

Lady the Magic Engine

Story two: Do you Believe in Magic?

James couldn't tell the other engines about his weird delivery until that night at the sheds, and when he did, the others weren't too sure, especially Donald and Douglas. "Dornt teel me ye believe in magic, James." Douglas said, "Aye," Donald added, "It's naethin' mair than make-believe." Gordon sided with the twins, but Henry and James found Donald and Douglas' position amusing, "Says the engines who talk about 'verra wee engines' from the Little Western." Henry said, "Yoo're th' ones fa thooght th' Arlesdale engines waur magic." The twins protested, "Nae us." "I'm telling you!" James yelled, "A mysterious feminine voice helped me keep the trucks in line!" "I'll believe it when Ah hear it!" Douglas said, "Ah hae a yard tae tidy up," and left to burn the late-night coal.

With Duck now working on the Little Western, Douglas and Donald shared the job of station pilot and alternate, who did it when the last passenger left the station. This included sorting the big station yard and arranging the Flying Kipper for Henry. Douglas had last seen the yard in a mess with the Magician's train scattered about, but when he arrived, he was surprised to see the yard was cleaned up, the Magician's train in one corner near a small shed, and Edward's morning local was waiting in one of the terminating platforms. "Doonal main hae wanted tae surprise me," he thought, "I'll thenk heem when Ah see heem next." He left without noticing the tarped object was gone from the well wagon, nor the steam from behind some vans.

Later in the morning, Douglas brought the express to the platform when Donald arrived with the first ballast train. "Thenk ye fur tidyin' th' yard fur me, Donnie," he said "Ah needed th' pleasant surprise efter th' spat wi' James" Donald was confused, "Ah didnae tidy th' yard fur ye." he said, "Ah hud tae tak' a late train tae th' works tae repair 'at visitin' diesel." now Douglas was the confused one, "It cooldn't hae bin onie ay th' others," he said, "Th' ones fa ur willin' tae shunt waur aw thrang wi' their wark." the twins were confused but James heard the whole thing and when he noticed the taped object missing from the well wagon, he had an idea, he whistled to get the twins attention, who groaned, knowing what the red engine was about to say. "Don't teel us ye hink th' voice did it," Douglas said, "at was probably jist yer conscience tellin' ye tae shape up," Donald said. "I was going to say the voice might have belonged to a tank engine." he began to explain, "There was a tarped object on that well wagon in my train, but it isn't there anymore, so I think it was a tank engine, and she shunted the yard since she had nothing to do." the twins scoffed "Dae ye realize hoo bampot yoo're soondin' reit noo James?" Douglas asked, "Aye," Donald agreed, "Wa woods a tenk engine be part ay some glaikit magic shaw?" "Why did you two think that tender switching trick would work?" James retorted, "Hoo dae ye expect us tae hink straecht when we waur fearin' separation?" the twins said in angry unison. Before James yelled another question, Sir Topham Hatt stormed up to them, "Whatever you three are arguing about can wait for another time!" he said sternly, "You all have work to do!" "Sorry, Sir." they all said, "Donald, you'll be spending the next few days on the Brendam line to help with a big clay delivery." "Alrecht, sairrr." Donald said, "James," Sir Topham Hatt said, "The Magician was

pleased with your work delivering the train here, but says he won't need you for his show. "Darn," James replied, and the three went about their work.

That night as Douglas went to cover Donald's shift as station pilot, he was a bit on edge, "If 'at James thinks, he can pull a body ower oan a Caledonian," he began, "'en he has anither.-" Suddenly an unfamiliar whistle was heard closer to the harbor, he went off to look for it, only to find the Flying Kipper already arranged and the fishermen loading the vans, Douglas wasn't amused "'Main 'en it James!" he yelled "It will take' a lot mair 'en a new whistle tae gie th' better ay me!" then he heard James' normal whistle as the red engine backed down onto the train "How'd ye change yer whistle sae fest?" Douglas asked, "I didn't." James said, "But thanks for shunting these for me." "Ah, didnae dae it." Douglas said, "Ah jist cam haur efter hearin' an unfamiliar whistle." "That's a point towards the voice being a tank engine." James said, "I'll make ye a deal," Douglas said, tired of the argument already. "Whoever's wrang abit thes whole mystery shunter deal has tae be painted black durin' their next trip tae th' works an' bide in 'at colour until th' followin' visit." James was intrigued, "The Kipper doesn't have to leave for a while," he thought, "Sure! Follow me," and he and Douglas puffed off to the yard.

When James and Douglas arrived at the yard, James headed straight to the shed where the Magician's rolling stock was sorted "Ur ye sure th' answer's gonnae be haur?" Douglas said, "I've ne'er heard ay an engine used in these 'shows'." James chuckled, "As someone who knows a thing or two about standing out," he began as they stopped at the shed, "The Magician probably wanted a grand finale no one's ever seen before." James' driver opened the doors to the shed and revealed a small Victorian engine painted like the rolling stock and an older couple looking over her. The man was not happy to see them. "Hey! No one is supposed to see Lady until the show's finale," he yelled before getting sad. "Though the life of a stage prop is no life for an engine like her." This took James's bravado away. "I'm sorry about my husband, Burnett," the woman said, "he doesn't agree with Mr. Boomer, but can't leave his show because our engine would be scrapped otherwise." As a fellow scrap escaper, Douglas felt sorry for Lady, "We won't teel anyain whit we saw," the Scottish engine said, "But Ah noticed some odd mince happenin' around haur, an' wanted tae ken if she was behin' it." Lady smiled. "Well," she began. "When I was uncovered and taken off the well wagon, I noticed how messy the yard was, so when I was getting steamed up, I decided to clean it up." "But whit abit th' Kipper vans?" Douglas asked, "An' th' whistle?" "Also me." Lady said, moving her eyes to look at Burnett's wife, "Tasha here slipped on the footplate when we were leaving and tried to use my whistle cord to pull herself up." The two Sudrians chuckled softly, and James' smug smile returned. "Look on the bright side, Douglas." James said, "You get to decide if you get lined up or not this time." Douglas just sighed, knowing he had lost the bet.