

Episode 2 – The Journey Begins**Scene 3**

Morning of the first day. Place: The Rock of Truth.

EORIK.

The morning of my first birthday passed slowly. Queen Ravenna stayed in the Power Chamber for a very long time. My sister Kaytaiya and I waited below. Every now and again our eyes would go over to my birthday cake, which was my favorite Zintauran lemon with a strawberry frosting swirled on top. We had to force ourselves to look away.

Kaytaiya was restless. She started juggling fishballs, but she had no talent for it and one by one they fell splat on the floor. I took scissors and cut one of the placemats into a strip with a repeating jagged pattern, and joined itself in a circle, so it became a crown and then placed it over my butt, turned around and pointed it at Kaytaiya, and said, “Hey Kaytaiya! Look! King Cete!”

KAYTAIYA.

Ummm, no! That is too flattering. *[Laughs.]*

EORIK.

[Laughs with Kaytaiya.] We both looked at that cake again. We looked away again. “Kaytaiya, have cats and dogs always been able to talk?”

KAYTAIYA.

No, not at the beginning.

EORIK.

“Well, how did we learn?”

KAYTAIYA. Observation. Imitation.

EORIK.

“Well it’s a good thing we did. Or I might not have a Zintauran lemon cake! Can you imagine living in a world where cats and dogs couldn’t talk to their people?”

KAYTAIYA.

I’d imagine there would be a lot of misunderstanding! What should we do about that cake?

EORIK.

“Hmm... I think that cake has been observing us. Now it’s imitating us! Why, it’s learned how to talk. I hear it saying, ‘eat me!’”

We sat down around the cake. Kaytaiya lit the one candle that stood in the middle. I took in a breath.

KAYTAIYA. Make a wish!

EOROK. "I wish for... an adventure!" [*Sound of blowing out candle.*]

{Door opens above. }

RAVENNA.

Happy birthday Eorik. You are going to get your wish.

KAYTAIYA.

My lady!

EORIK.

"Queen Ravenna!"

RAVENNA. {Steps descending as she speaks.}

Children, this news: Cete has immobilized our brave planes. Their engines have fallen silent. He intends to attack us in one week's time at the end of his military parade.

KAYTAIYA.

What are we to do?

RAVENNA.

Well, what he'd like us to do is to fall into immobilizing fear and despair. But we will not do that. I have brought back a plan.

KAYTAIYA and EORIK.

Tell us!

RAVENNA.

Kaytaiya, you remember the Little Plane?

KAYTAIYA.

Of course.

RAVENNA.

King Visalius made that Little Plane with the same controls as he made our brave planes here. The Little Plane must be brought here to Zintaurus. When we have it, we will be able to start their engines again.

KAYTAIYA.

What became of the Little Plane after the accident?

RAVENNA.

It took itself to the old gardener's shed on the north grounds of the palace, and there it has been all this time. I will send you there.

EORIK.

"An adventure!"

KAYTAIYA.

But the palace grounds are guarded. And although I was just a puppy, I'm sure Cete would still recognize me. Me, the one who witnessed his treachery. It would be the end of me if I were captured.

RAVENNA.

Yes that is true. And that is why in this plan, you will be disguised.

KAYTAIYA.

What kind of dog will I be then?

RAVENNA.

You will need to be able to climb a tree outside the palace fence. You will need sharp claws! You will have to be able to balance yourself delicately and go from branch to branch high above the palace grounds, and you will need to be able to drop down from the branches onto the roof and land safely and lightly on your feet.

KAYTAIYA. [*Puzzled.*]

What kind of dog can do all that?

EORIK.

While Ravenna was speaking, I imagined myself doing all of those things! I did them in pantomime. Up a tree! Across the branches. Down onto the roof! I was just getting ready to leap up into the branches again when Ravenna called Kaytaiya's attention to my antics by pointing at me.

RAVENNA.

I mean... really disguised.

KAYTAIYA. Oh no. No!

RAVENNA.

Yes, my child, you must be a cat.

KAYTAIYA.

But a cat has no strength! We are going to need a dog, not another cat! Queen Ravenna, when I saw Cete throw King Visalius off the cliffs and into the sea, I was a little puppy. I had no strength to stop him. I lost king and master because I was not strong enough. And now you want to send me back as a cat?

RAVENNA.

Dearest, I know your grief. I lost king and husband. And son. But this plan can only succeed if you are a cat. The Rock of Truth has confirmed this. You know the Little Plane, you must get to it, and you must bring it here. Eorik, you will help your sister. I will send you both.

KAYTAIYA.

And you will bring us back?

RAVENNA.

No, that I cannot do, Kaytaiya. When I was a girl, I had natural tendencies. I sensed the truth of things; now, I am the Truth Upholder. I could sense the future; and, the Power Chamber has amplified that so that I can see into the future, not always perfectly, but still powerfully. Why, I saw King Visalius falling in love with me!

KAYTAIYA.

Where is this leading?

RAVENNA.

