

"Fire Escape"

by
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INT. TRAIN - THAT MOMENT

El, Emma and Kim are in the middle of a heated debate.

KIM

Look, all I asked was why can't we just hand this damn thing over to them and move on with our lives!

EL

That's a surprising sentiment coming from Mr. Conspiracy Guy.

KIM

Look, if you were a conspiracy guy like me, you'd know that they don't give a damn about the lives of three nobodies on the outside. Is finding out the truth about this device really worth risking your life?

El glances around, concerned that people may wonder just what they're talking about.

EL

Come on, let's see if the car behind us is a little more private. El rises.

INT. NEXT TRAIN DOWN - MOMENTS LATER

They enter the car to find there only five or six people aboard.

EL

My brother's mixed up in this, so I'm willing to take the risk. You guys don't have to come with me if you don't want to.

They sit.

KIM

Hey, what's the deal with your brother, anyway? You never talk about him.

EL

He never calls--he works for some government contractor in the PR department.

KIM

Oh, damn. You're going to need me on this one if your bro is part of the conspiracy.

EL

John, there's no conspiracy, man! He just works for a contractor.

KIM

Uh-huh. No, I'm in. You need me to keep you safe on this one.

EL

"This one?"

EMMA

Yeah, well, I'm in this for the long haul, too, Ellie.
(looks in El's eyes)
I'll always be here to help you.
You know that.

EL

Em, if you want, we can just drop you at your place and move on. We'll lay low for a few days until we can stay clear of them and then head back to our place.

EMMA

No chance, exy-poo. You need me to figure out what that thing is and I'm just the kind of woman who likes to feel useful.

The three REACT TO A VOICE OVER THE LOUD SPEAKER.

CONDUCTOR VOICE

(over loudspeaker)

Now arriving Crescent Heights and Midvale, now arriving at Crescent Heights and Midvale. Next stop is Valley Spring.

EMMA

'Kay, one more stop after this.

The train slows and then comes to a stop. A few people stand and exit as the train doors open. Several more get on. One of them is Bernard. The three go back to talking as Bernard takes hold of one of the poles several feet away from them.

ANGLE ON BERNARD SNEAKING A GLANCE INTO HIS COAT POCKET.

CU. ON FETPDA DISPLAY IN HIS POCKET. We can see on the display that the red star is almost exactly at the center. Bernard looks around the car and then spots El. He lets go of the pole and begins to approach the group. El glances up at him as a look of vague recognition crosses Bernard's face.

BERNARD

Excuse me, son, are you by any chance related to... Robert Ellis?

KIM

Don't--

EL

Who are you?

BERNARD

A Dr. Robert Ellis? Perhaps you are the little brother he has spoken of? What did he say your name was, Ryan, I believe?

El rises to his feet as Emma and Kim do the same.

EL

Who are you?

BERNARD

I am the person who you essentially stole that Device from.

EL

It was in a dumpster!

BERNARD

I left it there to be picked up by someone else and now I need it back.

EL

How do you know my brother and why do I keep seeing him?

BERNARD

You've seen your brother?
(thinks for a moment)
Fascinating--you've accessed the FET UI.

EMMA

"UI" you mean, like "User Interface?"

BERNARD

Indeed--the Fire Escape Technology User Interface.

EL

What does that have to do with my brother?

BERNARD

You didn't see your brother, my dear man- you saw his work.

El pulls the device from his jacket and looks at it. A single spot on it is FLASHING RAPIDLY.

EL

So, if this is yours, what does that flashing mean?

BERNARD

Hm, can't always be sure with FET. That flashing likely means that we are closing in on a data cypher. Just don't touch that light--in fact, you've done well to not touch it at all.

EMMA

Whoa--hang on--what's a data cypher, now?

CU. ON BERNARD STARING AT THE BLINKING SPOT ON THE

DEVICE. CU. ON THE BLINKING SPOT. It is now blinking very rapidly.

BERNARD

I'm afraid I've told you all too much as it is. I need you to hand me that device now. I need to get it to the authorities so the truth can be known. You must have some idea of how important that device is!

CU. ON THE BLINKING SPOT. It's blinking even faster now. CU. ON BERNARD STARING AT THE BLINKING SPOT. He is now very nervous.

KIM

Yeah, well, we're not doing
anything with anything until you
tell us what's up with his brother.

CU. ON BERNARD STARING AT THE BLINKING SPOT ON THE

DEVICE. CU. ON THE BLINKING SPOT. It's now blinking so
rapidly it is almost solid. Bernard steps forward, reaches
for the Device and is about to snatch it when El pulls it
back as both Kim and Emma shove El back, blocking Bernard's
approach.

CU. ON THE BLINKING SPOT AS EL ACCIDENTALLY TOUCHES IT.

El, Emma and Kim VANISH. Bernard grabs at where they were a
moment earlier.

BERNARD

Damn it!