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Discworld's new novel, 40th in the series, sees the album's first train arrive in the city. Change is underway in Ankh-Morpork. Discworld's first steam engine has arrived, and once again Moist von Lipwig encounters a challenging new job. Fantasy Fiction Humor (Fiction) Donec in tortor en lectus laculis vulputate. Sed aliquam, urn ut sollicitudin moiestie, lacus
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penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. It's hard to understand anything, but the multiverse is full of it. Nothing travels everywhere, always ahead of something, and in the great cloud of knowing nothing yearns to become something, to go out, to move, to feel, to change, to dance and to experience, in short, to be something. And
now he found his chance as he veered into the ether. Nothing, of course, knew anything, but this was different, oh yes, and so nothing quietly slipped into something and floated with everything in mind and, fortunately, landed on the back of a turtle, a very large one, and rushed to become something even faster. It was elemental and nothing was better than
that and suddenly the elemental was captured! The bait had worked. Anyone who has seen the Ankh-Morpork has to be supplied by Quirm's fishing fleets. In order to avoid terrible gastric problems for citizens, Ankh-Morpork fishmongers have to
make sure their suppliers make their catches a long and long way from the city. For Bowden Jeffries, supplier of the best seafood, the two hundred miles or more between the fish docks in Quirm and customers in Ankh-Morpork was a woefully long distance during the winter, autumn and spring and pure penance in the summer, because the road, as it was,
became a linear furnace to the Big City. Once he had had to deal with a ton of overheated octopus, he never forgot; the smell lasted for days, and followed you around and almost in your bedroom. You could never get him out of your clothes. The he was so demanding, demanding, demanding, Ankh-Morpork's elite and, in fact, everyone else wanted their fish, even in the
hottest part of the season. Even with an ice house built by his own hands and, by arrangement, a second ice shed in the middle of the trip, made you want to cry, he really did. And he told his cousin, Relief Jeffries, a market gardener, so much that he looked at his beer and said, 'It's always the same. Nobody wants to help the little businessman. Can you
imagine how fast strawberries turn into little mush balls in the heat? Well, I'll tell you: there's no time at all. He blinks and misses them, just when everyone wants his strawberries. And you ask the berros people how hard it is to bring the damn things into town before it's as limping as a second-day sermon. We must ask the government! No, his cousin said.
I've had enough of this. Let's write to the papers! That's the way to do things. Everyone complains about fruits and vegetables and seafood. Vetinari must be made to understand the difficult situation of the small businessman. After all, why do we pay our taxes from time to time? Dick Simnel was ten years old when, back at the family blacksmith's shop in
Sheepridge, his father simply disappeared into a cloud of oven parts and flying metal, all wrapped in a pink steamer. He was never found in the terrible mist of scorching moisture, but that same day young Dick Simnel swore to what was left of his father in that boiling steam he would steam his servant. His mother had other ideas. She was a parter, and as
she said to her neighbors, 'Babbies are born everywhere. I'll never run out of a client. So, against her son's wishes, Elsie Simnel decided to take him away from what he now considered a haunted place. She packed her belongings and together they returned to her family home near Sto Lat, where people did not inexplicably disappear into a hot pink cloud.
Shortly after arriving something important happened to your son. One day, while waiting for his mother to return from a difficult birth, Dick entered a building that seemed interesting, and turned out to be a library. At first he thought it was full of poncy stuff, all kings and poets and lovers and battles, but in a crucial book he found something called mathematics
and the world of numbers. And so, a day about ten years later, he gathered every fiber of his being and said, 'Mother, you know last year when I said I was going to 'go to the Uberwald Mountains with me mates, well, it was kind of ... a kind of lie, just very small, mind that. Dick blushed. You see, I found the keys to Dad's old shed and, well, I went
back to Sheepridge and did some experiments and...' he looked at his mother anxiously: 'I think I know what 'e were doing wrong'. Cock Prepared for hard objections, but he hadn't had so many tears - and as he tried to comfort her he added, 'You, Mother, and Uncle Flavius gave me an education, you got me the knowledge of numbers, including the
arithmetic and strange things dreamed of by philosophers in Ephebe where even camels can do logarithms on their fingers. Dad didn't know these things. I had the right ideas, but I didn't have the ... tech-nol-ogy right. At this point, Dick allowed his mother to speak, and she said, 'I know there's no way to stop you, Our Dick, you're like your stubborn, pig-
headed father. Is that what you've been doing in the barn? Teck-ology? She looked at him accusing, and then sighed. I can see I can't tell you what to do, but you tell me, how can your logger reasons stop you from going your poor father's way? He started sobing again. Dick pulled out of his jacket something that looked like a little wand, which could have
been made for a miniature magician, and said, 'This will keep me safe, Mother! I have the knowledge of the sliding ruler! I can tell the sine what to do, and cosine in the same way and work the tangent of t'quaderéticas! Come on, Mother, stop worrying and come with me now to T'barn. You must see 'er!' Page 2 Ms. Simnel, reluctantly, was dragged by her son
into the open barn she had made as Sheepridge's workshop, hoping that her son would have accidentally found a girl. Inside the barn he looked helplessly at a large circle of metal that covered most of the ground. Something metallic buzzed around and around the metal, sounding like a squirrel in a cage, giving a very similar smell to camphor. Here it is,
Mother. Isn't she the champion? Dick said happily. I call her Iron Girder! But what's the matter, son? He smiled enormously and said, 'It's what they call a pro-a-type, Mother. You have to 'bird in favor-to-type if you're going to be an engineer.' His mother smiled wanly, but there was no way to stop Dick. Words just fell. The thing is, Mother, before you try owt
you have to 'come up with some idea of what you want to do. One of the books I found in that book, the man who wrote it said before building his next big ouse he always made quite small models to get an idea of how it was going to work. He said it sounds restless and stuff, but going slowly and being thorough
is the only way forward. So I'm testing slowly, seeing what works and what doesn't. And actually, I'm very proud of myself. At first I made wood t'track, but I thought the engine I wanted would be very 'eavy, so I cut the wooden circle for wood and went back to t'forge'. Mrs. Simnel looked at the little mechanism that was around and on the barn floor and said,
in someone's voice really trying to understand, 'Eee, boy, but what does it do?' Well, I remembered what Dad said about the time I was watching boiling t'kettle and I noticed t'lid going up and down with the pressure, and he told me that one day someone would build a bigger teapot that would lift more than a kettle lid. And I think I have the knowledge of how
to build a proper teapot, Mother. And what good is that, my son, said his mother sternly. And she saw the glare in her son's eyes as she said, 'Everything, Mother. All. Still in a haze of a slight misunderstanding, Ms. Simnel saw him unroll a large, rather dirty piece of paper. It's called a blueprint, Mother. You have to have a blueprint. It shows you how
everything fits together. Is he part of the pro-a-type? The boy looked at his mother's face and realized that a little more exposure should be close. He took her by the hand and said, 'Mother, I know they're all lines and circles to you, but once you have the knowledge of circles, lines and all that, you know this is an image of an engine.' Mrs. Simnel grabbed her
hand and said, 'What do you think you're going to do with her, our Dick?' And young Simnel smiled and said happily, 'Change things as needs to change, Mother.' Mrs. Simnel gave her son a curious look for a moment or two, then seemed to come to a reluctant conclusion and said, 'Only you come with me, my boy.' She took him back to the house, where
they climbed the stairs to the attic. She pointed to her son's chest of a sturdy sailor covered in dust. Your grandfather gave me this to give you, when I thought you needed it. Here's the key. She was satisfied that he did not grab it and in fact looked carefully at the trunk before opening it. As he pushed up the lid, suddenly the air filled with the flash of gold.
