordinaire.

FRANÇOISE

And him?

VALKYRIE

This is my silent partner, Yves.

FRANÇOISE

He doesn't look like a moth-killer.
He looks like the criminal Hennessy.

She pulls off SPUDS' mustache.

SPUDS

Now wait a minute. I don't stand outside your
apartment and pull off your mustache.

FRANÇOISE

It's him. It's the dangerous subversive Spuds
Hennessey.

François, get him.

VALKYRIE

A moment. A moment, please.
That resemblance of which you speak
is my partner's curse,
I beg you do not make it his downfall,
for if Yves falls, so fall we all.
Can't you see in the battle of man and moth
human weakness and human conflict are to us as the
heel of Achilles?
While you detain a brilliant moth-killer on the basis
of his resemblance to a criminal himself only a
fraction as dangerous as the moth in question,
the moth waits,
the moth bides its time
the moth prepares to strike
and all in a moment
it is too late
all is lost.

FRANÇOIS
Bravo. Bravo.
Quick. Go in there.
Kill the moth.

FRANÇOISE
You fool, these are no moth-killers.

FRANÇOIS
Françoise, I'm sorry.

He knocks FRANÇOISE unconcious.

Quick. Before she wakes up.
Take the bed. Kill the moth.

VALKYRIE
It is a far, far better thing that I do
than I have ever done before.

singing.
The moth is large
the fires grow high
and where go I?
To die!
To die!

Adieu, my friend.
Adieu.

*VALKYRIE and SPUDS go into the building.
They come back out with a bed.*

Thank you, my friend.
You've served your country well.

SPUDS
Oh, and if you see the Préfet de Police,
tell him Spuds Hennessey says, hi.

VALKYRIE and SPUDS run off with the bed.

FRANÇOIS
Françoise, Françoise, wake up.

Oh, Françoise, I've been a fool.
What a fool I've been.

FRANÇOISE
François, what happened.
Where is the criminal, Hennessey and his accomplice
the moth-killer?

FRANÇOIS
Oh, Françoise, I let them escape.
You were right. There was no moth.
Why didn't I listen to you?
Why?

*A gigantic pink moth enters and eats FRANÇOIS and
FRANÇOISE.*

The Overture plays.