

THE TRAIN TO VERONE

Written by

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EXT. THE TRAIN TO WEST VERONE - NIGHT

The train moves along the tracks, steam rising up into the air. The steam twists and spins, battling a light wind.

Behind the tracks is a landscape of forest and trees, the autumn colors briefly glittering in stained moonlight.

INT. THE TRAIN TO WEST VERONE - SAME TIME

NAOMI - 17 year olds, she is in the process of running away from her parents. Mad at them for moving her to another city, she decided to leave and return home.

Naomi stares through the fogged over glass, her hand leaving a small print against it. Her breath forms clouds.

She watches as the trees go by, her eyes pacing back and fourth to follow them.

The whistle blows.

She lets her head touch the glass. She shuts her eyes.

She is seated in one of the small rooms, the seats padded and long, like a booth. There is a small door, with a small window that cannot actually be seen through.

A tapping comes against the window.

OUTSIDE OF NAOMI'S BOOTH

THE BOY - A small boy, about 6 or 5. Orange hair, is standing outside of the booth. He is tapping on the glass.

He looks behind himself, his eyes narrowing a little, before he taps on the glass harder.

INSIDE NAMOI'S BOOTH

Namoi lifts her head up from the side of the window, blinking a couple of times and wiping at her eyes. She waits for the tapping to repeat again, then she stands and goes to the door.

She opens it, peering through. She stars straight forwards, she does not look down and notice The boy.

THE BOY

Excuse me.

She begins to close the door, and stops. She looks down. The boy stands with his hands held behind his back, rocking on his heels.

NAOMI
(Confused)
Oh... hi.

THE BOY
Hi.

NAOMI
I didn't see you.

The boy pushes past her. He enters the booth.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
Oh, uh, this is...

He sits down across from where she was sitting perviously, next to the window. He looks through it, watching the trees.

THE BOY
I like trees. Don't they look like
spiky things? Do you think in the
ice age all their leaves were spiky
and frozen in place?

Naomi lets the booth door say just slightly open. She goes and sits across from the boy. She sets her hands in her lap.

NAOMI
I think the leaves would have
fallen off.

THE BOY
Really?

NAOMI
(A little pitchy, trying
to be inviting)
Mhm, I mean, that's what their
doing now, right?

Naomi touches the window as she points at the fall colored leaves. It is hard to see in the dark, but still visible. The moon is bright.

The boy put's his hands up on the glass, nearly pressing his face against the cool surface. As he breaths, fog forms, then vanishes. It temporarily hides the exterior world.

THE BOY

Is that why they are all red? I
always thought they turned red
because the trees were sad.

NAOMI

No, it's...

THE BOY

(Speaking quickly,
stumbled words)

And Billy, he told me... oh Billy
is my friend, uh, but he said it
happens because the trees can't
afford to have green leaves. Is
that true?

NAOMI

No. They are getting ready for the
winter.

She pauses.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Where are your parents?

THE BOY

Looking for me.

NAOMI

(A little alarmed)

They are?

THE BOY

But don't worry. We're playing hide
and seek. Well, they don't know we
are. But you better not tell them.

He holds up his finger, shaking it. Naomi appears surprised.

NAOMI

I... how can you be playing hide
and seek if they don't know you're
playing hide and seek?

THE BOY

I don't know. But I like it here.

NAOMI

(Disjunctive)

But, well, I'm a stranger. And your
parents, aren't they worried?

(MORE)

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Haven't they ever told you that you shouldn't really talk to strangers?

THE BOY

Yeah. But they said women are fine.

Naomi's eyes widen.

NAOMI

(Doesn't know what to say.
Surprised)

Uhh.

THE BOY

Plus, I like you. So I'm gonna stay here.

The boy crosses his arms. He lets his lower lip drop, so it appears he is pouting.

NAOMI

But...

Naomi leans over, trying to look through the crack in the booth door.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

But what if they get worried?

THE BOY

They won't.

NAOMI

But they probably are. I mean, well-
why are you hiding from them
anyway?

THE BOY

I'm mad.

NAOMI

You're mad?

THE BOY

Yeah. I'm mad. I want them to
worry. They are so mean to me.

NAOMI

(A little concerned and
confused)

What do they do?

THE BOY

Well, they made me go on this trip.
I don't want to go on this trip. I
wanna be at home. But we aren't
gonna go home again.

NAOMI

So you are hiding?

THE BOY

Yeah. I'm gonna go back home. I'm
gonna go with you.

NAOMI

But I'm going where this train is
going.

THE BOY

Well you'll take me back home.

NAOMI

No I won't.

THE BOY

(Insistent)

Yup.

NAOMI

No.

THE BOY

(Insistent)

Yeah, cause you have to. You have
to take me home. I'm asking.

Naomi laughs.

NAOMI

I think your parents have a good
reason for taking you on a trip.
Moving?

THE BOY

I don't wanna move.

NAOMI

Well...

Naomi stops. She looks out the window, she bits at the corner
of her lip.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(Sombre)

I used to live in Verone.

THE BOY
I don't wanna live there.

NAOMI
(Sombre)
You don't?

THE BOY
It's stupid.

NAOMI
(Thoughtful)
No. No it's not. It's, it's
beautiful. It's by the beach. It's
sunny almost every day.

THE BOY
I don't like the sun. I like my
home.

NAOMI
(Realizing something)
I'm sure you do.

THE BOY
Yeah. So I ran away from them. And
you're gonna take me back.

NAOMI
No. I'm not. Look, I moved too. A
month ago.

THE BOY
I don't care.

Naomi looks out the window, pulling her knees up to her
chest, so her feet rest on the chair.

NAOMI
I didn't want to leave Verone. But
my parents, they did things for a
reason. For my sake. My dad got a
job, more money. Better education.
Parents look out for you.

THE BOY
(Angry)
No they don't!

NAOMI
Yes they do. Trust me. And it would
hurt them so much, if they couldn't
find you. Think about that?

THE BOY

(Angry)

They don't like me, they won't
care.

He also looks out the window.

Naomi takes a deep breath.

NAOMI

They do care. And I don't think you
should hurt them by running off. I
think you should go back and tell
everything you told me.

THE BOY

(Not happy)

Why?

NAOMI

So they'll understand. And they'll
make you feel better. Come on.

She holds out her hand. The boy looks at it skeptically.

THE BOY

If you don't live in Verone
anymore, why are you going back?

NAOMI

For the same reason you came here.
But I'll go home, if you go back to
your parents. I promise you'll love
Verone. You just have to give it a
chance.

THE BOY

So you live in Reeds then?

NAOMI

Yeah.

THE BOY

(Disbelief)

And you liked Verone so much you
wanted to leave Reeds for it?

NAOMI

Mhm.

THE BOY

(Surprised)

Wow.

NAOMI

It's really nice there. You just
have to look. I'll walk you to your
seats?

The boy stares at her. He takes a deep and long breath.

THE BOY

Are you gonna go back to Reeds?

NAOMI

If you go back to your parents.

THE BOY

When you go back, will you go feed
my fish? He's in the pond, at, uhh,
the park with the big tree.

Naomi smiles.

NAOMI

I'll feed your fish.

THE BOY

Okay then.

The boy takes her hand. They stand up, departing the booth
together.

THE END