

**Episode 3 – A Riddle****Scene 5**

*The second day. Plum Creek siding, near the palace.*

EORIK.

Kaytaiya and I and the train named Joe stopped on a siding by a little gurgling creek, not far from the palace grounds. Plum trees stood on the opposite bank. If Joe was missing his false bliss blossom, you could not tell it by the determination in his effort, and he did not once mention it. We went by foot until we reached the palace grounds. Then, up a tree, over the palace wall, and through the branches above the grounds, towards the old gardener's shed. It was not easy work, but Kaytaiya, as a cat, kept even with me. We dropped down lightly onto the roof, swung through a top window, and found ourselves on high shelving looking down to where the Little Plane stood.

LITTLE PLANE.

[Calling out, child-like voice, not afraid, curious. ] Who's there. Who is it?

KAYTAIYA.

Shh! Friends. Don't be alarmed. We're friends. We're coming down.

{Noise of cats descending shelving.}

[Arrival announced. ] There! Hello. I'm Kaytaiya.

EORIK.

"And I'm Eorik. We're cats, from Zintaurus."

LITTLE PLANE.

Hello Kaytaiya and Eorik. I'm glad to meet you, but I don't understand. Why are you here? Is Zintaurus a long way?

KAYTAIYA.

Yes, a very long way. We were sent. By Queen Ravenna.

LITTLE PLANE.

Oh! Queen Ravenna! She must hate me. Oh Kaytaiya, I didn't mean to hit him. And then after the child died, King Visalius took his own life. I've been in this shed for three years, and it's all I have had to think about, every day.

KAYTAIYA.

Queen Ravenna doesn't hate you, Little Plane. She doesn't blame you. In fact, she needs you. We all need you. We were sent to bring you back with us to Zintaurus. Our lives depend on you, actually. There's no time to explain. Every minute we stay here we are in danger. But I will tell you this. King Visalius did not take his own life. He was thrown off that cliff by his brother Cete. The same villain who now threatens to destroy Zintaurus.

LITTLE PLANE.

King Cete did that? Oh! He used the accident! What a bad man. And the poor queen, to have lost son and husband both. But it's my fault for starting it. [Defending self from own accusation. ] But I didn't mean to! I don't even know how it happened. But it is my fault. Oh, I am so sad!

EORIK.

"It will all be better when we get you out of here Little Plane. This is a sad place. You will be better with us, you'll see."

KAYTAIYA.

That's exactly right. What we need to do is, Eorik and I will go through the trees and back over the wall. You will fly over the south wall and we will meet you on the other side. We have a train to take us the rest of the way.

LITTLE PLANE.

Oh Kaytaiya, I can't!

KAYTAIYA.

You can't come with us?

LITTLE PLANE.

I can't **fly**! I've tried. Something happened to me in the accident. I don't know what part is broken, but I can't fly. I've been here alone, unable to leave. Well, *almost* alone.

LITTLE PLANE.

On a warm summer's day  
I was soaring in play  
My life had only begun  
Hung a full triple roll  
I spun out of control  
And he tumbled, the king's little son

Just a poor little plane  
Without even a name  
My shame and my sorrow extreme  
I've got no family here  
Not a soul who comes near  
But sometimes something comes in a dream

It says  
Me! me! live! be!  
Fly! fly! fly!  
Me! me! live! be!  
Fly! fly! fly!

Me! me! live! be!  
Fly! fly! fly!  
Me! me! live! be!  
Fly! fly! fly!

Take me to the sky  
Oh, take me to the sky  
Take me to the sky  
Oh, take me to the sky

LITTLE PLANE, KAYTAIYA, and EORIK

Take me to the sky  
Oh, take me to the sky  
Take me to the sky  
Oh, take me to the sky

LITTLE PLANE

But oh, me! me! live! be!  
Fly! fly! fly!  
Me! me! live! be!  
Why can't I fly?

KAYTAIYA.

If you can't fly, then the three of us are going to have to make a run for it. Together! Head for the south gate. All speed, Eorik, don't stumble, and don't look back. Put that wing around my shoulder, Little Plane... good. Now put that other one around Eorik's shoulder. Good. Ready? Then....go!

**End of Scene 5**

**Scene 6**

*Directly following Scene 5.*

EORIK.

Kaytaiya and I flung open the door to the old gardener's shed and, supporting the Little Plane like a wounded warrior, we dashed across the palace grounds, through the south gate, and back through the woods to Plum Creek. There, Joe waited for us. Halfway to our goal, our means of escape, we heard barking. We were being pursued! That knowledge propelled us to even greater speed, but despite our impressive velocity, the barking grew even closer. Who would win the footrace?