Your grandfather was a bit of a pirate and then he became religious and got a little excited, and the last words he said to me on his deathbed were: That young man is going to be. The people of the city were quite accustomed to the noises and blows emanating
every day from the various blacksmiths for which the area was famous. It seemed that, despite having created his own forge, young Simnel had decided not to enter the blacksmiths soon became accustomed to making mysterious objects that
young Mr. Simnel had meticulously outlined. He never told them what he was building, but because they were making a lot of money, they didn't care. The news of his legacy of course -- gold always finds its way out somehow -- and there was a scratch of heads among the population exemplified by the oldest inhabitant, who, sitting on the bench outside the
tavern, said, 'Well, damn it! Lad were blessed wi'a fortune inherited in gold and turned it into an old iron charge! He laughed, like everyone else, but nevertheless continued to watch young Dick Simnel had found a couple of probably locals who
helped him do things and move things. Over time, the barn was augmented by a number of other sheds. More boys were accepted and hammers were heard all day every day and, a little at a time, the barn was augmented by a number of other sheds. More boys were accepted and hammers were heard all day every day and, a little at a time, the information entered what might be called the local consciousness. Apparently the boy had made a bomb, an interesting bomb pump pumping very high water.
And then he had thrown everything away and said things like, 'We need more steel than iron.' There were stories of large remnants of paper arranged at desks while young Simnel worked in a wonderful company, as he called it. It is true that there was an occasional explosion, and then people learned what the boys called 'The Bunker', which had been
useful for jumping on several occasions when there had been a little ... Incident. And then there was the uns familiar noise but somehow homey and rhythmic 'chuffing'. Really a rather pleasant, almost hypnotic noise, which was strange because the mechanical creature that was making the noise sounded more alive than I would have expected. Page 3 It was
noted in the locality that Mr. Simnel's two main co-workers, or 'Crazy Iron' Simnel as some called him now, seemed somewhat changed, more adult and self-aware; young, acolytes of the mysterious secrets of the barn.fn1 They were
now behaving accordingly to the love of the fiery furnace. And then, of course, there were the sunny days when young Simnel and his cohorts dug long lines in the field next to the barn and filled them with metal as the oven shone day and night and they all shook their heads and said, 'Madness.' And this continued, it seemed forever, until it was over and the
blows, the noise and the foundry had stopped. Then Mr. Simnel's lieutenants pulled aside the double barn doors and filled the world with smoke. Very little happened in this part of Sto Lat and this was enough to bring people running. Most of them came in time to see something heading towards them, panting and smoking, with spinning wheels and oscillating
rods that appear and disappear into smoke and mist, and above all, as a kind of king king smoke and fire, Dick Simnel, his face contorted with the effort of concentration. It was faintly reassuring that this was apparently under the control of someone human, though the most reflective of the viewers might have added 'So what? So a spoon,' and prepared to
flee as the steaming engine, dancing, spinning, corresponded to the barn and sank down the tracks placed in the field. And passers-by, most of whom were now byrunners, and in some cases spectators, fled and complained, except, of course, for every child of any age who followed him with his eyes wide open, swearing there and then one day he would be
the captain of the terrible harmful engine, oh yes, in fact. A steam prince! A master of sparks! A Thunderbolts coachman! And outside, finally released, the smoke was deliberated the speed. Later that day, and after several triumphant turns
around the short track in the field, Simnel sat down with his aides. Wally, Dave, I'm running out of bronze, guys, he said. Have your mothers gather your things, make us buttocks, take out the orses. We'll take lron Girder to Ankh-Morpork, I 'ear is the place where things 'appen'. Of course, Lord Vetinari, a tyrant of Ankh-Morpork, would occasionally meet Lady
Margolotta, governess of Uberwald. Why wouldn't I? After all, he also occasionally had meetings with Diamond King of Trolls near Koom Valley, and in fact with The Dwarfs' Lower King Rhysson in his caverns under Uberwald. This, as everyone knew, was political. Yes, politics. The secret glue that stopped the world from falling into war. In the past
there had been so much war, too, but as every schoolboy knew, or at least knew in those days when the schoolboys actually read something more demanding than a crisp package, not so long ago a truly terrible war, the last war of the Koom Valley, had almost happened, of which the dwarves and trolls had not exactly achieved peace, but an understanding
of which, hopefully, peace could evolve. There had been the tremor of hands, important hands, shaken fervently, and therefore there was hope, hope as fragile as a thought. In fact, he thought Lord Vetinari while his coach was shaking towards Uberwald, in the pink glow that had followed the famous Koom Valley Accord, even the elves, had finally been
recognized as sapient creatures, to be metaphorically treated as brothers, though not necessarily as brothers, though not necessarily as brothers but simply
nothing could turn the ride to Uberwald into anything other than a penance in every pothole, which led to a fundamental discomfort. Progress had been very slow, although stops at the nail towers along the route had allowed his secretary, Drumknott, to collect the daily crossword puzzle without which Lord Vetinari considered the day incomplete. There was an
explosion from the outside. Good pain! Should we hit every bump along the way, Drumknott? I'm sorry, sir, but it seems your honor can't even control the bandits around the Wilinus Pass. She has a sacrifice from time to time, but I'm afraid this is the least dangerous route. There was a scream outside, followed by more blows. Vetinari blew up his reading
lamp moments before a ferocious-looking individual pushed the point of a crossbow bolt into the glass of the cart, which was now in the dark, and said, 'Just come here with all your valuables or it'll be worse for you, all right! There are no tricks now! We're murderers! Lord Vetinari calmly downloaded the book he had been reading, sighed and said to
Drumknott, 'Looks like Drumknott, we've been kidnapped by murderers. It's not that... Nice. And now Drumknott had a little smile. Oh, yes, that's good, sir. You always like meeting killers. I'm not going to get in your way, sir. Vetinari pulled out his cape around him when he got out of the coach and said, 'There's no reason for violence, gentlemen. I'll give you
everything I've got...' And no more than two minutes later that his lordship got back on the coach and pointed out that the driver would continue as if nothing had happened this time, my lord? I didn't hear anything. Beside him, Lord Vetinari said, 'They did not either, Drumknott
My dear, it's a waste. One wonders why they don't learn to read. Then they would recognize the crest of my coach, who would have enlightened them! When the coach came to what might be considered an erratic type of speed, and after thinking about it, Drumknott said, 'But your crest, sir, is black on a black background and it's a very dark night.' Oh, yes,
Drumknott, Lord Vetinari replied, with what happened like a smile. You know, I hadn't thought of that. There was something inevitable about Lady Margolotta's castle environment. In fact, what kind of vampire would live in a castle that didn't
creak and moan at the time? The Igors would not have it any other way, and now resident Igor welcomed Lord Vetinari and his secretary into a cavernous room with cobwebs hanging pendulously from the ceiling. And there was a feeling, just a feeling, that in the basement something was screaming. But of course, Vetinari reflected, here was a wonderful
lady, who had made vampires understand that returning from the grave so often that she got dizzy was quite stupid and that somehow she had persuaded them to ups and down their night activities. On the other hand, she had introduced coffee to Uberwald, apparently exchanging a terrifying craving for another. Lady Margolotta was always short and to the
point, as was the nature of the conversation that followed a splendid dinner a few days later. It's the grags again, okay, Havelock? After all this time! My vord, even vorse, like you, my dear, prophesied. How could I have foreseen it? Well, ma'am, Diamond King of Trolls asked me the same thing, but all I can say is that it's in the indefatigable nature
of sapient creatures. In short, not everyone can be satisfied at the same time. You thought the buns, the fireworks, the handshakes and the promises after Koom Valley was signed and sealed was the end, okay? Personally, I've always considered this a mere interlude. In short, Margolotta, peace is what you have while incubating the next war. It is impossible
to accommodate everyone and twice as impossible to please all dwarves. You see, when I'm talking to Diamond King of Trolls, he's the troll spokesman, he speaks for all the trolls. As sensible as they are, they leave everything to him when it comes to politics. And then, on the other hand, we have yourself, dear lady: you speak for all your ... people in
Bonkfn2 and most of the agreements made with you are, well, quite nice ... But the dwarves, what a calamity. Just when you think you're talking to the dwarf leader, some wild-eyed grag will go out into the landscape and suddenly all bets are off, all treaties instantly become null, and there's no chance of confidence! As you know, there is a king – a dezka-
knikfn3, as they call it - in every mine on the disk. How do you do business with people like that? Each dwarf his own inner tyrant. 'Vell,' said Lady Margolotta, 'Rhys Rhysson is managing quite a vell in the circumstances and go on Uberwald higher...' now your honor almost whispered, they are very close to progress. But, yes, how can vun vin vunce and for
everyone, which is vhat that Vould I would like to know. His lordship carefully lowered his glass and said, 'That, unfortunately, is never entirely possible. Stars change, even if it means initiating some of its worst threats to an early grave.
