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Train #2

Austin Worth

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The munchkins gathered around Scarecrow and sat down to wait.

"What if a wicked witch comes by?"

"Grab a bucket of water—just in case."

"What is that? What is that?" someone asked as he pointed.

"I think it's a horse," said a voice disjointed.

As they watched, the object moved closer and grew large and fat.

"It's not slowing down!" yelled a voice from the back.

With a sudden rush of wind and dirt and noise, the object roared by without any pause.

Three Munchkins threw water and ran from the slaughter.

"Whatever it was," said one shaking with fear. "It just finished eating. I saw people inside as it grew near."

"It didn't eat them," said Scarecrow. "That was a wagon of some sort. It must have been powered by an invisible horse."

"I've think I've seen enough," said one worker to another. "I want to go home; this has been such a great bother."

Everyone agreed and they packed up their stuff; they began the walk back because they all had enough.

On their return, they saw more horseless wagons zoom by, coming and going without hello or goodbye.

When they finally reached Oz, the road was full of wagons, honking and rattling, and coughing smoke like sick dragons. One curious little wagon, of the oddest color and shape, had the mayor of Munchkin Land, with his big shiny face.

A hotel was built where the mayor's house once stood. Where the park once was, were buildings not woods. There were Munchkin stores and Ozstaurants. Munchkin shops

sold Munchkin dolls and painted Oztrays. Little wagons sped by, wheezing noise and smoke. The drivers leaned out and yelled, "Get off the road!"

The Emerald City had changed even more than imagined. Surrounding the outskirts were thousands of wagons. They were all parked in rows like poppies of metal; they leaked fluids and goo and smelled something terrible. At the entrance to the city, you needed tickets to get in, so the workers stood in line, their patience wearing thin. Eventually, they learned, after an hour and a half, they needed to use the service entrance, way in the back.

Scarecrow and the workers walked through the back alleys, stepped over piles of trash and plastic bags of laundry.

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