KAYTAIYA.

*[Out of breath.]* Quick! Up on the train! One, two, three, heave!

{ grunting from the cats, sound of plane being dropped onto flatbed car. }

There! Okay, Joe, let's roll!

*[BOWSER and WOWSER enter barking, panting.]*

BOWSER.

Hold it, cat burglars! Or should I say, cat bunglers. You set off half the alarms at the palace. You'll be coming back with us now. You have some explaining to do to King Cete.

KAYTAIYA.

Oh, Queen Ravenna! Where is that dog you were going to send us?

EORIK.

At that very moment, another dog did show up. He had a face full of red freckles and a swirling coat of red and white fur. He had a sheathed knife on his hip. But what he did not have was a left arm.

FRECKLES.

*[Coolly.]* Hold it! *[Pause.]* Back away from the plane and nobody gets hurt.

WOWSER.

*[Under breath, to Bowser.]* It's only one dog, Bowser.

BOWSER.

*[Under breath, to Wowser.]* And he's only got one arm, Wowser!

FRECKLES.

Back away now and keep your dirty paws where I can see them.

WOWSER.

*[Affronted.]* My paws are not dirty. I lick them every day before I go on duty!

BOWSER.

[*Under breath.* ] He's just trying to get your goat.

WOWSER.

[*Not understanding.* ] My goat? [*Pauses to consider.* ] I don't have a goat!

BOWSER.

[*Getting exasperated.* ] It's just a figure of speech!

WOWSER.

[*Now truly mystified.* ] A figure of speech?

BOWSER.

Forget it, just forget it.

[*To Freckles.* ] What do you want here, stranger?

FRECKLES.

I'll be taking that plane. You can keep the cats.

BOWSER.

It's palace property. It's stolen. Sorry, but we have to take it back with us.

FRECKLES.

I'll be taking that plane. I can sell it for scrap. It's high-grade steel.

And from here, that gold trim looks mighty real.

BOWSER.

Stranger, you're outmanned here. And if you don't mind me saying so, you're also outarmed.

[*Laughs.* ]

WOWSER.

[*Laughing also.* ] That's a good one Bowser!

FRECKLES.

Oh. A funny comment about my arm? Let me tell you something really funny about that arm. See, once I was just like you. Two arms. [*Sizing him up, giving benefit of the doubt.* ] Average amount of courage. Then, one day I was reaching for some food. Suddenly, bam, I was caught in a bear trap! There was nothing else to be done. I took my knife... and I cut... my... arm... off. My own arm. And when that arm left me, all the weakness I ever had just seemed to go with it. Now, I fight like ten dogs. Ten crazed dogs. Just try me. Or back away.

WOWSER.

Oh....I don't think I want to fight somebody who would cut his own arm off, Bowser.

BOWSER.

[*Feels things slipping away.* ] Now just wait a minute. We're not giving up this plane.

FRECKLES.

Your partner's got more sense than you do. Look, here's what I'll do. Let's make it a game. A riddle. I ask you a riddle. If you guess correctly, you get the plane. If you don't, I get the plane.

BOWSER.

What's the riddle?

FRECKLES.

Well, let's see. *[Pauses to look around.]*

All right. "Tween numbers one and five I be, the answer will be plain to see."

BOWSER.

How many guesses do we get?

FRECKLES.

Two.

BOWSER.

All right.

FRECKLES.

You'll abide by the result? Word of honor? Between dogs?

BOWSER.

Yeah, yeah, word of honor.

FRECKLES.

I'll write the answer on the bottom of this stone so there'll be no questions. {Sound of scratching on stone} All right. Guess away.

BOWSER.

Four!

FRECKLES.

No!

BOWSER.

*[Pause.]* Two, as in "Too big for your boots."

WOWSER.

He's not wearing any boots, Bowser.

FRECKLES.

Still no. You lose.

BOWSER.

Prove it! Show us the answer.

FRECKLES.

I guess I'll have to show you. You couldn't even get it if I gave you a third guess!

BOWSER.

Oh? Give us a third guess then.

FRECKLES.

A third guess? I could. You'd have to give up something for that, though. *[Pause.]* I know, throw in the cats. They're not much to look at, but I could probably sell 'em to somebody.

BOWSER.

You're on.

FRECKLES.

Still word of honor?

BOWSER.

Yes.

FRECKLES.

Go ahead then. Take your guess.

BOWSER.

*[With a flourish.]* The answer is...

WOWSER.

Wait. I'm taking this guess. You've been wrong twice.

