

The Truth About Henry

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Translated by ChatGPT



One morning, Henry was grumbling in the shed.

"I don't feel well. My fire is not burning properly," he complained repeatedly, but James and Gordon were unsympathetic.

"You're not going to say you need special coal again, are you? Honestly, get a grip!" said James.

"Or maybe you want a new firebox fitted at Crewe? Ha! What a luxury!" Gordon added.

They dismissed Henry and left in a hurry. He was annoyed.

"Humph! They're still bitter about that time, aren't they?"

"Come now, they're only joking," soothed his driver as he poked at the fire.

"Besides, sometimes coal just doesn't burn well. It doesn't mean you're ill." he said.

Finally, the steam built up, and Henry sluggishly went to collect his train.

Henry headed towards the junction where Thomas was waiting, pulling his usual passenger train. The driver and fireman tried hard to make up for lost time, but Henry was still in a foul mood. When they finally arrived, Thomas greeted him with complaints.

"You're five minutes late, you lazybones! How many times are you going to be late?"

"Oh, shut up! I've had a rough morning!"

"Hah, who cares! Keep that up, and The Fat Controller will have you replaced with another engine!"

As Henry was about to retort, the guard's whistle blew, and Thomas hurried away. Henry was furious.

"Silly tank engine! He would never do that!"

He believed that The Fat Controller cared about all the engines and was proud of the long service he had given to the railway.

Around noon, Henry arrived at the big station at the end of the line. He was due to take a rest here. The driver and fireman left him on the platform while they went to get lunch. At that moment, Henry was stopped right next to The Fat Controller's office. The window was open, and Henry could hear the voices of The Fat Controller and his assistant. They were too busy to notice Henry nearby.

"Have you finished organising the old documents ? They were quite overflowing," said The Fat Controller, sitting at his desk.

"Yes, Sir. I've sorted and compiled them all," the assistant replied. "By the way, I was surprised to see some documents from when the railway started..."

"Oh? What is it?" The Fat Controller inquired.

"Is it true that Henry was originally built from stolen blueprints?" the assistant asked.

The Fat Controller's face hardened at the question. Then he replied, "Yes, it's true. That's why Henry used to have so many problems. My grandfather was supposed to receive a different engine, but he was tricked and got Henry instead."

Henry had heard everything! He was shocked. He had no idea he was such an engine... Just then, the driver and fireman returned.

"Come on, Henry, let's have a good afternoon," the driver said, pulling the lever. Henry's wheels started turning, and the train smoothly left the station. But Henry was still in a daze.

The train ran through the quiet countryside, but Henry's mind was clouded. He couldn't stop thinking about what The Fat Controller and his assistant had said.

"I'm an engine that The Fat Controller was tricked into buying... And I was built from stolen blueprints... The Fat Controller knew all this... Does he see me as a nuisance?"

He murmured to himself, growing more and more saddened. As a result, his steam weakened, and his speed decreased. The driver noticed something was wrong.

"What's the matter, Henry? Pull yourself together!"

The driver encouraged him, but it was no use. Henry finally came to a halt and couldn't move another inch.

The driver phoned The Fat Controller.

"The train is stranded. Henry won't move at all," he said.

"I'll arrange for a replacement engine immediately. Move Henry onto the siding," ordered The Fat Controller.

"But Henry's acting strangely," the driver said worriedly. "He's crying, saying things like 'I was never meant to be on this railway' and 'I was a fake engine.' This has never happened before."

The Fat Controller was speechless for a moment.

"He must have overheard that conversation... All right, bring Henry back to the shed. I'll come down and speak with him myself."

He hung up and left his office.

Poor Henry was sobbing in the shed. The driver and fireman stood outside, wondering what to do. Just then, a blue car arrived, and The Fat Controller stepped out. He went into the shed with the driver and fireman and gently spoke to Henry.

"Henry, I'm here. No more crying now."

Henry looked up at him with tears streaming down his face.

"Sir... what am I? Am I just a fake engine that you were tricked into buying...?"

Hearing this, The Fat Controller climbed onto Henry's running board and gently stroked his face.

"Henry, it may have been unexpected when you came to my railway. You were a bit 'different' from the other engines," he said kindly. "But have we ever considered abandoning you? Remember when we bought the Welsh coal to give you a chance? That was because we believed you were an indispensable, important engine on this railway!"

Henry was startled by this.

"And we took you to Crewe and had you rebuilt. Since then, you haven't been an engine built from stolen blueprints! I've been grateful for all your hard work up to this day. Do you remember when you rescued two broken-down diesels at once?" The Fat Controller asked.

"Of course, Sir! I remember! I was having trouble myself at the time," Henry replied, feeling a growing sense of pride.

"And you once pulled the express without giving up, even with your red paint," The Fat Controller continued.

"I remember thinking, 'Let them laugh at my red painting, I'll show them,' as I ran, Sir," Henry said, starting to smile again. The Fat Controller went on.

"Henry, let me make this clear! I've never thought of you as a fake or a tricked purchase! I want you to continue working for me on this railway! Will you do that?"

"Yes! Of course, Sir! I'd be happy to!" Henry answered enthusiastically.

The Fat Controller smiled warmly.

"That's a good engine!" he said.

For the rest of the day, Henry was filled with happiness. The driver and fireman were relieved too. James, Gordon, and Thomas had been worried when they heard that Henry was crying, but they felt reassured when they saw him smiling. Henry no longer cared about his origins. Above all, he was truly glad to be one of The Fat Controller's engines.