Although I am obliged to say that the subtlety and careful interrogation of the things that the world puts before us I that the Lower King, whom, as dictated by protocol, I have called before coming here to meet you — — forming a plan right now; and when he does his work we'll throw it all away to support him. He's betting a lot on the future. He believes this is
the right time, especially since Ankh-Morpork is now well known for having the largest dwarf community in the world. But I think your people don't like modernity too much. I must admit, I can see Vhy. Progress is such a bad thing when one is trying to keep the peace in the vorld. So... Unpredictable. I can remind you, Havelock, that many, many years ago, an
ephebial philosopher built an engine that you go very powerful, in a horrific way so. If those people had persevered with the steam-powered engine, the nature of life could now have been very different. Can't you find that vorryink? How can you guide the future when von idiot can make a mechanism that could change everything? Lord Vetinari haggling one
last drop of brandy in his glass and said cheerfully, 'Ma'am, only a fool would try to stop the progress of the crowd. Vox populi, vox deorum, carefully shepherded by a reflective prince, of course. So I think when it's time for the steam engine, the steam engine, the steam engine will come. And what do you think you're doing, dwarf? Young Magnus Magnus Magnus of the progress of the crowd. Vox populi, vox deorum, carefully shepherded by a reflective prince, of course. So I think when it's time for the steam engine, the steam engine will come.
attention at first to the older dwarf whose face, to the extent you could see, was definitely grumpy, the kind of dwarf who had apparently never been young, and so shrugged and said, 'No offense, oh venerable, but what I think I'm doing is walking through my own affairs in the hope that others would shrug at themselves. I hope you don't have a rat with that?
fn4 Page 5 A gentle response is said to ward off anger, but this claim has a lot to do with hope and was now stating clearly inaccurate, as even a well-spoken and thoughtful soft response could actually lead to the wrong kind of person in a state of rage if anger was what they had in mind, and that was the state that the old dwarf was enjoying now. Why are
you wearing your helmet upside down, young dwarf? Magnus was an easy midget and did the wrong thing, which was going to make sense. Well, oh venerable, he's got my Scouting badge on him, you know. Scouting? In the fresh air? Don't you get up to the shenanigans and serve my community well? This litany of good intentions did not seem to get
Magnus any friends and his sense of danger began to work late to function much faster. The old dwarf was very, very unhappy for him, and during this brief exchange some other dwarves had been alone in the twin towns of Bonk and Schmaltzberg
long, long way, 'And then it all happened. Magnus was a fast runner, as he got ahead of the Ankh-Morpork Rat Pack, fn5 and as he ran he tried to figure out what he had done wrong. After all, he had taken it forever by various means to get to Uberwald, and he was a dwarf, and they were dwarves and ... It occurred to him that there had been something in
the newspapers back home saying that there were still some dwarf societies that would have nothing to do with any organization that included trolls, the traditional and visceral enemy. Well, there were certainly trolls in the herd at home and they were good sports, all of them, a little slow-minded, but every now and then I'd gone for tea with some of them and
vice versa. Only now I remembered how old and older trolls occasionally got upset for no other reason than after hundreds of years of trying to kill each other, they were supposed to have made friends through a handshake. Magnus had always understood that the Lower City of the Lower King was a dark place, and that was fine for dwarves as dwarves and
the darkness always got along well together, but here he felt a deeper darkness. At this difficult time it seemed that here he had no friends apart from his grandmother, and it seemed that there would be many problems between him and the other side of the city where he lived. He was gasping now, but he could still hear the sounds of persecution, even
though he was leaving the deeper corridors and tunnels behind him and leaving the underground town of Schmaltzberg, realizing that he would have to come back another day ... or another day ... or another way. As he paused briefly to catch his breath, a city gate guard entered his path with some greedy expression. And where do you think you're going in a hurry, Mr. Ankh-
Morpork? Come back to light with your troll friends, huh? The guard's sponton hit Magnus's feet from beneath him and then the kick began seriously. Magnus walked out of the way and as a kind of reflection shouted, 'Tak doesn't want us to think about him, but he wants us to think!' He complained and spat out a tooth when he saw another dwarf
approaching him. To his dismay, the newcomer seemed middle-aged and well-made, which certainly meant there would be no friendship here. But instead of administering a kick, the older dwarf shouted in a voice like hammers: 'Listen to me, young dwarf, you should never let your guard down like that.' The newcomer struck his original aggressor on the
ground with commendable ferocity and a gloriously unnecessary display of violence and as the moaning magnus upright. Well, you can run, kid, much better than most dwarves aren't in favor at the moment, at least not around these parts. To tell you the truth, I'm not so happy for
them, but if there's a fight it must be fair. He kicked the grieving guard very hard and said, 'My name is Bashfull Bashfullsson. You'd better get a micromail if you're coming to call your grandmother looking for all of Ankh-Morpork. And it's a pain in the ass that my fellow dwarves treat a young dwarf so badly just for what he's wearing. And the complete stop of
that spoil was one more blow to the reclining guard. I'm going to give it to you, boy, I've never really seen a dwarf who can run as fast as you were! My word, you can run, but now might be the time to learn to hide. Magnus brushed and looked at his savior, saying, 'Bashfull Bashfullsson! But you're a legend! And he took a step back saying, 'I've read all about
you! You became a grag because you don't like Ankh-Morpork! Maybe not, young dwarf, but I won't take care of killing myself in the dark like those deep-hearted, light-hearted bastards. I like a fight standing up, I. To say this, Bashfull Bashfullsson kicked the fallen guard hard once more with his huge iron-clad boot. And one of the world's best-known and
most respected dwarves reached out to young Magnus, and said, 'Now let your talent take you to safety. Like you might want to think or two about adjusting your outfit when you visit your grandmother again. Plus, you may not appreciate Ankh-Morpork
fashions. Nice to meet you, Mr. Speedy, and now get your sad ass out of here -- you may not be around next time. Page 6 Away and as for Uberwald, Sir Harry King was reflecting on the day's businesses. He was widely known as the King of the Golden River because of the fortune he had made to take care of other people's businesses. Harry was usually a
cheerful man with good digestion, but not today. He was also a loving husband, making against euphemia, his wife of many years, but unfortunately not today. And Harry was a good employer, but not today, because today his stomach was turning through the halithan to which the phrase could not be happily applied a long time ago. He hadn't liked his
appearance when he was on his plate, halibut being a fish that tends to look back reproaches you, and during the last few hours had foreseen the damn thing looking at the bowels of his stomach. The problem was, he thought, that euphemia still remembered the good old days when they were poor as church mice and by both necessarily frugal with money.
and such habits bite to the bone, very much like the fishsayfully digested that they had been swimming somewhere in Harry's bowels and threatening to swim much further. Unfortunately, Harry was a man raised to eat everything he stood in front of him and that meant everything he ate. When he finally came out of the privy, where he believed that the damn
fish had been watching him from the bowl, he had pulled the chain with such vehemence that it broke, causing the words, unpleasant and spiteful words flew on both sides, words that if Harry could help he would be thrown back at the wretched fish
that had started it all. But instead he and his wife had had what they had known all their lives as an ups and downs. And, of course, Effie, born in the gutter next door to Harry, could give at least the best he put himself in such situations, especially when armed with a rather valuable and decorative jug. Effie had a voice in her that could sometimes make a boy
blush, and she had called Harry the 'King of Shit', making him do what he never, ever wanted to do, that was raise his hand in anger, especially since the jug with which his wife was armed was also guite heavy.fn6 Of course he would blow over her would blow over, always did, and genuine marital harmony would deviate in its usual place at home. But all
afternoon Sir Harry prowled around his compound like an old lion. King of Shit, well, yes, and because of him the streets were clean, or at least considerably cleaner than they had been before what might be called the Harry King dynasty. He reflected, as he wandered, that his work was about those unimaginable things that people wanted to leave behind.