BOWSER.

No, no!

WOWSER.

I'm taking the guess. The answer is...

BOWSER.

*[More quietly, resigned, but can't bear what's coming.]* No, no, no, no.

WOWSER.

The answer is... three!

BOWSER.

*[Surprised.]* Huh? *[Much relieved.]* Whew! Good job, Wowser!

FRECKLES.

But again, no!

BOWSER.

What? That's impossible! There are no other numbers between one and five! What is the answer then?

EORIK.

I was as curious as those guard dogs were. I knew my numbers. What was this dog up to? I will tell you what. He pointed at Joe's smokestack, and we all saw it painted there. A serial number. One-ninety-five!

FRECKLES.

Each train is numbered, as you know  
So, you can tell which one to go  
Since this one's been alive  
He's known as train one-ninety-five  
Between the 1 and 5 so fine  
Behold the curving number 9  
And that's what's written on this stone!  
Consolation prize: One bone!

EORIK.

That dog reached for his knife, but what he pulled out was not a knife at all. It was a large bone! He tossed it to the dog named Wowser, who caught it neatly in his mouth.

BOWSER.

You tricked us! The deal's off.

FRECKLES.

I said the answer would be plain to see. And the number on that smokestack is plain to see! If the deal's off, then we go back to Plan A. That's the one where I cut off your arms.... and throw them in the woods for the coyotes!

EORIK.

That dog then revealed he was wearing a second knife sheath! He stared those dogs down.

FRECKLES.

I know how to do it, too. I've had practice

WOWSER.

Not Plan A, Bowser.

BOWSER.

All right, stranger. You win. We're done here.

FRECKLES.

Word of honor?

BOWSER.

Word of honor.

FRECKLES.

Then here, a bone for each of you! It's almost lunchtime.

EORIK.

That dog had a second bone in the second knife sheath! He threw it to the dog named Bowser, who caught it with some style but with an unhappy look on his face.

FRECKLES.

And don't talk about this, not to anyone.

WOWSER.

Talking about this is about the last thing we'd ever want to do!

BOWSER.

Not in a month of Sundays!

WOWSER.

A month of Sundays? Is there a month that's all Sundays?

BOWSER.

It's an expression meaning "a long time."

WOWSER.

Oh. But wouldn't that be good, Bowser, Sunday is our day off. We could be on vacation for a whole month!

BOWSER.

Right now, Wowser, that's definitely what we need! Let's get out of here.

*[Exit Bowser and Wowser. ]*

KAYTAIYA.

*[Relieved. ]* They're gone.

EORIK.

"Wow mister, what did it feel like to have to cut off your own arm?"

FRECKLES.

Well, I don't think I could ever tell you that, little cat.

KAYTAIYA.

*[Explaining manners to Eorik. ]* Because it would be too painful for him to talk about, Eorik.

FRECKLES.

Because it never happened! I could tell you what it felt like to say it happened, though. It felt like I was walking out on a very narrow ledge.

EORIK.

"What! You bluffed them?! What if they hadn't believed you?"

FRECKLES.

Well then, we would have had a real fight on our hands. You'd have jumped in to help, wouldn't you?

EORIK.

"You bet I would!"

FRECKLES.

But it worked out, they're gone, and you're still here. That's that. [*Pause.*] Well, you're all free to go. Have a good trip! Me, I'll be moving on.

KAYTAIYA.

[*Not comprehending.*] Free to go?

FRECKLES.

Well of course! I'm not trying to get something out of this. I just don't happen to like bullies.

KAYTAIYA.

[*Trying to make sense of it.*] How was it you happened to come along just now?

FRECKLES.

Well, that's the strange part. Last night I heard a voice in a dream saying, "Go to the siding at Plum Creek, there's someone in need." So here I am. Just got curious, you understand?

KAYTAIYA.

That had to be Queen Ravenna!

FRECKLES.

Who?

KAYTAIYA.

Queen Ravenna. In Zintaurus. The Truth Upholder. She's our person. Could you come with us? We have to get back to Zintaurus and we don't know what kind of trouble we might run into.

FRECKLES

Oh no, now wait a minute! No. All the way to Zintaurus on this train? With you? No. Not even a queen can make me do that.

KAYTAIYA.

She can't make you do anything. She didn't make you come help us, she only said someone would be in need. You helped because you wanted to, out of your own free will. Even at a great risk to yourself! And we greatly appreciate what you did. [*Forceful.*] But we're still in need! Zintaurus is at risk of total destruction. Everyone's life is in great danger! [*Desperate, beside herself.*] We need a dog!!