When I was a girl, I could start the most amazing things going. People would get caught up in them. Excitement! But once the pieces were all in a whirl, I myself would lose interest and go on to something else. So the Power Chamber amplified that part of me. I can start things quite magically. But I can't finish them. The pieces have to sort themselves out on their own. I'll be able to help a little. But I can't bring you back. You must return by train.

EORIK. "Wow, a train ride!!"

KAYTAIYA. But Cete controls all of the trains.

RAVENNA.

Not all. There is one locomotive that is not under his control. It will carry you here, if you can persuade it to.

KAYTAIYA.

Persuade a train?

RAVENNA.

You will see. That will be your first task. That train has a name. It is Joe. Give him this necklace. Now make ready to go.

RAVENNA.

Children go
I cannot on my own
Children go
I would only weigh you down
Though still of tender years
You are strong and you are clever
Our world could end in tears
It is now or it is never
Children go

Children go
I will send you on the wind
Children go
May you safe return again
Now's the hour for action
Not a minute can you linger
In the time it takes to question

The world slips through our fingers
Children go

Seek that plane
Go and bring it back
We will strain to hear your whistle
Blowing down the track

Children go
Across the rivers deep
Children go
Over mountains fast asleep
I will give what help I'm able
When you set the wheels in motion
But you must live the fable
From the ocean to the ocean
Children go

KAYTAIYA.
Don't you think we need a dog?

RAVENNA.
Children go

KAYTAIYA.
I still think we need a dog

RAVENNA.
Children go

RAVENNA.
Kaytaiya, I will send you a dog. You must never tell that dog that you are not really a cat. Tell no one. Swear it.

KAYTAIYA.
I swear.

EORIK.
With that, Ravenna raised her arms, spun them slowly forward, and I felt myself spinning too, slowly at first, then faster. Faster! I straightened out of my spin. I was flying!!

End of Scene 3

Scene 4

Afternoon of the first day. Place: A meadow on the other side of the country.

EORIK.

Kaytaiya and I sped magically across the country, sent by Queen Ravenna to bring back the Little Plane to Zintaurus, jumpstart our Big Planes' engines, and thwart the evil King Cete. We landed in a meadow, a good ways from the locomotive named Joe. I was ecstatic from the trip. But Kaytaiya was something else.

"Wow, what a trip! When she says 'send you', she means 'send you'!"

I looked for Kaytaiya but did not see her.

"Kaytaiya? Kaytaiya?"

KAYTAIYA. Meoww!

EORIK.

"Oh! Kaytaiya!"

Sure enough, it was Kaytaiya, but she had changed. She was now a cat.

KAYTAIYA.

My ears!

EORIK.

No more irritating flop!

KAYTAIYA.

My tail!!

EORIK.

That's a tail that's hard to top!

KAYTAIYA.

My paws!!!

EORIK.

Pause and just consider the utility

When you and me

Have to climb that tree

KAYTAIYA.

Cat body?

EORIK.

By necessity.

Cat mind?

KAYTAIYA.

I don't know about the rest of me!
Will I need a catnap
Will I wind up wanting catnip
My canine mind consigned to **felinicity**?

EOREK.

Felinicity?

KAYTAIYA.

All my life
I've been me
This is very
Strange to see
Will I be left behind in felinicity?

All my life
I've been me
This is very
Strange to see
Will I be left behind in felinicity?

My head is in a fog

EORIK.

It shouldn't happen to a dog!

KAYTAIYA.

Will I be left behind in felinicity?
Meoww! My bark is gone!

EORIK.

I think you're catching on!

KAYTAIYA.

Will I be left behind in felinicity?
Will I be left behind in felinicity?

KAYTAIYA.

Well, come on. We've got a train to catch!

EORIK.

We started walking towards Joe. He had a flatbed car in tow, and two boxcars behind that. He looked alive, like our Big Planes. But something seemed wrong with him. "That train hasn't moved in a long time. Look at the weeds around it!"

KAYTAIYA. Oh, no! Those aren't just any weeds.

EORIK.

“What do you mean?”

Kaytaiya reached down and picked one of the weeds and held its golden bloom in front of my nose.

KAYTAIYA.

Take a whiff. Only a small one though.

EORIK.

[Small inhale through nose.] [With pleasure.] “Wooooooooooooow.....”

[Pleasure replaced by irritation as sensation fades.] “Ohhhhh....”

[Demandingly.] “Give me more.”

KAYTAIYA.

No.

EORIK.

“Come on. Just one more whiff, that’s all I want.”

KAYTAIYA.

One whiff of this is enough.

EORIK.

[Recovering.] “Whew. What is that stuff anyway? One minute I felt incredibly great, then that great feeling left me, and I felt terrible, and then I wanted a whiff again.”

KAYTAIYA.

It is False Bliss Blossom.

EORIK.

False Bliss Blossom?

KAYTAIYA.

You feel bliss. At first. But it does not last. It is false. All that is real about it is the need for more.

EORIK.

Oh. You seem to know a lot about it.

KAYTAIYA.

