

Welcome anyone! This is one of our unfinished episodes. The script is mostly unrevised, so any grammar check/sensitivity reading will have come after. You may see some highlighted parts, which are usually notes to check accuracy or pronunciation notes for our cast. Here, you get to see our writer's stream of thought, so please be kind and remember that what you see in the final product is never a first draft! With that, enjoy the story!

EPISODE 12 - THE TRAIN STOPPERS

After his mom left, Wyatt's stifled sniffles and stray tears erupted into bit fat sobs that shook his tiny frame. This wasn't FAIR! He curled in a corner of the cold, grey room, but the rough-cut stone offered no comfort. He wanted to go home. He wanted a hug. His mom had reached for him through the bars, but a guard had pulled her away. She'd been crying too. He can't remember ever seeing her cry before, and it scared him. Wyatt hadn't wanted to ask if everything was going to be alright. He didn't want to see her lie.

Wyatt sprinted down the street as fast as his short legs could carry him, his school-bag bouncing on his back as he ran. The trains didn't go very fast around this part of town, and if Wyatt could just push himself for a few more moments, he'd be able to catch up. His heart pounded in his ears, beating in time with the chugging train. Clouds of dust sprung from his feed as they hit the dry ground, and his chubby hands pumped in perfect formation at his side.

Then; Wyatt's left leg jerked to a halt mid-strike, and he pitched forward headfirst. He had just enough time to look down and see where his right foot had stepped on his untied shoelace, before he slammed into the dirt and skidded a few inches. He choked on the dust, and scrambled to his feet. His hands and face stung. There was no way he'd be able to catch the train now, and he was going to be late to school

again. Wyatt didn't want the teacher to yell at him, but he'd get yelled at even more if he turned around and went home. There was nothing for it; he'd just have to wait until the next train came around.

As Wyatt stood and watched the train he'd been chasing turn 'round the bend, he heard shrieks of high-pitched laughter in the distance. Then there was a great HISS of steam, a loud CLANK of metal colliding, and the unpleasant sound of gears struggling to turn. Then, the sounds of the train stopped altogether

Hardly daring to breathe, Wyatt speedwalked to the intersection and peered around the corner. The train was completely motionless, and annoyed commuters were beginning to step out of all three passenger carriages. From the first carriage, at the head of the train, a burly-looking man in a top hat shouldered his way past the other passengers and scanned the scene.

"You!" he shouted, and pointed accusingly in the direction of one of the stores, just around the corner from where Wyatt was standing. Wyatt followed his finger and saw a group of four children, ranging from older teenagers to a boy that looked much closer to Wyatt's age. *The Train Stoppers!* He thought. *It must be them!*

"Do you think this is funny?" he bellowed, and headed in their direction with his fists balled tight. Wyatt ducked back out of sight before the scary man could notice he was there as well. He could hear the man's steel boots thudding against the dirt as he stomped closer. Then one of the kids shouted: RUN!

Before he could think to move, the kids flew around the corner and one of them barrelled straight into him. Wyatt found himself well-acquainted with the dirt for the second time that morning, and began to think he might be having what his mom liked to call a

"[hardizan euphemism for bad luck idk]" day. The girl that had knocked him over stared at Wyatt with surprise and annoyance for a brief second, before grabbing a fist-full of his shirt and hauling him to his feet. She grabbed his arm and tugged him along, forcing him to sprint to keep up. Behind them, the man in the top hat continued to shout indictments and obscenities as they ran, but didn't follow in pursuit.

Wyatt found himself dragged down several side streets and into an altogether unfamiliar neighborhood, where the buildings were crammed close together and held up with wishes and luck. They passed several track crossings and a few packed commuter trains before the oldest kid -- a short stocky girl with close-cropped hair -- nodded her head in the direction of a particularly empty car and all four kids hopped aboard. Wyatt, not sure how he'd even get home if he wanted to, followed suit.

Four sets of eyes turned towards him in unison, and Wyatt shrank against the back wall of the train car. A scrawny boy -- the one Wyatt had thought might be close to his age -- gave him a chipped-tooth smile and a discreet thumbs up, which boosted his moral considerably. At least, until the leader stepped forward.

"The name's Wishbone," she said with her arms crossed, as if daring him to challenge that. "I'm the head of the Train Stoppers; you may have heard of us. Do you stand with our cause, rust-bucket? Or should we tie you to the tracks?"