And so there wasn't much for him at the top table of society. Yes, it was Sir Harry, but I knew Effie really wanted them to be able to leave behind all the stinking business. After all, he said, you're as rich as Creosote as he is. Can't you find something people really want instead of need? Generally speaking, Harry wasn't very good at
philosophy. I was proud of what he had achieved, but a small part of him agreed with Effie that surely there was something better for him than chasing the purefn7 and making sure the city's unreliable septic tanks didn't overflow. Someone had to do it, of course, and it wasn't like it was Harry himself, not for many years, as he paid the gongfermors, dumb
divers and now an entire army of goblins too to do the dirty work. Even what he needed now, he thought, was an occupation that was manly without being despicable. Distractedly, he fired his last lawyer, a dwarf who had been caught with nasty little fingers in the box, and managed to do it without really throwing the little bastard all the way down the stairs.
Unusually dejected, Harry prowled, trying to calm his nerves. On the edge of his complex he smelled the air, to the extent he dared. There was a wind blowing from the bucket and it turned to him and caught a tempting smell; a manly smell, a smell with a purpose, a smell that wanted to take him places, and he said promise. The relationship between Moist
von Lipwig and Adora Belle Dearheart was firm and happy, quite possibly because they were not seen for substantial periods of time, as she was immersed in the operation of the Great Trunk and he was dealing with the Bank, the Post Office and that was, in
his own mind, called upon to keep everything together. Things worked out, in fact they worked very well, but they worked, Moist thought, because he was always seen in the Bank or the Mint or the Post Office being Mister Post Office and Mister Mint. He talked to people, talked to them about their work, asked them how their wives and husbands
were, having memorized the names of all the family members of the person they were talking to. It was a gift, a wonderful gift, and it was vitally important that he was always around to keep the magic flowing. As for Adora Belle, the clacks were in her bones, it
was her legacy and ay that someone got between her and her, fn8 even if someone was her husband. Somehow the system worked as hard as they did and so they could afford Crossly, the butler, and Mrs. Crossly too.fn9 His house on Scoone Avenue had a gardener too, who seemed to come with the territory. Crispfn10 was also a decent and quite
talkative handyman, although Moist never understood a word he said. He came from somewhere in the Shire and spoke using a vocabulary that was theoretically morpokian, but actually had a lot of straw in it with the syllant 'ahh' working every conversation. He made cider in his shed at the bottom of the garden, using the apple trees that the previous owner
had carefully appreciated. Also, of course, he cleaned the windows, and with the help of a huge box full of all kinds of hammer, saw, drill, screwdriver and chisel, nail bags and a number of other items that Moist could not recognize, and besides he did not want, made the life of Moist easy while making Crisp possibly the richest handyman in the neighborhood.
Page 7 Moist von Lipwig had done a heavy job once and could not see any future in it, but I could look at it for hours, and when other people were doing, and he shrugged and was happy that Crisp was happy being a handyman, while Moist was happy not to pick anything that was heavier
than a glass. After all, their work was not seen and depended on words, which fortunately were not very heavy and did not need fat. In his career as a thief he had been served well and he now felt a little smug about using them for the benefit of the public. There was a difference between a banker and a thief, there really was, and although he was very, very
small Moist felt that he should point out that it existed and, besides, Lord Vetinari always had his eye on him. So everyone was happy and Moist went to work with a very clean clothes with a very clean conscience. Having washed and dressed in those clothes in his private bathroom, fn11 Moist went to see his wife, practicing his smile along the way and trying to
look cheerful. You never knew with Adora Belle fn12 that it could be pretty steely. After all, she ran the whole clack system these days. He also liked elves, which is why there were some living behind the house wainscoting and others on the roof. They smelled, but the smell wasn't, once he got over the shock, so bad. The compensation was that the elves
had taken the clacks in their scrawny hearts, one and all. The wheels and levers fascinated them. Moist knew that goblins generally hid in caves and unhealthy places where humans did not bother, but now, when they were suddenly being treated as people, they had found their element that was usually heaven. They could climb a tower faster than any man
could run, and the machinery of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied. Already, after only a few months in the city, the elves had improved the efficiency of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied. Already, after only a few months in the city, the elves had improved the efficiency of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied. Already, after only a few months in the city, the elves had improved the efficiency of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied. Already, after only a few months in the city, the elves had improved the efficiency of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied. Already, after only a few months in the city, the elves had improved the efficiency of the clacks, shuddering, back and forth and was relentlessly occupied.
on the roof, but if you wanted your clacks to fly fast, you didn't use the term out loud. The villains of the storybooks had finally found their place in society. All I needed was technology. When Dick Simnel entered Sir Harry King's compound, he wasn't quite sure how you talked to the great people. However, he managed to speak his way through the people in
the front office, who had a rather jaundice look and seemed to consider it his duty to make sure that no one should get to see Sir Harry King, especially greasy-looking young men with wild eyes trying to seem respectable despite his extremely old clothes that, these doormen thought, needed something, possibly a bonfire. However, Dick had the persistence
a wasp and the sharpness of a razor blade, so he eventually ended up deposited in front of the great man's desk as a supplicant. Harry, red face impatiently, he looked over his desk and said, 'Boy, time is money and I am a busy man. You told Nancy at reception you got something I'd like. Now stop bothering me and look me in the face like. If you're another
chance who wants bamboozle, I'm going to have me down the Effingfn14 stairs before you know it. Dick looked silently at Harry for a moment, and then said, 'Mr. King, I've made a machine that can carry people and goods almost everywhere and doesn't need 'orses and is running on the coal 'n' water. It's my machine, I built it and I can do it even better if
you can see your way clear to make me move forward a little investment.' Harry King got into his pocket and pulled out a heavy gold watch. Dick could not help noticing the famous gold rings he had been told that Sir Harry always wore, possibly as a set of socially acceptable and extremely valuable knuckledusters. Did I hear you right? It's Mr. Simnel, isn't it?
I'll give you five minutes to catch me and if I think you're just another thimble in the tilt, you'll get out of here faster than you came.' 'My old mother always said to see is to believe, Mr. King, and so I have come prepared. If you can give me some time to get t'lads and t' 'orses...' Dick coughed and continued, 'I have to tell you, Sir Harry, I took the liberty of
parking them right outside your complex, because I talked to people and they told me that if Harry King wants something to start happening,' as if to 'squeeze fast'. Hesitated. Was that a flash in Harry's eye? Well, he complained about the tycoon quite theatrically. The young man, even though time is money, talking is cheap. I'm going out in five minutes, and
I'd better have something solid to show me. Thank you, Mr King, that's very kind of you, sir, but we'll have to heat the boiler first, sir, and so we'll have 'er throbbing in no more than two hours, sir, you'll see. Soon after, and just in time, the smoke and
steam enveloped the complex and Harry King saw and, in fact, was surprised. And Harry King was really surprised. There was something like an insect in the metal contraption, pieces of which rotated incessantly while everything was shrouded in a cloud of smoke and steam from their own manufacture. Harry King saw the purpose personified. Purpose,
moreover, that you would be unlikely to ever ask for a day off for your grandmother's funeral. Page 8 On the noise he shouted, 'What did you say this thing is called, boy?' Iron Girder, sir. What if let us put your rails on, sir, we can
really show you what you can do. Yes, sir. She runs on an iron road, you'll see. Suddenly there was the sound of a banshee in the heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'steam. He heat as Wally moved a lever. I'm sorry, sir, you're here to let t'steam out. This is 'arnessing t'st
test trail around your complex. We'll have 'er running very soon, I promise.' Harry was unusually silent. The through the machine was like some kind of spell. Once again, the metal voice of the steam sounded over the compound like a lost soul and found himself unable to leave. Harry wasn't a man for introspection and all that crap, but he thought this, well,
this was something worth looking at more closely. And then he noticed the faces of the crowd around the enclosure, the elves climbing into this furious new devil who was nevertheless under the control of two boys in flat caps and very little to talk about with regard to teeth. Making his thoughts align properly, Harry turned to Dick Simnel and said, 'Mr. Simnel
I'll give you two days, no more. You have your chance, sir, don't waste it. I'm, as I say, a busy man. Two days to show me something that amazes me. Let's go. Dwarves and men sat down and listened intently to the old man sitting in the corner of the human Treacle Minerfn15, possibly, but with a beard any respectable dwarf would have coveted, who had
decided to share with them his knowledge of the world of treacle mining. Get together, boys, fill up my pot and I'll tell you a story that's dark and sticky. She looked significantly at her empty tank and there was laughter, as she was replaced by a good wish and, while drinking her beer, began her story. Years ago, unexpected deep treacle reserves had been
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discovered under Ankh-Morpork, fathoms down, and as every treacle miner knew, the lower the treacle, the better the texture and therefore the better the taste. In truth, and at least in Ankh-Morpork, there was very little friction between the dwarf clans on this matter, and the question of who would be allowed to extract the discovery was kindly treated by the
old, dwarves and humans. Everyone admitted that when it came to working underground there was nothing like dwarves, but, to the dismay of older miners, very few of Ankh-Morpork's young dwarves were at all interested in mining under any circumstances. And so the old grays welcomed the local miners of any kind to work under the venerable streets of
Ankh-Morpork, to the great pleasure of seeing that the treacle was produced correctly from and the miners, whoever they were, did their sticky business in pursuit of the glowing treacle. And something happened, it happened, near the Shires, where the dwarf miners had been working on a reasonable seam, part of which was underground that at the time
belonged to the Lower King of the Dwarves. In those not too distant days, political relations between humans and dwarves were somewhat nervous. The day things came to an end there was a sudden drop in dark toffee, extremely precious and very unusual, but feared by all treacle miners due to their tendency to spontaneously collapse into the tunnels.