There was a time I needed something to make myself feel better. I was going through a terrible period of missing King Visalius, and being angry at myself for not having been strong enough to save him. I was in pain, and I fell under its spell. I don’t think I would have gotten out from under, but Ravenna caught me.

EORIK.

So, what did she do?

KAYTAIYA.

She told me I had to stop focusing on the past and find something in the present I could put all my attention on. Something that might help me feel connected to the real world again, even if it was frustrating, draining, and could drive me crazy at times.

EORIK.

“So, what did you do?”

KAYTAIYA.

Well, that’s when we got you!

EORIK.

“Glad I could help!”

KAYTAIYA.

Enough now. Train time. {Footsteps} [*Shouts.*] Hello! [*No answer. Tries again.*] Hello in there! We’re looking for a locomotive!

JOE.

Well, you seem to have a knack for it, little miss. Except this one doesn’t want to be looked for. Go look for another one, and good luck to you.

KAYTAIYA.

We are looking for a **particular** locomotive.

JOE. Well, I am particular. About my friends. [*Short pause, then delivers punch line.*] That’s why I haven’t got any.

KAYTAIYA.

We are looking for a **certain** locomotive.

JOE.

Well, I’m certain of one thing. Our good King Visalius didn’t do this country any favors by jumping off a cliff. And I’m certain of another thing. Our good King Cete is as wicked as the day is long.

KAYTAIYA.

We are looking for a **specific** locomotive. One named Joe. I think that’s you.

JOE.

What do you want with me?

KAYTAIYA.

We want you to take us across the country to Zintaurus.

JOE.

Well, the days for that are long gone, aren’t they?

KAYTAIYA.

We need your help.

JOE.

Look at me. I can't help anybody. I can't even help myself. One minute I'm a hard-working self-respecting train doing important work for King Visalius. The next minute he has taken his life and I'm doing things for his brother Cete that you don't even want to know about. I resisted. They put me on this siding. The false bliss blossom eased my pain, at first. Now it does nothing but keep me shackled to it. I don't care anymore. It all goes back to King Visalius. How could he jump off a cliff and leave the country to Cete? Even if he did suffer a terrible loss, how could he?!

KAYTAIYA.

Joe, King Visalius did not jump off that cliff. That is just a story put out by Cete. He did not jump. He was pushed. By his brother that now wears his crown.

JOE.

How do you know this?

KAYTAIYA.

I heard it from a dog who saw it happen.

JOE.

Do you know that dog well?

KAYTAIYA.

As well as I know my own self.

JOE.

Would that dog lie?

KAYTAIYA.

That dog would no more lie than I would.

JOE.

Who are you? How did you find me here?

KAYTAIYA.

We were sent. By Queen Ravenna.

JOE.

[*Shocked, interested.*] Queen Ravenna! [*Closing off again.*] Ravenna, Ravenna, anyone can say "Ravenna." For all I know, you two are sizing me up, roll me into a scrap yard somewhere and sell me off for sardine money.

KAYTAIYA.

She sends you this necklace as proof of what I say. Joe, she said you would recognize it.

JOE.

[Regards with wonder.] Why, it is the necklace she wore when I pulled the train that brought her from Zintaurus to meet King Viz. No one was ever more beautiful. No wonder he fell in love with her straightaway. He gave me speech you know, to reward me for bringing her. I almost wish I didn't have it now. Because all I can use it for is to say, I've tried to leave here, many times, but I always end up right back again, to dull my pain. I can't take you to Zintaurus. My will is gone. I can't help you.

KAYTAIYA.

You may have failed before Joe, but you have been alone. This time, you'll be with us! We'll help you! Joe, Cete now threatens the last resistance in Zintaurus. We need to bring the Little Plane to Zintaurus in one week's time, or there will be no more Zintaurus.

JOE.

[Wonderment.] The same Little Plane that crashed into the king's son?

KAYTAIYA.

The same, Joe.

JOE.

And Ravenna really asked for me?

KAYTAIYA.

Yes, Joe. She has faith in you. And we'll stay with you. The whole way.

JOE.

A prisoner on this track
Could I make it back
To freedom
These blossoms got me down
Sadly I have found
I need 'em I need 'em

Now you come to me
Looking for a ride
Not just once or twice
I have tried and tried

But if you stay with me
And you have faith in me
Together we could turn the tide
This train would ride

I must not stay the same
Got to end this shame
It's over

Might end in tatters Lord
But nothing matters more
Than sober
Sober

I will heal my brain
Don't care what it takes
I won't mind the pain
'Cause my life's at stake

And if you stay with me
And you have faith in me
Together we could turn the tide
This train will ride

KAYTAIYA and EORIK.
We will stay with you

JOE.
This train will ride

KAYTAIYA and EORIK.
And we'll have faith in you

JOE.
This train will ride

KAYTAIYA and EORIK.
We will stay with you

JOE.
This train

JOE, KAYTAIYA, and EORIK.
This train
This train will ride

JOE. All aboard! All Aboard!

End of Scene 4