FRECKLES.

[*Reasonably.*] If you need a dog, why did she send two cats?

KAYTAIYA.

That's a question I myself ask. [*Excited.*] But maybe it's because you're supposed to come with us! Would you do it? You're smart, and I can see that you're brave. I think we're going to need you, somehow. Would you join us?

FRECKLES.

I'm not much of a joiner.

KAYTAIYA.

Look at us. We're not much to join.

FRECKLES.

There's no one else?

KAYTAIYA.

Just us.

FRECKLES.

[*Sucks in air, slowly exhales.*] All right. I'll come with you.

EORIK.

"Hooray!"

KAYTAIYA.

Oh, that's wonderful, thank you, thank you! Now we have to make introductions. What's your name?

FRECKLES.

They call me Freckles.

KAYTAIYA.

Hello Freckles. This is Eorik, and I'm Kaytaiya.

EORIK.

The dog they called Freckles opened his mouth to say her name, but what happened was this: No sound came out at all! I could tell he was trying and that it cost him great effort, but he could not do it. This smooth-talking stranger was at total loss. I could see the surprise on Kaytaiya's face and she stepped in to try to cover him.

KAYTAIYA.

Ha, that's ok, mine is a difficult name to pronounce at first. Eorik, we must help him.

EORIK.

It takes a lot of time to get to know someone  
A person isn't always what they claim  
If you've got a lot of miles to go with someone  
You might as well get started with their name

KAYTAIYA.

Certainly your effort is impressive  
We should give a shout for you

EORIK.

Hooray!

KAYTAIYA.

May I help to make you more expressive  
**Let me spell it out for you**

K-a-y like kayak  
t-a-i like tail  
y-a like I told ya  
And now you cannot fail  
Kay-tai-ya

KAYTAIYA and EORIK.

K-a-y like kayak  
t-a-i like tail  
y-a like I told ya  
And now you cannot fail  
Kay-tai-ya

EORIK.

Your energy is really commendable

KAYTAIYA.

But the final product is expendable

EORIK. [*Spoken in affected accent.* ]

Excuse me, I didn't quite catch your name!

KAYTAIYA.

K-a-y like kayak  
t-a-i like tail  
y-a like I told ya  
And now you cannot fail  
Kay-tai-ya

And now you have my name!

FRECKLES.

[*Tries again, still cannot say her name at all. Gives up.* ] Look, it's no use. It's not just your name. I'm not able to say anybody's name at all!

KAYTAIYA.

You can't say anybody's name? Why not?

FRECKLES.

Because of something that happened when I was a little. That's why. *[Pause.]*  
I don't want to talk about it.

KAYTAIYA.

And you don't have to, Freckles. We're glad to have you just the way you are.

LITTLE PLANE.

Well, we're really a collection! I can't fly, he can't say anyone's name. Who are you, train, and what's your problem?

JOE.

My name's Joe. I used to whiff false bliss blossom. Not anymore!

LITTLE PLANE.

How long have you been whiffless, Joe?

JOE.

Well, I don't think I could tell you that exactly, Little Plane.

LITTLE PLANE.

Because it's been so many years?

JOE.

Because I don't have a watch!

KAYTAIYA.

Joe has been whiffless since yesterday afternoon and he's doing fine. We're very proud of him.

LITTLE PLANE.

Oh, good for you, Joe, I'll be proud of you too. But just one day! Do you think you're going to be able to get us all the way across the country?

JOE.

Have no fear. That is what I am made for!

JOE.

Once I barreled around each dangerous curve  
Hit the straightaways with verve  
I used to hustle  
Using muscle  
But now I mostly run on nerve

You know **I'm gonna get you there**  
Know I'm gonna get you there  
You know I'm gonna get you there

They said sorry Joe, this is your last year  
Then they put me out to pasture  
But now I'm back  
No heart attack  
If anything I think I'm faster

You know I'm gonna get you there  
Know I'm gonna get you there  
You know I'm gonna get you there

I'm no modern diesel techno-dream  
What I am is hope and smoke and steam

Can't you feel the danger in the air  
We're taking up the devil's dare  
To cross the country  
It might get bumpy  
But you know I'm gonna get you there

I'm gonna get you there  
Know I'm gonna get you there  
Know I'm gonna get you there

JOE and ALL (KAYTAIYA, EORIK, LITTLE PLANE)

Know I'm gonna get you there  
Know I'm gonna get you there.  
You know I'm gonna get you there

You know I'm gonna get you there  
Know I'm gonna get you there.  
You know I'm gonna get you there

**End of Scene 6**