According to eyewitnesses, both humans and dwarves were exploding underground, while politicians argued on both sides of political division. And this fall was mostly on the human side of the seam, with many men trapped in a flood of relentless stickiness. He hesitated for a moment and said, 'Or it could have been the dwarf side, now I think about it...' He
seemed embarrassed, but he continued. Well, it doesn't really matter now who they were, it was a long time ago anyway. The miners who worked at the seam on the other side of the fall heard that there were a lot of miners down there, trapped and drowned in refined sugar derivatives, and they said, Come on, guys, get the equipment together and we're
going to get them out of there. The old man hesitated for one more moment, possibly to his effect, and said, 'But of course that meant they had to enter territory that required going through two bloody security barriers manned by armed guards. The guards, moreover, who were not so concerned about the miners and were certainly not going to drop any of the
enemies on their sovereign soil.' Another significant pause, then the story ran in. All the miners had piled up against the barriers. Someone said, 'We can't attack them, they hove guns!' and they looked at each other in what's known as a wild assumption, and then another voice shouted, 'But we too, when you look at it the right way, and ours are bigger!' And
the speaker waved his huge fist and said, 'And we're extracting every day, not standing and looking smart.' And just as a dwarf, or possibly human, rushed the barricade and shovels came down on them at full speed and sixty miners were
saved from a very sticky situation on both sides of the seam. Nothing official happened afterwards because the officer didn't want any part of the shame of it. The old man looked around and shone as if he himself had been one of those miners and, quite possibly, it could have been, and his tanker was topped once more and said wistfully, 'Of course, that
was the old days. I wish it was still. Page 9 It was just the end of the second day when and his boys had Iron Girder chuffing slowly and deliberately along a short circular track in Harry's compound. And Harry help you realize that the appearance of the engine had changed and now it seemed somehow ... softer than before. In fact, he thought, he had
been ready to say elegantly, though it was hard to think of what looked like fifty tons of steel as elegant, but yes, he thought, why not? She shouldn't be beautiful, but she was. Stuttering, stinking, growling, smoking, but very beautiful, but she grows
on you, don't you think? And when we've built 'er up, and added in the wagons and as there will be no stoppin' 'er.' And there he was again. It really should be a he, Harry mused, but somehow the 'she' got stuck relentlessly. And then Harry's wrinkled forehead is further grooved. This young man clearly knows his things, he thought, and said that his machine
could carry people and goods... But who would want to ride this great monster? On the other hand, the compound smelled of steam and charcoal and hot fat – little sticks, healthy smells ... Yes, I'd give them a little more. Maybe another week. After all, coal wasn't expensive and I didn't pay them anything. Harry King realized he was unusually happy. Yes,
they might have a little more time. And the smell was good, unlike the ones he and Effie had endured over the years. Oh, yes, they could definitely have to keep the boys on his fingers of fingers of fingers was blowing
from the center, fresh and on purpose, and Adora Belle Dearheart thought he could see the edge of the world from here. She appreciated moments like this. He was reminded when he was young, when his mother hung his crib from the top of a tower as he coded, leaving his daughter making cheerful noises several hundred feet above the
ground. In fact, his mother said his first word was 'checksum'. And now I could see, clearly from its mists, cori Celesti mountain shining like a great green icicle. He sang as he squeezed the spinners in the top gallery. She was out of the office as far away from her as possible, and felt good. After all, I could even see the office from up here. In fact, I could
probably see everyone's office from here, but right now he solved the delicate mechanisms and savored a world where he could reach out and touch the sun, well, metaphorically at least. This dream was broken by one of the elves of the tower. I'm bringing in twenty spinners and a very hygienic bottle of coffee, I cleaned the cup myself with my own hand. Me.
From Twilight the Darkness, ' he said proudly. Loves looked down on a face that would take a frantic frantic of mothers to love, but yet she smiled and said, Thank you, sir. I must say you've really acclimatized for someone who's spent most of their life in a cave. I can't believe you don't even worry about heights that never cease to amaze me. And thanks
again, it really is a good coffee and still hot, too. From Twilight, darkness shrugged like only a leprechaun could shrug. The effect was more like a plot of dancing snakes. Boss, elves aren't strangers to acclimatize. Don't acclimate, don't live! And anyway, things are going well down there, no problems. The elves have relief! And how's Mister Slightly Damp?
Moist's fine, my friend, and you probably know my husband doesn't like the name the elves have given him. He thinks you're doing it on purpose. Do you want us to stop? Oh, no! He teaches you a lesson in humility. I think he has to go to college in that sense. The elf smiled in the path of a conspirator, and could see Adora Belle trying not to laugh, while
applause continued to send his messages to the world. Adora Belle could almost read the messages just by looking at the towers, but you had to be very, very fast; and the elves were even faster than that. And who would have thought his sight was so demanding? Using the new color-increased sealing boxes after dark, most human observers could
separate about four or five or perhaps even six colors on a very good and clear night, but who could have imagined that the elves, fresh out of their caves, would be tirelessly able to even identify the puce instead of the rose while most humans had no idea what a puce was if they saw it? Adora Belle looked at Of the Twilight the Darkness and once again
recognized herself that elves were the reason clack traffic was much faster, more accurate and aerodynamic than ever. And yet how could you reward them for increasing efficiency? Sometimes elves didn't even bother to accept their pay. They liked rats, of which there was never a shortage, but because she was in fact bossfn16 she felt it was up to her to
persuade the little nerds that there were, in fact, many other things that you might be doing other than coding and deciphering messages of applause. It almost shuddered. They liked to work actively, all day and all night if possible. She knew that if the name on the door said 'Boss' then in theory she had to think about her well-being, but they
weren't interested in her own well-being. What they wanted to do was code and decipher, pausing only when the troll woman with the rat cart was Honestly! They liked it, but they wanted to do was code and decipher, pausing only when the troll woman with the rat cart was Honestly! They liked it, but they liked it.