That, Thomas told him later, was Wishbone's way of saying hello.

BEGINNING OF SEGMENT [1]

[PEACHES OPENS THE DOOR TO THE WORKPLACE. MAILROOM SOUNDS.]

PEACHES. Good morning! Good morning.

[NO RESPONSE.]

PEACHES. *(mumbled)* Everyone's quiet today.

DRYDEN. Courier Marks.

PEACHES. Oh, ah. Hello! What can I help you with?

DRYDEN. See me in my office as soon as you're done settling in for the day. You sure are taking your time.

PEACHES. Sorry, sir. Your office?

DRYDEN. Yes, Marks. My office.

PEACHES. Isn't that...? Uh, yes sir. Will do.

[DRYDEN STALKS AWAY.]

DRYDEN. Hey, you! Aren't you supposed to be at the front? Go on!

[A DOOR SLAMS SHUT.]

PEACHES. Oh boy.

[PEACHES PUTS THEIR THINGS IN A LOCKER? AND HEADS OVER TO THE OFFICE. THEY KNOCK.]

DRYDEN. *(from the other side)* Enter.

[THE DOOR OPENS.]

DRYDEN. Marks, sit down.

[PEACHES CLOSSES THE DOOR AND SETTLES INTO A CHAIR.]

DRYDEN. You look confused, speak up.

PEACHES. Sorry, sir. I'm just used to someone else sitting in that chair.

DRYDEN. Mr. Fowler's employment has been terminated.

PEACHES. What?

DRYDEN. You two seem close, I thought he may have told you.

PEACHES. We are, but-

DRYDEN. Good, then you should already know. I'd like to remind you of a few policies we have around here, nothing you don't already know, I'm sure.

PEACHES. Alright...?

DRYDEN. Don't interrupt me. Courier Marks, I trust you understand that the residents on your route are your top priority.

PEACHES. Yes, sir.

DRYDEN. What did I just say, Courier?

PEACHES. Sorry, sir.

DRYDEN. Our job is to deliver their mail on time and be polite while we do it. I've heard some chat about your "misdemeanours," let's call them. Courier, while you're under my employment, this will not hear anything but compliments about your behaviour on the clock. Is that understood?

[PAUSE.]

DRYDEN. Is that understood, courier?

PEACHES. Yes sir. I wasn't sure if I'd be allowed to respond this time.

[A PREGNANT PAUSE.]

DRYDEN. Courier Marks, let me tell you something. You're not in shallow waters anymore. Mr. Fowler may have been the one responsible for the flyers being passed around, but I don't believe for a second that you weren't involved in more than just handing them out. But I'm a nice guy, so I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt. No more mishaps. No more rumours about you misbehaving. Tread water, Marks. I'll be waiting to see if you sink.

PEACHES. Wonderful analogy, sir. I'll keep that in mind.

DRYDEN. You're dismissed, Courier. Get to work.

[PEACHES ABRUPTLY STANDS AND LEAVES THE ROOM, CLOSING THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.]

END OF SEGMENT

KASS.

When they hopped off the train near the city limits Wishbone pulled the other kids - save Wyatt - into a huddle just out of earshot. Wyatt watched a man play fetch with a clockwork dog a few blocks down, before the huddle broke and Wishbone strode towards him.

"We're gonna stop another train," she said. "Gonna go for a record today. Thomas is our lookout, and you're welcome to stick around and help him. Or not. But either way..." here she leaned in close, and put an arm on Wyatt's shoulder. It wasn't a friendly gesture. "Either way, you're gonna keep your mouth shut, about today, got it?"

Wyatt nodded solemnly, which seemed to satisfy her. Then she turned and gave the scrawny kid a dire warning to not get distracted again, complete with threats of violence if he failed in his task. Her intensity scared Wyatt, but Thomas just stuck his tongue out and kicked her in the shins. Wishbone ruffled his hair and headed off with the angelic looking dark-skinned girl that had dragged Wyatt into this in the first place, and a tall, rail-thin boy that Wyatt hadn't heard say a single word yet.

As soon as they were alone, the scrawny kid turned and held out his hand.

"I'm Thomas!" he chirped, and without pause for breath he began giving Wyatt the run-down on... everything. Wishbone, apparently, was his older

sibling. "She's not actually a girl," said Thomas. "But she says she/her is close enough."

