

# Opera Seria

Most of the plot set up in an *opera seria* was communicated through *recitative*. The harpsichord played the chord, accompanied by a low string instrument like the cello, and the singer chanted his line in free rhythm. At intense moments, other instruments joined in to enhance the mood. At this point the singer would sing an aria.

Using the following words from the film *Speed*, add music that is appropriate to the style of the words. Remember that one part will be the *recitative*, while the other will be the *aria*. Try to imagine how each of the characters would be feeling.

Dennis Hopper: I'm an incredibly evil bomber with a particularly nasty little plan!

I've put a bomb on your bus! A Bomb! And it's going to go off and kill you all if the bus's speed drops below 50 miles per hour!

Sandra Bullock: What'll we do? Oh, What'll we do?  
A bomb on the bus!  
You're gonna die, and I'm gonna, too  
Yes, every one of us!

Come on Keanu, give me a kiss!  
Bridge out? Oh, what a pain!  
Anyway, I can promise you this:  
Next time, I'll take the train.

## Glossary:

**Recitative** – Speech like singing. The singer semi chants the words, like free rhythm of speech.

**Aria** – A big song where the singer reveals her feelings and shows of her voice.

**Opera Seria** – Formal serious opera, especially from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.