they wanted to stay in their clack towers, and in the small hours of the night chat with the elves to the elves to the elves to the elves somewhere else. They would rather chat than eat, apparently, and even sleep in the tower, dragging on small thatched beds by the time they were forced by nature to take a nap. Page 10 Adora Belle had insisted to the trustees that there should be a
foundation, against the day the elves and their children wanted to move forward in society. So a little after the remarkable musical talents of Mushroom Tears had been so spectacularly revealed to Ankh-Morpork high society, the elves had become people, strange people, yes, but people though. Of course, there was the smell, but you couldn't have it all. The
novelty was around Ankh-Morpork as an embarrassing disease, thought Sir Harry King the following afternoon as he looked towards the complex where people were looking through the doors and fencing in a great whisper of speculation. Harry knew his fellow citizens from the bottom up, so to speak, slaves willing to novelty and the exotic, rubberneckers all
of them. The whole crowd was turning his head like one to keep track of Iron Girder, like a flock of sneers, and all the time Iron Girder was walking away with Dick waving from the plate of his feet, the air still full of smuts and smells. And yet, he thought, it's all approval. Nobody disagrees, nobody's scared. A beast out of nowhere. A fiery dragon, all smoke
and ashes, has appeared among them and they hold their children to look at it, greeting as it passes. What strange magic? He corrected himself; What strange mechanics could have accomplished this? There was the beast and they loved it. I'll have to familiarize myself with these words, Harry thought as he left his office: 'footplate', 'boiler', 'reciprocal',
'molybdenum disulfide',fn17 and all the tedious but fascinating language of steam. Having noticed that Harry was watching them, Dick Simnel allowed Iron Girder to slow down gently until, with an almost imperceptible bump, he stopped. Dick jumped off the footplate and walked towards him, and Harry saw a triumphant look in his eyes. Harry said, 'Well done,
boy, but be careful, be very, very careful. Be careful with everything right now. I've been watching people's faces with their nods pressed against my fence, their little corrugated faces, so to speak. They're fascinated, and fascinated people spend money. The most important thing in the business is to find out who gets that money and that's the way it is, boy,
it's a jungle out there and I'm more than a billionaire, much more. I know that while happy handshakes are very nice and friendly, when it comes to business you can't do bloody lawyer get in touch so they can talk from lawyer to lawyer while they raise their dollars. I
don't want anyone to say Harry King ran away from the boy who tamed the steam. For what it's use, I'll fund you to some extent, no doubt, because I think this engine of yours has real possibilities, huge possibilities. So now you have my interest and by the time the newspapers find out about this you'll have everyone's interest.' Dick shrugged and said, 'Well,
Sir Harry, it's great that you're giving me a chance, so anything you suggest will be fine with me.' Harry King almost yelled, 'No, no, no! I like you, I like you a lot, but business is, well, business is business! Harry's face was now puce with anger. You don't go and tell anyone you're going to take what they want to give you! Negotiate, boy. Don't get starry-eyed!
You negotiate. You negotiate hard. There was silence and then the boy said, 'Mr. King, before I decided to come to Ankh-Morpork I talked about things with my mother, a very cunning lady -- she'd ad to be, what with my father being somewhere out there in the ether, if you catch my drift. And she said if anyone wants to do business in the big city, Dick, make it
simple and see that they treat you. If they treat you properly, as simple as you are, then you can probably trust them. And then you can show them how smart you are. I think he's as straight as lunchtime. I'm going to go get a lawyer right now. Hesitated. Er, where can I find a lawyer I can trust? I may not be as smart as I think I am. Sir Harry
laughed from the heart. It's a tough call, boy, and a question I've needed lately, as it happens. My friend Mustrum Ridcully from college told me about one yesterday: a lawyer so straight he could be used as a lever. Why don't you let your boys show Iron Girder to the crowd, and come with me in my carriage, even if it's not a patch you brought here, huh? Uh!
Come on, boy, come on, okay? In their office in the Bar Guild building, Harry King and Dick Simnel met Mr. Thunderbolt, surprisingly large and surprisingly large and surprisingly a troll. A troll with a lava-like voice flowing smoothly. You're going to want to know my credentials, gentlemen. I am a member of the Ankh-Morpork Bar Association and have served my articles here under
Mister Slant, Mr Thunderbolt said. In addition to my ankh-Morpork practice, I am the only troll who also has accreditation as a lawyer in the kingdom of the Lower King. For nothing, Sir Harry, I am also the nephew of Diamond King of Trolls, although of course I must add that the nature of troll families is such that the mere word nephew does not justice to the
situation.' The voice was the voice of professor, but one who had chosen to speak in an echo cave. The characteristics were more or less like those of plant life in the visible cavities and, not least, that elusive, and possibly bright, glowing glow that caught the
light so delicately; not boldly in his face, but irresistibly there. Page 11 'And yes, I'm a one-step-through diamond and therefore I can't tell lies for fear of tearing myself apart. Besides, I have no intention of trying to do it. It seems to me, gentlemen, from what you're telling me, that you two agree, or want to play unfairly, and you both want to act decently with
each other and so, on this occasion, as much as my Guild colleagues can disapprove of, I suggest you act as a mediator and lawyer for both of you. Troll justice is remarkably simple, I just wish this could be the case everywhere. However, if you fall then I would not carry out the work of any of you later. Thunderbolt smiled and small flashes shone around the
room like an fireworks display. I will draw up a brief document which, elsewhere, could be called an agreement to reach an agreement. And I am the judge not on your side individually, but on your side, and leave the paperwork
to me. I hope to see you at the resort tomorrow. Harry and Dick kept quiet in the coach until Dick said, 'Wasn't that nice? For a lawyer. By the time they returned to the complex, elf Billy Slick, who had worked for Harry for many years, was dizzy, though he didn't know it, unaware that the word existed, and was at the door waiting for them when the carriage
was drawn up. Frantically, he said, 'I closed the door, Sir Harry, but it looks like you'll go up above anything to see this... This thing! I keep telling them we're not going to run any fun house here. The light faded and yet the viewers' eyes still followed Iron Girder as he traveled the track as Simnel's team put her through her footsteps, sparking in the
twilight as signals to the universe that the steam was here to stay. And when most of the visitors had reluctantly left to go home for dinner, some of Harry's elves sank into the complex to see the wonder of the time. In fact, they sneaked away, except
that at this point they were dancing around Iron Girder, and the boys had cut off work to keep skinny goblin fingers out of dangerous places. Iron Girder sat down and occasionally breathed steam or smoke while all the time, in the twilight, Harry heard little staccato voices questioning the engineers, 'What does this one do, sir?', 'What if I push this, sir?', 'I see,
sir, that this one connects to blastpipey armor.' Harry and Dick joined Dave and Wally while they were with Iron Girder answering barrage of questions. To Harry's surprise, instead of the complaints he hoped he was emitting from the boys' mouths, he saw that they were smiling happily. Looks like they're getting it, sir! 'Oh, yes!' said Wally. They're in
everything! We're 'waiting to keep an eye on them, but they seem to understand without being told, can you believe that?' And Harry marveled. He liked bastards, because any employer would like someone to work hard, but how does a elf get an understanding of steam engines? It must be something in his nature. Their little scruffy faces were crowned with
smiles in sight of something metallic and complicated. It was a sign of the times, he thought, and it seems time for the elves. Simnel was silent for a moment as if awakening the inner steam for the next thought, then said, in a careful kind of voice, 'You'd really think they were born for it!' I can't say I'm surprised, Dick, Harry said. Clack people say the same
thing. It's strange, but they seem to automatically understand the mechanisms, so be careful as they like to disassemble things on the fly just to see what they do. But once they understand how anything works, they seem to put it all back together. There's no malice, they just like to play with the best and, you know what, sometimes things get better. How can
you explain that? But if I were you, I'd have one of you three sleeping under iron Girder one night just so you don't get creative. The next day Moist turned to bed and saying, 'Mumble mumble grumpy murmur!' The
sequence was repeated three minutes later, with the same response, this time with the emphasis on the last syll record, pronounced three times with the increase in volume. Subsequently, in fact and to be precise, fifteen minutes later, Moist von Lipwig was taken out of Morpheus's arms by the too soft destitution of a leaf belonging to one of the guards of the
