

The Great Train (Robbery) Mess Up



Detective Inspector Orth of the New York police department was stumped. There had been a robbery and the thief had escaped with over a million dollars worth of old, used banknotes.

The notes were on the way to a furnace where they were to be burnt because they were too worn to be kept in circulation. But the thief believed they should be kept in circulation a little while longer; at least until he got to use them.

The Detective Inspector had interviewed railway staff present at the scene and confided to his workmate and friend, Damien Garlick, that he thought the robbery had gone too smoothly. He thought that it must have been an inside job.

He had spoken to the ticket inspector and the driver of the electric train. Both claimed that they did not even know that a robbery had occurred until the guard crawled to the front carriage with blood trickling from a blow to the side of his face.

'There's something about the guard's story that doesn't seem right,' said Detective Inspector Orth. 'I think I'd better talk to him again.'

'It's just like I told you before,' said the guard, a shifty character by the name

of Nicholas Todd. 'It all happened so quick. The whole thing was over before I knew it even started.

'There I was, minding my own business and the old banknotes, when some character grabs me from behind. Real strong he was too. Next thing I feel somethink like the train hit me and I see stars and little birds flyin' around.

'He works quick. I gets up an' sees him on the back of my van. But I didn't see nothin' of his face because of the smoke from the engine that's still floatin' around.

'You see, we'd just come out of a tunnel. Next thing he jumps—gone! And he's away with a cool million or so. Not bad for a few minutes work eh?'

'Very good, indeed,' said Detective Garlick nodding his head.

He and the Detective Inspector left the interview room.

'Got him,' said Detective Inspector Orth. 'He's part of this heist. A pity that he went to so much trouble to make up such a complicated story. It's what's going to put him in jail.' 🕵️

You, the comprehension detective, must find out what made Detective Inspector Orth so certain that Todd's story was untrue.

1. Write the dictionary meaning of the word 'heist'.

Thinking skills through comprehension

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2. Write short answers to the questions below.

- (a) What had been stolen? _____
- (b) To where were the notes being taken? _____
- (c) Why were they being taken there? _____
- (d) What is meant by an 'inside job'? _____
- (e) What sort of train was it? _____
- (f) When did the ticket inspector and driver first become aware of the robbery? _____
- (g) Where did Todd say that he caught a glimpse of the thief? _____
- (h) Why did he say he was unable to see the thief's face? _____
- (i) Why did he claim that the smoke was 'still floatin' around'? _____
- (j) List the main characters in this story. _____
- _____

3. Can you find the names of these famous trains in the puzzle?

- Canadian Pacific
 Stephenson's Rocket
 Indian Pacific
 Spirit of Progress
 Southern Aurora
 Shinkansen
 Flying Scotsman

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4. Now that you have gathered lots of information about the crime, you, like the Detective Inspector, should know why Todd's story is untrue.



bickering

joking

sofa 

feud

rivalry

half-sister



step father

show off

nagging

revelation



secret

suspicion

millionaires

luxury cruise

shock

hidden past

