

**Claire is not afraid of the ghost train ... at first.**

‘The ghost train is for children!’ said Claire.

‘People look afraid when they leave,’ said Peter. He tried to pull her to The World’s Best Ghost Train. ‘It’s fun!’

‘They know it’s not real, so why are they afraid? I’m going home.’

‘OK,’ Peter said. He bought a ticket for himself.

But there was one thing left to do at the fair – buy a candyfloss. It was very difficult to finish a candyfloss. They were too big and too sweet. It’s possible, she thought, as she paid for the big pink sugar cloud. And tonight I’m going to eat a whole one. For that, she needed time. I’ll walk home by the train tracks, she decided.

It wasn’t very dark yet. Of course, Claire knew not to walk on train tracks – it was dangerous. Last year some boys in the city died playing on the tracks. But there was nothing dangerous here because there were no trains in Fellside. There wasn’t even a train station. The tracks just finished.

It was a mystery, but an old one and nobody thought about it now. They were just there, and that was it. Claire thought about another mystery. Where does candyfloss go when you eat it? It disappeared in her mouth so fast. There was a lot left. She needed to walk slower.

The tracks vibrated as she walked. She could feel it and then she could hear it too. It was getting stronger and louder. She looked back. A round light, small but getting bigger, was coming. It wasn’t possible!

A train.

Claire fell to the right, off the track. The train passed her, empty, and then slowed and stopped.

Where is it going? she thought. The tracks end soon.

A man put his head out of the window and shouted. ‘What are you doing? It’s dangerous on the tracks!’

‘But ... there aren’t any trains!’ Claire said. Maybe there were no trains before, but there was a train now. It’s not real, she told herself.

‘This isn’t real,’ she said. But the heat coming from the train felt real.

‘You can’t walk on the tracks,’ the driver said. ‘You have to come on the train.’

‘No!’

‘Are you afraid?’ he asked. ‘It isn’t real, remember? So what are you afraid of?’ They were her own words to Peter.

She didn't want to, but she climbed the stairs of the train, candyfloss in hand.

'Sit,' he said, and the train slowly started moving again.

'Where are we going?' Claire asked.

'End of the line,' he said.

'Oh!' That wasn't far because the tracks ended near here.

She didn't want the candyfloss. It takes forever to eat it all, she thought. It's not possible.

'How long until we get there?' Claire shouted, because it was noisy inside the train too.

'The time it takes to eat all the candyfloss,' the driver of the real ghost train said. He turned his face. But now there was no face. There was nothing under his cap at all. 'Forever.'

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