A trip to devil's bridge

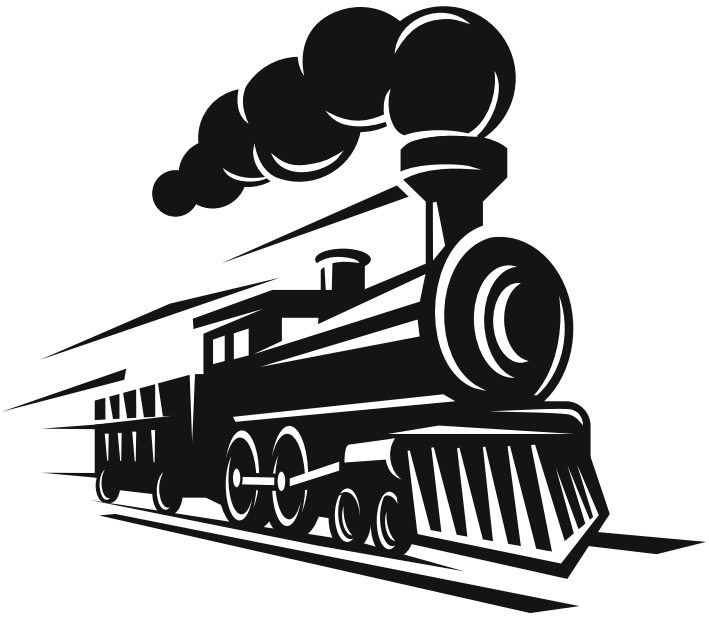
Paul had always loved steam trains. Ever since he was a small boy, he had watched the steam trains pass his bedroom window. Most people now travelled by electric train, or car, but Paul and his dad often travelled to Aberystwyth by steam train when they needed to go shopping.

On Saturday morning, Paul leapt out of bed. They were going to meet his grandparents at Devil's Bridge for a picnic today. This meant that they would travel by steam train all the way there! Paul loved this journey, they would be on the train for nearly two hours, far longer than their usual trip to Aberystwyth. His sister, Tabitha, was less keen. She hated the smell of the steam train and much preferred to travel by car with mum.

"Must we go on that train?" she whinged. "You know how much I hate it. I had to wash my hair three times to get rid of the smell of smoke last time I went on it."

"We're all going on the train today Tabitha," replied their dad. "Your mum and I have been looking forward to this trip all week. And you know how much Paul loves..."

"Trains!" snapped Tabitha. She grabbed her jacket and stomped out of the door, waiting for the rest of the family.



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Paul's mum and dad rushed around getting the last of the things ready for the day. "I'll pick up the picnic basket as we leave," said dad as he rummaged the shelves looking for his keys.

Eventually, the family left and arrived at the station just in time. The air was thick with smoke and passengers bustled on the platform as they waited for the carriage doors to be opened. Paul had made this journey a thousand times, but it still excited him. He loved the velvet seats that you sank into as you sat, the large windows that you could slide all of the way down so that you could see the view and the way the carriage tilted as it twisted and turned through the valley. Paul jumped on and made sure that he had a window seat. Tabitha huffed as she climbed aboard, and put her headphones on as soon as she sat down.

As they stopped at the station in Capel Bangor, the heavens suddenly opened. Dad had pulled down the window of their carriage but he quickly slammed it shut before he and Paul were soaked.

The family continued their journey, admiring the views despite the rain. As they neared Devil's Bridge Station, the sun burst through the clouds and the rain stopped. It looked like they would be able to enjoy their picnic after all! Suddenly, a red kite swooped beside the train. It was a magnificent sight – even Tabitha looked up from her smartphone.

Paul's grandparents were sitting waiting on the platform as the train screeched to a halt and the air, once again, filled with smoke that was billowing from the engine. They gathered their things as Paul's grandad approached and opened the door.

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“Shall I grab your picnic?” he asked.

“The picnic!” Paul’s dad exclaimed. “I forgot to pick it up as I was rushing about trying to find my keys!”

“Great,” Tabitha huffed. “Not only will I smell of smoke for weeks, but now I’m also going to go hungry.”

Luckily, Paul’s grandparents had brought plenty of food for everyone, including Tabitha’s favourite – cheese and ham sandwiches. This finally put a smile on her face.

As they walked towards their favourite picnic spot overlooking the waterfall, Paul was already daydreaming about the return journey, wondering if they would see the red kite again on their way home.

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