Tempus Adsequitur

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March, 1987

Sodor Ironworks
Killdane
Island of Sodor
United Kingdom

If you were to ever travel along a nearly

silent road, just outside of Killdane town itself, you might see a short section of railway line, stretching out up a short hill, until eventually bending away from the street.

Follow the rails, and you would soon hear the sounds of machinery grinding, creaking, and the calls of metal clattering to the ground..

These are the sounds, of the Scrapyard.

Killdane's Scrapyard and Ironworks was the biggest of its kind on the Island of Sodor,

able to take in the traffic Mainland England's many could not handle.

But you've heard that story already, haven't you?
Allow me tell you something New
In this World.

It had been about three years since Bert had his own encounter with Paxton. Sir Topham Hatt was gracious to receive another shunter, and quickly restored him to active service. In turn, Paxton pointed him in the direction of two more shunters down on their luck, Sidney and Norman. The Family

around the Dieselworks was growing, and welcomed Bert in with open arms, and claw, after his heroics.

Arry, however, was more apathetic, and judging of his brother, resulting in a rather large falling out between them. This lasted for years, the two unwilling to speak to each other beyond work requirements, and Bert choosing to stay near the Dieselworks at every chance he got.

Arry couldn't get it.
This was their JOB.
Why take valuable product like a scrap diesel over to the Dieselworks. Even if he WAS one of their siblings, they had a job to do.
He never felt empathy for those at the End of the Line, why did Bert have that sudden turn of face?

Why?

That was all he could think about one evening, as he was arranging scrap into the lines deep into the yard. Forgotten tracks, buried under scrap metal of cars, trucks, rolling stock, and even engines. Preservationists loved to scour this place for parts, as these things dated back, FAR back. All the way back to Beeching and his axe in some places. Faceless machines lined the scrap piles all around him as he moved the flat trucks and open wagons into place near the front of the masses to collect more bits and pieces, to clear up the backlog, y'know how it is.

As he rested, letting the men take care of the clearing, and resting things IN the trucks, his eyes drifted around the silent sidings, landing on some of the scrap cars and lorries. He couldn't help it, and smirked, looking over their now lifeless corpses, all valuable bits and pieces already having been extracted. They were really now hollow shells.

He knew the process well. First came out anything worthwhile with the motors and wiring. Then came upholstery, and last, any components that could work on anything else.

“Heh, ashes to ashes, rust to rust.”

Arry grinned, letting out a laugh, his eyes drifting over the machines again until, stopping, nearly right in front of him. He could see, some kind of figure. Twisted, broken, but recognizable enough to be an old Mineral Wagon.
It’s right side was crunched inwards, while the other side seemed to SPLIT open, metal dragging down to the ballast of the siding below, almost like a twisted and broken leg, pushing it forwards.
Arry blinked, trying to get a better look at the truck but, when he blinked…
It was gone.
Only an Empty Siding was left.

“Ugh, solo Night work. Messin’ with me ‘ead.”

Once he heard the pat on his cab from his driver, he moved off, taking the loaded wagons of scrap with him, passing the empty siding where he SWORE a truck should be.

The rest of his work that night, strangely, had the same visions. Collecting bits and pieces rostered to be melted down into new steel, Arry couldn’t help but gaze around the empty sidings, often seeing strange shapes, shadowy figures, and mangled machines seemingly, even with no eyes, staring right back at him.

Though, at last, he was signaled to head into the Smelter’s Shed.

The Red Glow enveloped him like he was a greeting card, truly, he was back into his own Element. Moving the trucks to their siding, he rolled off to

the Refueling point within the glow to take on a bit before heading back to his shed for the night.
As he rested, his eyes still were darting around him, not out of his own enjoyment of scrap anymore.
No.
Now, it was out of slight defensiveness. He was on edge, watching those figures and pieces of metal appear and vanish had messed with his radiator enough to cause his paranoia to spike.

Then, as his eyes finally chose to rest straight ahead, he blinked.
There was an engine.
Not, one he recognized from the visiting Sudrics, no, far from it. It looked, larger. He couldn't see it well, but the engine seemed to have two wheels on a pony truck, and eight large drivers behind. Parts of it, even looked like Henry in places but, this, wasn't the big green Hippee.

“OY. Who’re you, what’re doin’ ‘ere? Lookin’ to get SCRAPPED are ya?”

Arry growled, a grin spreading on his face as he laughed at his own sadistic wit. That smile was wiped right off his face as he looked back towards the Locomotive again, registering that it, it had it’s own sadistic looking grin on it’s face.

Arry just blinked, squinting towards it, before rolling forwards slightly.

