

The Copper Comet and the Tunnel Trouble





Maya Chen had built the railway three times that afternoon. Each time, Copper Comet raced from the red barn, across the bridge, and toward the tunnel. "Last run," Maya declared. "Then I'll pack everything away."



Copper Comet clicked over the bridge.
Click-clack. Click-clack.
But at the tunnel, the train gave one tiny jerk—and stopped.



Maya tried a gentle push.
Nothing.
She tried a careful pull. The train did not budge. The tunnel did not budge either.



“A mystery,” Maya said.
She fetched the blue toolbox and folded measuring tape.
First rule of mysteries: look closely before making a guess.



She checked the wheels. Clear.
She checked the rails. Straight.
Then she noticed a pale line of dust beneath the tunnel's third block.



Maya measured the tunnel entrance.
Then she measured Copper Comet.
The train was not too wide. The tunnel had shifted—just a little, but enough.



Maya could have pulled harder.
Instead, she made a plan.
She would lift the shifted block, widen the opening, and check every piece before sending
Copper Comet forward.



She held the tunnel steady with one hand.
With the other, she eased the wooden wedge into the dusty seam.
The block lifted a millimeter. Then another.



The opening widened.
Maya rolled Copper Comet back a short distance, then forward again.
Click. Clack. The wheels passed the tight spot.



Maya did not stop at a successful escape.
She checked the rails, the bridge, and each tunnel block.
A clever fix was good. A careful fix was better.



At last, Maya gave the signal.
Copper Comet crossed the bridge, curved past the trees, and entered the tunnel.
This time, the click-clack never faltered.



Maya packed away the tools but left the railway standing.
She added a small sign beside the tunnel: CHECK THE TRACK.
Then Copper Comet made one final journey—steady, bright, and ready for tomorrow.

The End

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