

SNOW-TRAIN



The snowdrifts were deep that day when I went on my very first railway journey. I was only two. It was cold. We were wrapped up in warm clothing huddled together in the railway carriage. Steam started to hiss and splutter, the smell of burning smoke crept through the crack in the ill-fitting window. We began to move.

Slowly and steadily the train eased its way carefully out of the sleepy station crossing onto the main line with such a shuddering that the whole carriage shook from side to side; almost causing us to topple sideways down the steep embankment. Unsuspecting homeowners looked on in horror and disbelief from their rail-side gardens.

It was a long climb to the top of the Bank and at times it seemed an almost impossible task with the little engine grunting and groaning like an old man supping on a well earned pint and putting the world to right.





The snow was now falling steadily, as it had done all through the long, dark December night, no wonder Rudolph had such a red nose. It was already piled high on the rooftops. Clinging to the now bare trees. Icicles dangling precariously from guttering already full to overflowing.

It was getting colder, much
much colder breath belching
like lonely dragons filling the
carriage with an eerie mist
of mystery!

Who were my co-passengers?
Where were we going?
When would we get there?

So many question, so few
answers. But there was one
thing I knew for certain,
it was definitely getting colder.



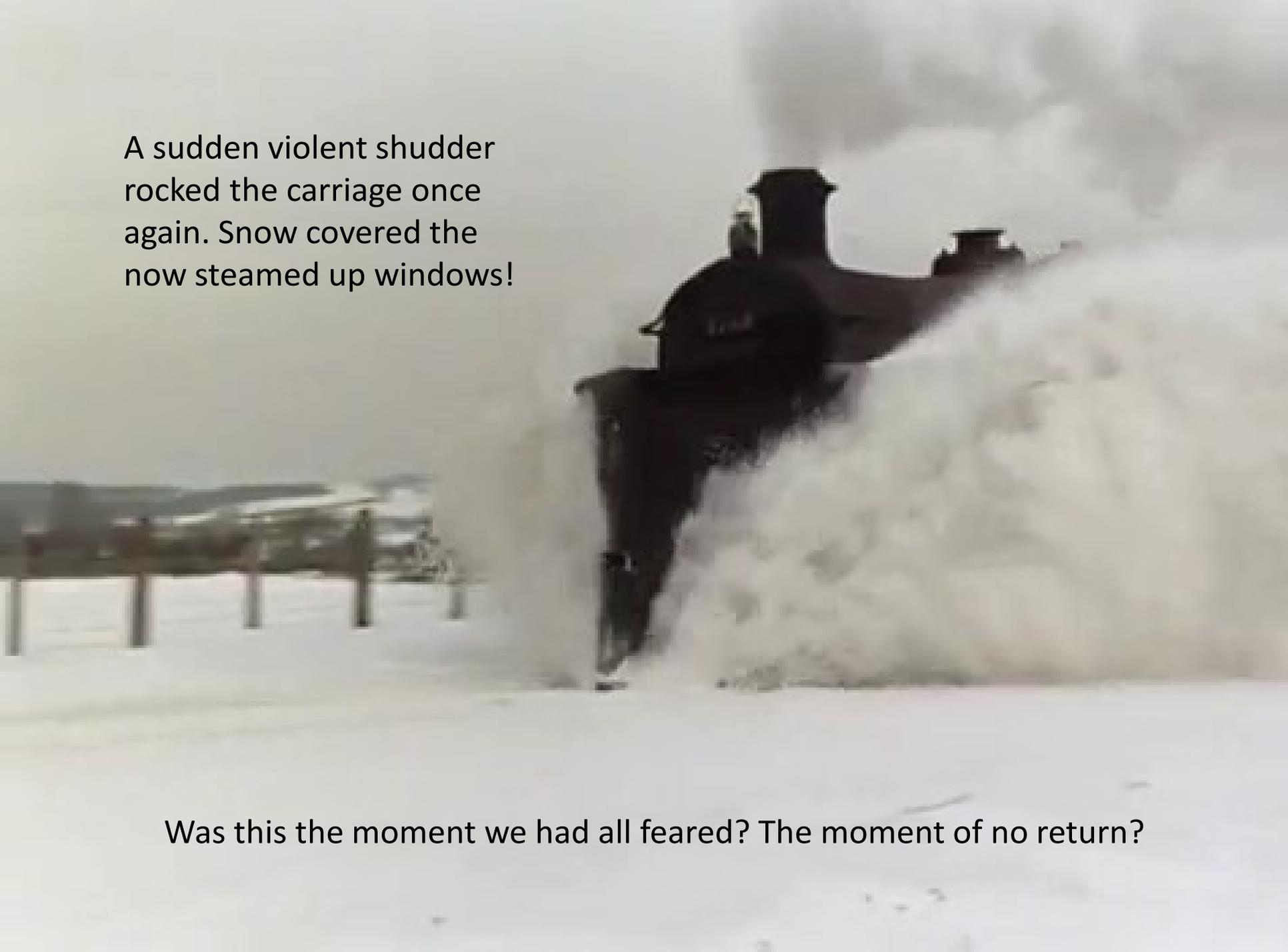
It seemed an almost impossible task slowly pushing those massive snowdrifts to one side like a hot knife slicing through butter. The spray floating high, high up into another greying winter sky full and ready to deposit yet another layer to this already well stacked cake. We eased under a creaking walkway on out into open countryside continuing our journey to the sea.





No sign of life! All were hidden away tucked up comfy in their warm country cottages, snuggling up together around a crackling wood fire. All we had were the clothes upon our backs and an intermittent warm air heater situated deep under our seats, ineffective at such low, low temperatures.

A sudden violent shudder
rocked the carriage once
again. Snow covered the
now steamed up windows!



Was this the moment we had all feared? The moment of no return?



The huge metal appendage
creaked and cranked,
twisted and turned,
pushing harder and harder
into the now well impacted snow.
There was no surrender!
The would be only one winner!

At last the screeching and scraping
eased; movement became smoother;
the worst was now passed. Our
journey could now proceed at a pace
and soon the welcome sight of the
sea would replace the never-ending
white of the countryside.



Never had a sunset been such a welcoming sight.
Home at last!