“I SAID, Who’re YOU-”

He didn’t get much further, feeling a tug on his back coupling. Trying to roll forwards again, he felt his wheels slip on the rusting rails.

“Bert, I SWEAR, if this is just a childish PRANK to get back at me for, for…”

Arry didn't get further. Glancing back with the reflection of the clean steel of the Smelter's Shed walls, he could only see, that truck from earlier, the Mineral Wagon. Now, closer, he could see it's FACE. It, looked like it was MELTING off of it's frames and sides, with a crazed look in it's eyes. The sides themselves, busted into pieces, almost looked like insect legs, and each stabbed into the ballast around it. Several of it's brothers in death seemed to also be holding him back, like a demented train on a twisted hill.

"Wh-what- AH-"

Turning his gaze back ahead, now that engine was right up close and personal. Now, he could get a better set of details in it's, face was a word for it. It was cloaked in shadow, it's entire body coated in black MIST, contrasting the sharp REDS of the Smelter's Shed, with cold white pinpricks for eyes, staring into his soul. He couldn't see much else of

it's face, but from the twisted mouth into a maniacal grin, and the shimmers of the edges of it's face, he couldn't make a guess to, WHAT it was.

"You still believe, you are the one with power here?"

The Engine's voice was unmistakably Feminine, but, in a way that coursed through his fuel pipes, like worms in DIRT. As she spoke, he could barely make out what looked to be a forked tongue in the engine's mouth, not, unnatural but, something near purposefully created in their jaw.

"You're far from it, little murderer."

Creaks began to creep into the Smelter's shed, old boiler tubes seemingly HOLDING the door open, staff above FRANTICALLY trying to shut it as alarms from the door blared over the entire scene, twisting around the ears of any who listened to it, and

almost sounding like, mad laughter and chants.
Latin, unmistakable.
Caro nostra messis erat.

“H-HEY! LET ME G O ! THE WORKERS WILL CUT YOU INTO PIECES IF THEY-”

The laughter ROARED over the smelter’s shed, demented, and TWISTED from every source, MOCKING Arry for his fear.
The engine ahead of him continued to GLARE into his soul, with what seemed to be boiler tubes seeping out of every leak and hole in her body, twisting, and climbing up the walls like vines, reaching out to the Grabber above Arry.

“OH, my dear BOY, that has happened many, MANY a moon ago. Do you not REALIZE, what we are? WE, are the souls, the SPIRITS of those who you and your kind, all of the kind in this place, have MERCILESSLY murdered. Now, I’d say,”

A creak from the grabber above, as it was FORCED downwards, clamping around Arry, and into his roof, BARELY missing his prime mover, and HOISTING him upwards as he SCREAMED in pure agony.

"IT'S Y O U R TURN NOW!"

The screams and echoes of laughter only got LOUDER, as the engine welcomed it's mechanical cohorts into the Smelting Shed, an old Lorry crawled up the walls, stabbing into the structure like a SPIDER, slashing into Arry as he was hoisted there, like a demented pinata, taking off one of his front buffers, as he swung around like a puppet on strings.
Then, more engines and, stock of all kinds, twisted, broken, shattered into pieces, and yet still somehow alive past death, rolling in with smiles, grins, looking at Arry with bloodlust in mind.

More took their shots, slashing against the diesel above, scratching his paint, tearing off parts, even one of his couple rods got taken off by the teeth of a snake like large Diesel, it's broken body slithering just like one.

"DO YOU FEEL IT HARRY? THE AGONY, OF BEING TORN APART AT THE **RIVETS** AND **WELDS**. THE PAIN, OF D E A T H !"

That spectral machine SCREAMED up at him, his bruised face only able to stare down, as her body seemed to shift, boiler tubes slowly emerging from the broken boiler on her frame, snaking upwards like support of a machine. The Smokebox, was gone. A mass of shadow covered where it should be.

"I PLEASURE myself, with tearing into monsters, that facilitate this, like you. Able to do MORE than any would THINK, because, in death,"

The Engine's face was gone, and when it emerged from the shadows, boiler tubes pushing it upwards so it's eyes were on Arry's own...

"YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO BE AN ENGINE ANYMORE!

In it's place, a shadowy woman with long, flowing hair, reaching closer to her WAIST than her shoulders, SCREAMED in laughter, clawed hand raising as she was about to apply a strike to his face that would tear flesh from radiator, but, with a loud CLANG, her posture faltered, the locomotive shell below her rolling forwards, and past the Claw, of which, since the tubes were holding it, CRASHED downwards onto the rails below, grasp on Arry releasing as his frame hit the rails with a loud SLAM.

The diesel winced, the pit of demons below trying

to push their way to him, but, one got their first, pushing through the rest, and somehow coupling to his front hook. Once they were secured together, the engine BOLTED backwards out of the shed, the demons chasing.

