

Catching Out

(A Hidden Herald Play)

By Marge J. Buckley

Location:

Union Depot **or** Transportation Museum **or** Another Railroad Location

CAST (in order of appearance)

RAILWAY WORKER (Matt)

EDDIE (Alex)...*trainhopper. more experienced.*

CAT (Anna)...*trainhopper. green. “disguised” as a “boy”.*

HERALD...*a pigeon*

(1920s. Early morning at the train yard. Hushed. We can faintly hear a train starting up.)

RAILWAY WORKER *(in the distance)*

All clear! That's the all-clear, lads!

EDDIE

Hey! Cat! Wake up. We gotta catch out of here.

CAT

What? Oh. I was having such a nice dream.

(Nearby footsteps.)

EDDIE

Wait, keep your head down!

CAT

Is there-

Oh jeez.

EDDIE

Ah, it's alright.

He didn't see us.

Gather up your stuff: we gotta get on that train in a minute.

CAT

I'm gonna miss St. Paul.

I mean...the parties. the dance halls.

EDDIE

There's more work out in San Francisco.

Or maybe we'll even find something in Seattle.

Remember:

hold yourself flat to the porch until we clear town so we don't get spotted.

This place is crawling with railway agents.

CAT

You got it.

Thanks for, uh, takin' me under your wing.

EDDIE

Us freighthoppers gotta watch out for each other.

I've seen too many greenies like you end up in the big house, or worse.

CAT

Worse?

EDDIE

If you live this way long enough, kid, you'll see.

Some poor galoot's gonna try to catch a train on the fly and break every bone in his body.

Hey, your disguise looks pretty good.

Boyish.

That's good. It'll keep you safe.

CAT

Thanks.

(again, in a deeper register:) Thanks.

Yeah.

You know, maybe I'll go like this all the time.

EDDIE

How do you mean?

CAT

Like, as a fella.

EDDIE

All the time? What are you talkin' about?

CAT

I don't know. I kinda like it.

The way people look at me.

EDDIE

...alright.

Whatever gives you kittens, I guess.

CAT

anyhow...I'm pretty hungry.

EDDIE

We can't eat any of the bread until dinner.

CAT

I know.

I'm just sayin'.

EDDIE

Hey, listen: I got the address for some Communists in Seattle.

I guess they're looking for some help.

CAT

Could be worth a shot.

EDDIE

They'll give us a hot meal, at least.

CAT

Ooo, I'm excited.

EDDIE

For Seattle?

CAT

For the ride!

EDDIE

You've come a long way already, kid.

CAT

How do you mean?

EDDIE

Back in Chicago you would've been in a blue funk right about now.

Now you're cool as anything.

CAT

I'm still scared. Just not as bad.

(Train whistle.)

EDDIE

Here we go. Me first, and then I'll help you up behind me, and then we hit the porch fast.
You ready?

CAT

Ready.

EDDIE

Now!

HERALD

I can't watch! Farewell, travelers! Enjoy Seattle.
Speaking of bread, I gotta hunt me down some crumbs...

[byline here instead of at the top]