Last Stop: This Town

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by WirelessW

Summary

Hinako catches a train from a station that wasn't there yesterday, and meets two men who have never set foot in Japan.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The sudden appearance of a train station where none had existed before in Ebisugaoka was not, on the whole, the strangest thing Shimizu Hinako had seen lately. When she saw there was a train approaching, she waited close to the exit to see what would happen. If it was full of monsters, if the train itself were somehow a monster determined to eat her, she could at least run back to the town itself.

When the train arrived, there were in fact no monsters inside it. As it turned out, the coach nearest her was almost empty. Two white men sat within, close enough to talk but not so close that they seemed to have gotten on together. She stepped in and looked for a seat far enough away to make a break for it if she needed to. She hadn't gotten a good look at who was in any of the other coaches, but she'd take her chances if need be.

She was surprised by how the two men were dressed. She had thought that the only white men in Japan were soldiers, and high-level American government types who had private meetings with members of the Diet about heaven-knows-what. These two were casually dressed in jeans and plain jackets. The man with dark hair had on a dark jacket over his white t-shirt, and the blonde man wore a drab green coat over a grey polo shirt. Neither man was expensively-dressed, and both seemed tired.

The dark-haired man waved to her idly as she stepped into the train and she waved back, feeling awfully daring for greeting an adult without bowing. The two men watched her for a long moment and then returned to their own thoughts, whatever those were.

When she sat and glanced out the window, she was startled to see scenery that looked nothing like the mountains surrounding her home. A lake surrounded by pine trees was visible off in the distance; belatedly she realised that for all they were up in the open air this train looked more like the subway cars she had seen in movies than anything else. There was graffiti on the back of the seat next to her. It said something in rōmaji that she couldn't make out.

The subway cars in movies never had graffiti.

"Where am I?", she asked. She felt that she had been asking that question a lot recently.

"Good ol' Silent Hill" said the man with dark hair, "A charming little resort town, allegedly. Why, where are you expecting to be?"

"Ebisugaoka."

"Never heard of it", he said with a blank expression.

"I'm not surprised, not much happens there. I must say, your Japanese is excellent."

"I was about to say the same for your English", replied the man with blonde hair. He sounded a little surprised, but not shocked.

"What?"

The blonde man sighed, "Fucking Silent Hill. It does things like this sometimes, you know."

The dark-haired man leaned over to cuff the back of his head, and told him “Don’t swear in front of the kid!”

“Sorry. Uh, forget I said that.”

Hinako couldn’t contain a brief giggle. With the unending nightmare of the past day (or however long it had been; she was starting to lose track) this new impossible thing was honestly more funny than anything else. Perhaps she should have been more wary of two strange men, especially two foreign men, but simply from looking at them she could tell they were having just as bad a day as she was.

When she got herself back under control, she asked “You mean I have been transported to the other side of the world?”

“Yup. Probably through time too, that happened to one of us and we’re not sure which.”

“How do you mean?”

“Last I checked it was 1973”, said the man with dark hair, “But James here swears it’s 1986.”

“1962”, replied Hinako, “I’ve come to the future.”

“Aw man, Kennedy hadn’t even been shot yet” muttered the dark-haired man. Hinako did not know if she had been meant to hear it. She wondered who this Kennedy was, and what he had done to make someone want to shoot him.

James seemed to realise something and asked “Hey Harry, where were you?”

“What?”

“Isn’t that the famous thing about it? Everyone remembers where when they found out about JFK?”

“I was in school, genius, where else would I be?”

James chuckled softly to himself and murmured, “No homework today, class, we have bigger problems to worry about.”

“It could be all three of us”, realised Hinako.

“What do you mean?”

“All three of us could have travelled in time. Perhaps it’s the year 2000, and men live on the moon.”

“What’d they even do up there?”

“The same things they do everywhere”, she replied in a sudden fit of bravery, “Complain about their jobs and get in arguments about things that don’t really matter.”

The two men sighed. “Yeah”, said Harry, “That sounds about right. I guess it’s the same all over, huh?”

The train started to slow, and she looked out the window again to see if anything was more familiar. No luck; just thick white fog and a few strange-looking buildings that seemed to have seen better days. James stood and nodded first to Harry and then to her. “This looks like my stop”, he said, “Be seeing you.”

“How long am I going to be on this train?” she asked.

“I think my stop’s next”, replied Harry, “You shouldn’t have too long to wait after that.”

They settled in for the rest of the journey. It ended up taking longer than she expected.

End Notes

Thank you for reading Last Stop: This Town, a story I wrote before even being done with Silent Hill ∫ because sometimes the muse descends upon you.

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