The pretty girl was Maude, who, at 15, was the second-oldest. "She gets us out of trouble," Thomas explained, "cause nobody ever thinks she could do bad things. Wishbone says she's got innocent eyes."

The other boy was Quentin, and it turned out that he didn't talk at all, ever. Wyatt figured that would make it hard to communicate, but Thomas said that he and Maude basically read each other's minds.

Notes:

Setting: Tinelock, Hardizan.

- There are groups of kids, upper class, mostly, that sabotage the trains of Tinelock. (Start with exposition scene? or maybe MC watching them/thinking about the rumors of the kids. Maybe a parental figure warns him to steer clear)
 - They delight in causing chaos, and in the feeling of revolution and revolt they get from it.
 - Of course, the only people it really hurts is the working class who need the trains to get to their jobs across the city.
- a young working class boy skips school (who cares, he'll be working in a year anyways and he won't need any of it) and joins the bigger kids, the rich kids, the train stoppers.
- He actually makes friends, and earns their respect (incident in which he does something cool & dangerous, and pulls it off)
- He becomes best friends with one boy in particular.
- There's a scene maybe where his mom warns him against doing small crimes (they're in a store and see rich kids stealing and his mom tells him that THEY can't or it'll fuck them up way more, but at this point he's already done way worse soo....)
- But when the cops come, our protagonist is the one held accountable (because he's from a lower class).
- The friend visits him in detention, but can't truly understand how much this will hurt his life. (now it's on his record, his family has to pay for his legal fees.)
 - He's sorry, but he doesn't get it. It's bittersweet. (Maybe the friend is like "yeah but your parents can just pay to have your name cleared, yeah?)

MC:

- Wyatt, he/him, 11 yrs

three bugs

make sure to include lots of steampunk stuff

- a) Snippet: Wyatt in a cell, awaiting trial. His mom has just left after visiting him, and he's pretty sad. She wasn't mad. She couldn't stop crying, and through that he knows the trial won't go well. It's not fair, he thinks. "I was just trying to help people!" he thinks, but he knows that's not true. That wasn't it.
- b) Wyatt runs for train, gets swept up with the train stoppers.

[BUG ONE]

- c) Thomas is assigned to be lookout (and warned not to get distracted like he sometimes does) while the others do another sabotage, and Wishbone tells Wyatt he can hang around and help, or not, but either way he'd better keep his mouth shut. Thomas & Wyatt chat and bond. Thomas gives exposition about the Train Stoppers & their goal, and the other kids.
- d) Wyatt is the one to spot cops headed their way, and though Thomas initially thinks to go talk to or distract them, Wyatt convinces him to go alert the other kids (his mom told him never talk to cops) and skedaddle. But then he musters some bravery, he wants to prove he's not a coward, so he takes an extra second to finish the sabotage before running off.
- e) The gang praises him for both his good lookout skills and risk-taking bravery, and invite Wyatt to keep working with them.

[BUG TWO]

- f) short montage skim-over; Wyatt has fun with his new friends, gets to know them. They're so cool, they laugh and do friend things. And sabotage. Wyatt isn't entirely sure how it helps the proletariat - after all, the rich people don't take the trains - but he's just happy to hang out with his friends.
- g) Many weeks later, Wyatt comes home late and extra dusty, and his mom is like "are you doing dangerous things?" and reveals neighbor said he hasn't been going to school. She's gentle, she's like "what's going on?" and he sort of says he's trying to help make the world a better place, and she cautions him that, he doesn't have to tell her, but he can't afford to take risks, because he's poor, because she can't bail him out, and it would ruin his life. Indentured servitude forever, probably.
- h) His mom's words ring in his ears when he goes to meet up with his friends the next day. They end up getting food at Maude's house after a sabotage, and he notices how rich it is, how clean and affluent, and everyone else seems perfectly at home there. The kids talk about what they want to be when they grow up.
- i) The cops show up; someone tipped them off after a sabotage, and Maude tries to play the innocent perfect rich girl card. The cops try and place the blame solely on Wyatt, due to him looking poor, but Thomas stands up for him. Then the cops come for Quentin, and Maude just sells Wyatt out entirely to protect Quentin, who she has a crush on and is very protective of. The other kids get off with a fine, but they haul off Wyatt.

