

**THE TRESTLE**

by  
Patricia Lamkin

Cast of Characters

HE

Laid back guy who works at a train museum. The kind of guy who used to tease his sister, and this has carried into his later teen years. But otherwise a nice guy. Seems like a slacker, but he's really more of a thinker and romantic. Loves trains.

SHE

Uptight popular girl who gets good grades. Not taken seriously by guys because of her looks, so she often questions herself. Smart, but gullible, too. She's a bit neurotic, and never does any thing "wild" just for the heck of it.

(The middle of a long trestle bridge across a scenic river somewhere in the mid west. Sound of crickets. Night.)

HE

I love trains. It's in my blood. My great grandfather, "Paw-Paw," was an Engineer for the Illinois Central. Showed me how to flatten quarters on the track when I was a kid. He used to bring me out to this very spot.

SHE

Cool.

HE

He'd say, "By the time you hear that train whistle, there's no escape!"

SHE

He was kidding, right?

HE

Afraid not.

SHE

What do you think I am, stupid? Yes there is. Isn't there? Of course there is.

HE

No time. Didn't you hear about those two teens in Alaska last month? Got killed. By a train. On a trestle just like this one.

SHE

Yeah, I heard, and you're not scaring me. Come on. There's plenty of time. It only took seven minutes for us to get to the middle of this bridge.

HE

Wait, you timed it?

SHE

Yeah. So? I looked at my cell phone.

HE

Not scared, eh?

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SHE  
 No. Just practical. This trestle is about a half mile long. I figure we could cover half of it running full speed in just a few minutes.

HE  
 (Smiling.)  
 And out run a train? You must be Supergirl.

SHE  
 (Trying to impress him.)  
 I'm a sprinter on the track team.

HE  
 I see. What about me?

SHE  
 You're in pretty good shape. For a slacker.

HE  
 Gee, thanks.

SHE  
 I mean...Believe me, you're far more interesting than the jocks I've dated - all they do is talk sports, or go on about their football injuries.

HE  
 Fantasy football is so much safer.  
 (She laughs.)  
 Anyway, this is kind of a sport - the trick is to enjoy it, without panic.

SHE  
 My biology teacher says panic makes the body produce adrenaline, and adrenaline preps you for survival and sure footing. So panic could be an advantage in this situation.

HE  
 Do you always think this much? I mean...thinking is good! I like thinkers. I'm a thinker, myself. Except for right now.

(She laughs.)

SHE

Seriously, there's the adrenaline thing. And sorry, but your Paw-Paw had to be kidding, because a train whistle can carry for miles!

HE

Assuming it whistles at all. Every train whistle has a meaning, and the drivers only blow them when they need to signal. If they don't see us...

SHE

Okay. Come on. What's the train schedule say?

HE

What train schedule?

SHE

The one you said you were bringing with you.

HE

I never said that.

SHE

Yes you did! Of course you did. Didn't you? You said you come out here all the time.

HE

Yeah, and I take my chances.

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