Ankh-Morpork palace, a species he did not like very much under any circumstances because they were generally creatively and at least humorously silly, which made them much more interesting. After all, you could talk to them and therefore confuse
them, while palace guards, palace, all they knew was how to produce, and they were pretty good at it. It was wise not to put them in any trouble, and certainly an audience with Lord Vetinari. Patrician was unusually not at his desk, but paying
attention to something on the large polished table that filled half of Oblong's office. Actually, I was playing. It seemed ridiculous, but there was no denying: he was seeing a children's toy with quite intent, a small cart, or a cart of some kind, on a small metal rail, which allowed him to continually sink into a circle for no obvious reason. He straightened up after
Moist coughed hard and said, 'Ah, Mr Lipwig. It's very kind of you to come ... Eventually. Tell me, what do you think of this? Page 12 Something much bigger and much more dangerous. Mr Vetinari raised his voice and said, as if speaking not only to
Moist but to the world at large: 'Some might say that it would have been easy for me to prevent this from happening. A stiletto that glided quietly here, a potion fell into a glass of wine there, many problems solved in one fell swoop. Diplomacy, so to speak, in the rough, unfortunately unfortunately unfortunate, of course, but not subject to discussion. People
might say that I was not paying attention and out of care of my duties allowed the poison to leak into the imagination of the world and irrevocably change it. Maybe I could have taken some action when I first saw Leonard from the chirom scribble something very similar to this little toy on the margins of his drawing of Countess Quatro Fromaggio at her Toilette,
but of course I'd rather break the old vase more invaluable than see any damage reach a hair in that head more useful. I thought he'd go down the road to his flying machines, nothing but a toy. And now it's come to this. One simply cannot trust the artifice; they design some terrible things for the love of doing it, without wisdom, foresight or
responsibility, and frankly, I'd like to see them chained where they can't hurt.' And here Mr Vetinari stopped and added, 'And I could have made that happen in an instant if it were not for the fact, Mr Lipwig, that the wretched are so useful.' He sighed, making Moist worry. Moist had never seen his lordship so bewildered, staring at the little truck as he went
around and around his little rails and filled the room with a smell of methylated spirits. There was something hypnotic about it, for Lord Vetinari, at least. A silent hand fell slightly, and eerily, in the Moisture. He turned quickly and behind him was smiling softly. I suggest you pretend you heard nothing, Mr. Lipwig, whispered. It's the best way, especially when
you have one of your, er, gloomy moments...' Still whispering, Drumknott continued: A lot of this has to do with the crossword puzzle, of course. You know how it is with that. I have a personal intention to write to the editor. Your Honor considers elegant completion to be proof of its integrity. A crossword puzzle is meant to be an attractive and educational
puzzle.' And then, his normally red pink face, Drumknott added: 'I'm sure it's not meant to be a form of torture, and I'm sure there's no such word as lagniappe. However, Your Honor has great powers of recovery, and if you want to wait while I make you a coffee, I bet it will be your old self again before you can say death order. In fact, Lord Vetinari stared at
the wall for only eight more minutes before he seemed to shake. It was transmitted to Drumknott and, with less clerus, acknowledged the presence of Moist, who had been subreptitiously looking at the unfinished crossword puzzle that was prominently on the other side of the table. Moist said, brilliantly, but with the best of intentions, 'My lord, I'm sure you
know that lagniappe is written differently than it seems. Just a thought, of course, just trying to be useful, sir. Yes. 'I know, ' said Lord Vetinari, in dark tones. Can I be of any other help, my lord, said Moist, receding that he had not been taken out of his bed for a made crossword puzzle, or to admire a child's toy. Lord Vetinari looked down At Moist momentarily
and said, 'As you have finally decided to join us at this difficult time, Mr Lipwig, I will tell you that once there was a man named Ned Simnel who made a mechanical device, propelled somehow arcane, to take on the harvest. The current difficulties might have started there, but fortuitously his device did not work, apparently tending to explode and burst into
flames, and so the balance of the world remained. But, of course, men who are attracted to touch-ups continue to play in their little sheds! And not only that, they find ladies, good sensible ladies, who inexplicably agree to marry them, thus raising a race of little hands. One of the world remained. But, of course, men who are attracted to touch-ups continue to play in their little sheds! And not only that, they find ladies, good sensible ladies, who inexplicably agree to marry them, thus raising a race of little hands. One of the world remained. But, of course, men who are attracted to touch-ups continue to play in their little sheds! And not only that, they find ladies, good sensible ladies, who inexplicably agree to marry them, thus raising a race of little hands. One of the world remained. But, of course, men who are attracted to touch-ups continue to play in their little sheds!
father's shed and certainly wondered if he, with his infinite curiosity, could achieve what his father, unfortunately, had not achieved. And now this young man has created a machine that devours wood and coal and sheds flames, polluting the sky, certainly scaring every living creature for miles around him, and making the very noise of the gods. Or so I Finally,
young Mr. Simnel has found his way to our good friend Sir Harry King. And apparently the two of them are now dreaming of a which I think is called ... the railroad road. Vetinari stopped only briefly before continuing. Mr Lipwig, I feel the pressure of the future and in this rotating world you must kill him or become your master. I have a nose for these things, just
like I did for you, Mr. Lipwig. So I intend to be like the people of Fourecks and surf the future. Giving it a little touch-up here and there has always worked for me and my instincts are telling me that this miserable railroad path, which seems to be a problem, could be a remarkable solution. Moist looked at patrician's gray expression. He had articulated the terr
railway path in something like the voice of an elderly Duchess finding something unmentionable in her soup. He had a total disdain floating in the air around him. But if you look at Lord Vetinari's climate, and Moist was an expert in Patrician's meteorology, you'd realize that sometimes an explosion of metaphysical clouds could soon turn into a beautiful day in
the park. I could almost smell his lordship reaching an agreement with reality in front of him: small face movements, changes in posture and all the litany of Havelock Vetinari's mind was running and well oiled. Page 13 Vetinari said,
increasingly cheerful in every word: My coach is waiting downstairs, Mr Lipwig. Let's go. Moist knew that any kind of argument was useless, and he also knew that Lord Vetinari definitely knew it too; but there was something like pride, and from what he said, 'My lord, I must protest! I have a lot of work to do. Surely you are aware? Lord Vetinari, in his robe
fluttering behind him like a banner, was already halfway to the door. He was a long-bone man and Moist had to run to keep up, occasionally jumping down stairs two at a time, with Drumknott in pursuit. In front of him, his lordship said, on his shoulder, 'Mr Lipwig, in fact you don't have much work to do. In fact, as Director General of Post Office, Vice President
of the Royal Bank of Ankh-Morporkfn18 and, of course, Master of the Royal Mint, you employ on our behalf many extremely intelligent people to like you against all the tests and surprisingly keep liking you, makes you a very good boss, it must be said, with staff who are
very loyal to you. But ultimately, all you really need to do on the way to desktop work is a little light auditing from time to time. Mr. Vetinari increased his pace and continued, 'And what can we take away from it all I can't hear you asking? Well, I'll tell you. What the sage will take is the certainty that any favor is worth doing for a good boss, and I, Mr. Lipwig,
Lipwig, a more exemplary and tolerant employer. This follows from the fact that his head is still clearly resting on his shoulders despite the fact that he could possibly dwarf. In truth, there were as many humans as dwarves who called Calls home, but since
most of them were miners, and as a rule, they were small or almost permanently concussed, you would really have to look carefully to distinguish the species. Therefore, since virtually no one was bigger than anyone else, there was general kindness in the area, especially since, although this was not generally spoken, the Goddess of Love ensured that her
spell covered equally. And since no one talked about it, well, no one was talking about it, and so life went on with mining for gold - how little there was of it for now - iron ore, zinc and arsenic that could be taken from the relentless rock and, of course, coal. All this was complemented by fishing on the coast. The outside world was involved only occasionally,
when something of real importance happened. That was yesterday, It happened. The ship arrived at Pantygirdl Pier, the largest city in Llamardos, just after lunch. The arrival of the grags on board, who had come to preach the truth of pure Enanism to the people of the city, would have been well received had they not come with the delves, the shock