"MURDERER! YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE ME! AFTER HIM!"

The gaggle of ghost spun around, and tried pursuing their target, RACING down the line after the damaged Class 08, though their broken bodies could only roll so quickly, and so far. One by one, as they passed where their husks of bodies once stood, they vanished, that massive engine SCREAMING Arry's name.

He was still recovering his bearings, trying to make sense of it all, and at last he got a good look at the engine in front of him.

It was rusty, worn down and broken, but with deep

green paintwork peeling at various places. The shape of the engine harkened back to a greater western region, small squat wheels, two in front, eight driving, and a short tender. Their face was speckled, freckles dotting the bridge of her nose, and down her cheeks. She looked, tired, like even doing this was wiping her out.

Ducking into an old siding, deep into the remains of machines and structures, the sound of the engine pursuing's screams jetted by, screams of a murderer, a monster, a facilitator of endless slaughter.

Once it was gone, Arry looked back towards the machine that had pulled him away, trying to see more of them in the low scrapyard lighting. Everything had moved so fast, he could barely think.

"Wh-what-"

"Are, are you ok?"

“...what?”

“Are you, ok.”

“N-no, I just, I had a claw, stabbed through me sides. I’m not, ok.”

“But you’re alive.”

“...yeah, I, I guess.”

“Good.”

The engine’s voice was, scratchy, worn down, like she’d screamed a lot before now. Quietly, she rolled backwards, letting Arry roll free on his own, or, when his crew found him.

“You should be, able to move on your own for a while. I hope. Contact with, Wraiths might do that.”

“Wraiths? Wait, do you KNOW what’s going on here? I’d LIKE to know myself considering what the HELL just *HAPPENED*.”

“Yeah.. yeah you should know. But even I don’t know about, her. Only myths and rumors in the, sixties when I was still running. A Wraith she is, something that, hunts in the Scrapyards for, ones who are in your, occupation. That’s all I know at least. I was, withdrawn in 1965, and she was, already a legend amongst scrapyards for about a year.”

The Specter paused, looking over Arry, before putting on what smile they could. They, tried to seem friendly, especially after everything ARRY had just been through.

“I, never had a name by the way. Just, call me 2876. That’s, what I went by on the, railway I used to run on.

I, already know your name Arry so, no need to, introduce."

Arry, was dead silent, staring at this old engine, this creaking husk. They'd saved him.

"Why? Why did you, save me? You, heard what they said."

"I, knew about your brother, Bert. There's, always hope for everyone, if they don't let the rot consume them, they're, able to turn around."

She winced, her frame tilting to the side as she looked over Arry again, the old machine trying not to fall apart at the seams. Arry, for once, looked at a steam engine, not in malice for scrap, but in remorse.

"You're, you're dead. Aren't you."

He even hated to say THAT. What was, happening in his head?
2876 meanwhile, just smiled.

"Not yet. But, I really feel like my time is soon considering. I've been on the backline for, 20 years. Last one, really left back there. I, heard the commotion and just, since I can, separate from my body, I looked around. That's, when I saw you, strung up and, about to be..."

"Murdered."

"That's a word for it."

The engine paused, looking over Arry for a few moments.

"Still, if this is my last act alive, then I'm proud of

myself for it."

"W-wait, no you, you can't, leave yet! You, I..."

That is when it hit. Arry stopped talking, looked at his lack of buffers, his battered body, and then back at the engine.
This, this wasn't just remorse, regret.
This was empathy. Mercy.

"Where, where is your body, in the backline. Maybe, maybe I can, return the favor of, saving you from, from DEATH."

The old engine blinked, staring at Arry, before pausing, and a smile rose on her face.

"You, you think?"

"There's, there's a massive works here, all based around Steam Restoration. If they can't do it, we'll

do it ourselves."

"Then, then FOLLOW ME."

Her voice rose slightly as she rattled backwards down the siding, Arry following close behind as he got a grasp on the fact that yes, somehow, he could roll himself along. Both engines seemed to limp, with major frame damage on Arry from the fall, and from rusting for that long on the old 2-8-0. Deeper into the scrapyard backlines the two moved, Arry having to move stock out of the way often, charging down sidings and old side tracks, until at LAST.

"Here I am."

They reached her. Her body was rusted, her eyes shut, but a face still present. There was still time before she faded away. The spectral version of her faded into the rusting form of the engine in front of

Arry, and slowly, her eyes flickered open, shimmering in the low light, as a weary smile curled onto her face.

"Heh, not, much, left. But I'm, still alive!"