[BUG THREE]

- j) Short scene: Thomas visits Wyatt in prison, and is sympathetic but can't truly understand how much this will hurt his life, how this fucks everything up. Then he leaves.

train stoppers:

- Maude = 14yrs, she/her, disney princess look with long brown hair. Wide, innocent eyes that get them out of trouble. Parents own a factory, and think she's in school. (Very distant relationship.)
- Wishbone = 17yrs, she/they, Butch anarchist, kind of the leader of the group. Very into the social justice angle of it all.
- Thomas = 12 yrs, he/him, Wishbone's younger brother. Becomes best friends with Wyatt. The two of them live with a moderately wealthy aunt, since their parents decided to run away to the much nicer Belvale without them to support. They're basically given free reign.
- Quentin = 13yrs, he/him, doesn't speak. Best friends with Maude. He honestly loves to blow things up and cause chaos.
- Wyatt: 12 yrs, he/him. Working class kid with a single mother that just wants what's best for him. Lonely, feels powerless.

[Wyatt falls somehow - maybe his shoe or backpack breaks or something? He thinks he's going to miss his train to take him to school - but then he sees the train stoppers!! They sabotage the train, and he ends up spending the day with them instead of going to school]

Episode 12: Hardizan

- Radio: Train Stoppers
- ~~Bugs: 1) Peaches meets the new boss. It's not... good.~~
~~○ Abraham Dryden~~
- ~~2) Peaches goes over to Charlie's after work, they talk money (like Charlie's finances & job prospects) and the future of the revolution, what the firing means for them. They realise they need a new headquarters~~

BEGINNING OF SEGMENT [2]

[A DOOR OPENS. IT'S RAINING OUT.]

CHARLIE. (*surprised*) Peach! Hey, what's-

PEACHES. Can I come in?

CHARLIE. Yeah, come dry off. Did you walk here?

PEACHES. From work, yeah.

[A PAUSE.]

PEACHES. I know why you didn't want to tell me.

CHARLIE. I did want to, I just didn't know how.

PEACHES. Charlie, we had that whole conversation. You can tell me these things. We can talk about it.

CHARLIE. I know, Peach. I was going to tell you tonight at dinner. I forgot you worked today.

PEACHES. They changed my schedule. I thought you had done it, but I guess it was that new guy.

CHARLIE. You met the new boss?

PEACHES. Unfortunately. He's a real piece of work. *(sigh)* What are you gonna do? Have you started looking for another job?

CHARLIE. Yeah, started. But you know what it's like after you've just been fired.

PEACHES. Yeah, I do. Look, do you need somewhere to stay?

CHARLIE. I've got this place for another month. I'll be okay for now.

PEACHES. You will let me know, though? As soon as you need help?

CHARLIE. I will. But I've planned for this. If I can find another job between now and then, I'll be alright. The more important thing right now is our little operation, in that we don't have a place for operation.

PEACHES. Yeah. Cogs, I almost forgot about that. What do we tell the people I gave those flyers to? Not to come?

CHARLIE. No, we can't go back on that. It reflects badly on our credibility. We'll just have to find somewhere else.

PEACHES. We can't do it here, or at my place. It's too personal. We'd get caught.

CHARLIE. Mhm. I don't know, maybe somewhere outside of the city?

PEACHES. Still dangerous. There are factories out there where people could still see us gathering, and we're out in the open. Anything could happen.

CHARLIE. We could rent a building?

PEACHES. *(sarcastic)* Mhm.

CHARLIE. You're right. It's not feasible. I don't know what to do.

PEACHES. Hey, that's okay. You don't have to have all the answers all the time. That's what this conversation is for. Brainstorming.

CHARLIE. *(noncommittal noise)*

PEACHES. Hey, why don't I talk to Eshe? She was able to find that radio, and she goes scavenging around the city all the time. Maybe she knows a good private space we can use that isn't owned by anyone.

CHARLIE. That's a solid idea, Peach.

PEACHES. I'll ask her tomorrow, and we can go from there. As for tonight, though, you and I are walking back together, and I'll ask mom to make enough for leftovers.

[CHARLIE CHUCKLES, AND PEACHES GIVES HIM A SHORT KISS.]

PEACHES. Come on, get your coat!

[THE DOOR OPENS AND WE CAN HEAR THE RAIN.]

END OF SEGMENT