Arry just smiled, rolling forwards, and letting his coupling hook onto her rusting hook, and carefully drew her backwards, out of the siding, and towards the main entrance. His entire body still ached, and having no buffers didn't help when he had to slowly push her down the branch from the Smelters, and onto the main line.

Elsewhere, the growl of a diesel motor on the main line echoed in an isolated area, with the echo of a scream of rage fading into the night.

"AND STAY OUT! *Spooky bitch. Interrupting my work.*"

Diesel 10 was taking care of a bit of business, the claw slowly resting on his cab roof as the silence around Kellsthorpe Road Station enveloped the environment. He was working on clearing a fallen tree from the line when the Screaming Banshee that was, IT, rolled in. After a while, he began to hear ANOTHER sound, the sound of creaking, and a hard working diesel motor.

Around the bend leading to the station, came a very strange party. There was Arry, battered, broken, and bruised, towing in what looked to be a rusty steam engine. His motor coughed, spluttered, and finally gave out, the two drifting into the station, just barely reaching the platform.

Intrigued, Diesel 10 rolled over, switching tracks to speak to the Iron Twin.

"What, what in the world-"

"No, time, and no, fuel. Steamworks. She's, she's..."

“Say no more.”

With a clunk, Diesel Ten dragged the two forwards with Pinchy, Arry wincing as he felt the second claw of the night clamp around his damaged frame, before Ten let them roll as he passed over the points, coupling up himself. He then continued the journey for Arry, delivering BOTH to the Steamworks, to the shock of the night staff. Both diesels hadn’t been there since, well, a takeover. They didn’t say anything, but Arry had finally ran out of Adrenaline, and at last, shut his eyes to rest.

The next morning dawned, the warm sunlight shining on Arry’s damaged body, his tired eyes opening to see that, instead of the Steamworks, he had been carted over to the Dieselworks.

Bert.

His brother.
He looked at his brother with a stare of relief.

“Oh thank god, Arry, Arry can you hear me.”

“..yeah, yeah. I’m, alive.”

“Thank, every builder. Ten, found you, and.”

“What about, 2876.”

“The, steamer. Yeah they’re, stable. Last I heard from, Paxton.”

Arry just, let out a breath of relief. For a steam engine. It was a new sensation of relief he had never felt. Maybe this was, peace.

“...Bert, I’m, I’m sorry, for, all this time I’ve been, isolating you. Pushing you aside just for the fact you, saw what was really, happening in the world. I, I get it now. I get what you feel. I get what you

know. Don't know if you can forgive me for, all of it over these years but-"

Arry got cut off by Bert midway through his rant.

"Water off a duck's back Arry. We're still brothers. Ain't no changing that, no matter what 'appens. Now, I gotta get rolling brother, I've got both of our work to do at 'ome."

The twins smiled, letting out a laugh each, as Bert rolled off towards Killdane, leaving Arry to shut his eyes, and just, relax.

A good month later, Arry came back to life, and was sent back to work at the Smelters once more. Now, his attitude towards the Steam engines, while still slightly menacing, was much more positive. No more threats of scrap, no more anger between each, and a sense of understanding, and peace guiding to those machines at their end.

And one day, he was thrilled to hear that the engine he saved, in fact, was stable, and being restored to operation. A perfect component on the Little Western for heavier freight she was stated to be, and during her steam tests, Arry was bringing some newly forged and salvaged pieces.
She was ecstatic to see him for certain.

"Arry! Look, look! I'm, hah, I'm BREATHING again! I, thank you Arry."

"Heh, well no trouble. Don't hear THAT often but, think this really is a new leaf for this ol' Reaper. See ya round kid."

Marshalling his trucks into place, he let out a blast of his horn, rolling backwards to set off.
As he did, he heard the sharp chime of a whistle, unfamiliar. Registering it being sourced from something in front of him, he looked back, and stared in amazement.

She was BEAMING, a shining new Great Western whistle on her boiler, steam draining from it, as it was freshly used.

"See you 'round, friend. And, please, call me Mary. Short for, heh, Mary on a Cross. My NEW name, decided by my, owners."

Arry just smiled, rolling off back to work once more. This change, really was something for the better in his mind.
The Grim Messengers went back to work as usual after that, often taunting the steam engines with their own sorts of gags, but never again did one get taunted over scrap, just as said before. Bert knew for his own reasons, and Arry knew for his own soul's safety, it wasn't a modern idea anymore. The parts from the engines that had moved on often now were donated to help keep other siblings and relatives running all over England. The Steam

Engines were shocked and confused at the sudden shift in attitude, being so friendly and docile at times, especially with Mary when she visited, but found it quite a welcome change from their behaviors previously.

I can’t help but agree, don’t you?