troops of the grags, who had never been seen on the ground before. Until then, the people of Llamardos were very happy that the grags were doing what they did in the realm of spirit and their observances, keeping things well done so that everyone else could move on with unimportant things like mining and fishing and stonework in the hills. But today
everything went horribly wrong, because Blodwen Footcracker was marrying Davy Counter, an excellent miner and fisherman and, more important. Almost everyone in Pantygirdl knew them both and considered them a sensible match, especially since
they were young children. And as they grew up, people wondered, like people, about the chances of a dwarf and a human conceing a child and considering it a long shot to say the least, but then they met by telling each other that, after all, love was there in abundance and, besides, whose business was it anyway? He and she were compatible and
affectionate and, as mines and boats charged their toll on miners and fishermen alike, there were always a lot of orphans for a new home in their own country. And everyone in Pantygirdl agreed that the situation, though not as it could it has, however, been satisfactory for the kind of people who took care of their own affairs, and wished the happy couple,
who were, it must be said, very almost the same size, all the best. Unfortunately, the grags and the delves must have thought otherwise, and broke the doors of the chapel, and since the people in Called were not armed to their weddings the grags had everything in their own way. And it could have been a complete massacre if it wasn't for old Fflergant sitting
so far unnoticed in the corner, who, while everyone was running to a shelter, threw away his cape and turned out to be exactly the kind of dwarf who would take heavy weapons to a wedding. He spun a heavy sword and axe together in a wonderful destructive alises, a whirlwind of struggle, and in the end there were only two casualties between the wedding
party. Unfortunately one of them was Blodwen, killed by a grag while clinging to her husband's arm. Covered in blood, Fflergant looked around at the concussed wedding guests and said, 'You all know me. I don't like mixed marriages, but since you can't stand those damn gys, the bastards! Let the gap take them! Lord Vetinari's trainer swung through the
streets of Ankh-Morpork, and Moist saw traffic spread around them until they reached the River Gate and were out of town proper. The coach made a big step along the road as it followed the Ankh-Morpork was cleaning up his
act. It had been a good act, full of spices, pests, floods and other entertainments. But now the Ankh-Morpork, unlike elsewhere (or quite possibly instead of being dead in Ankh-Morpork, which was always an optional extra). But, as everyone
knew, the city was trapped in its old stone corsetry, and no one wanted to be there, metaphorically speaking, when the rooms broke out. There was excess water, and my, how it was a wonderful game, and Moist, in an earlier life, would
certainly have joined and made a fortune, several fortunes indeed. And in fact, as Lord Vetinari looked out the window, Moist listened to the sirens and their seductive songs of money that the right man had to make in this right place and the piercing vision hung in the air for a tempting moment. Ankh-Morpork was surrounded by clay, easily unearthed, so if
the cow shit ran out there was the for your bricks, right there in front of you, with easily available wood from the dwarves, delivered to your site by water. Soon you would have a terrace of shiny new houses at the disposal of the and the aspirational population eager to buy, and then all you needed was a bright billboard, and certainly an exit strategy. The
coach passed through many such buildings, which would undoubtedly be small palaces for the occupiers, who had escaped from Cockbill Street and Pigsty Hill and all the other neighborhoods where people still dreamed that they could 'improve', an achievement that could be achieved, oh happy day, when they had 'a small place of their own'. It was an
inspiring dream, if you didn't look too deeply at words like mortgage and repayments and refueling and bankruptcy, and the lower middle classes of Ankh-Morpork, who saw themselves as footsteps by the class above and illegally stolen by the one below, lined up with borrowed money to buy, in installments, their own little Oi Dongfn20. As the coach rumbled
beyond the settlements, known together as New Ankh, Moist wondered if this time Vetinari, by allowing all these lands to be colonized in such a way, had been very stupid or indeed very, very intelligent. He collapsed by clever. It was a good bet. Eventually they reached the first outpost of the complicated, stinky but ultimately more profitable, wire-fenced net
of Sir Harry King, at some point aher and man of rag and bone, is now believed to be the richest man in the city. Moist really liked Sir Harry, he liked him very much, and every now and those who got in his way were also on the hard track. Most of the
previous area was filled with the products of Harry King's noisome profession, conveyor belts that came and went from who knows where, being loaded and unloaded and ordered by goves and free golems. The horses and carts passed loaded with even more grist for that particular mill. At the other end of the complex was a collection of large extensions,
and in front of them a surprisingly clear stretch of space. Moist suddenly noticed the compound fence, pressing against every inch of wire nets, and heard what sounded like a sleeping-hard dragon, a kind of
chuffing noise, very repetitive, and suddenly there was a scream, as if the world's biggest teapot had become very angry. Lord Vetinari touched Moist on his shoulder and said, 'Sir Harry tells me that the sheds, and as they approached the smell of
coal smoke became more and the almost liquid noise grew louder. Wet thinking, well it was a mechanism, that's what it was, isn't it? Just a thing like a clock, yes, just a and so he straightened himself and walked fearlessly, at least outside, to the door where a young man in a greasy hat and an even more greasy general would dream of a greasy smile like a
fox staring speculatively at some chickens. It looked like they were expected. Harry came out boisterous and said, 'Greetings, my lord... Mr. Lipwig. Please come and meet my new partner, Mr. Dick Simnel. Behind them, inside the peel, was the shocking metal monster, and he was alive. He was really alive! The thought instantly stayed in Moist's brain. He
smelled his breath and heard his voice. Yes, life; strange life, but nevertheless the life of a species. Every part of her was subtly shaking and moving, almost dancing on her own, a living thing, and waiting. Behind the beast, in the bathroom, he saw wagons, presumably ready to be towed, and thought, yes, that he is an iron horse. Around him were acolytes:
men working around, hammering in metal, running back and forth with fat cubes and oil cans and occasionally pieces of wood that, at this time, looked out of place among all the iron. And there was a strong sense of purpose that meant that we wanted something done and that we wanted it done quickly. Dick Simnel smiled broadly behind a fat mask and
said, 'Ow do you, gentlemen. Well, before it is! Now you have to be afraid! His name, technically, is number one, but I call 'er Iron Girder! It's my machine. I made it, every little bit: nuts, bolts, flanges and meters. I had to design everything myself
because no one's done it before. Page 15 'And when you slide him, he will move more cargo than a battalion of trolls, and he will arrive much faster to start, said Sir Harry, standing behind Moist. He added, 'It's true. I swear young Simnel plays with Iron Girder all the time: tinker, tinker, tinker. A review every day. She laughed and said, 'I wouldn't be surprised
if I finally blew her up.' Mr. Simnel wiped his hands off his greasy rag, causing them to grease further, and then offered one to Mr. Vetinari, who gently waved it, saying, 'I'd rather you dealt with Mister Lipwig, Mr Simnel. If I decide to allow you your fascinating ... experiment, it will be up to him to answer, in the first part. Personally, I treasure my ignorance of
how machinery works, although I am well aware that this is of great interest to some people, he added, in a tone of voice suggesting that it meant strange and secret people. A guy, unfortunately, who would say something as innocent as, we're going to it can't hurt, can it? We can
always hide under the coffee table. Coffee. interest,' Lord Vetinari continued, 'finds himself in forms and means, opportunities, dangers and consequences, see? I'm to believe that its remarkable engine is steam-propelled, heated until the boiler almost, but it doesn't completely explode. Isn't that right? Mr. Simnel gave patrician a cheerful smile and said,
'That's it, gaffer, and I've flown one or three in evidence, I don't mind telling you! But now, sir, we've got you all right, sir. Safety valves! That's the fire before the boiler explodes. Simnel continued: 'Live steam is very dangerous, of course, for
those who don't have the knowledge of it, but for me, well, gaffer, it's as playful as a puppy. Sir Harry has allowed me to build a demonstration route, sir, and gestured to the rails that came out of the reservoir and wounded around the perimeter of the complex. May I ask if you gentlemen would like to come and take a little turn? Humidity turned to Vetinari and
said, with a flat face, 'Yes, how about... gaffer? And he's got a stiletto look. A look he said, we'll have words about this later. Vetinari turned to Simnel and said, 'Thank you, Mr Simnel. I believe that on this occasion I will give that honor to Mr Lipwig. And I daresay Drumknott will be eager to accompany him. This was said brilliantly, but Drumknott seemed
anything but delighted with the opportunity, and frankly neither moist was very happy, remembering too late that he had put on a new and expensive jacket. Moist asked, 'Mr. Simnel, why does your contraption have to work on the rails, please?' Dick Simnel smiled at the expansive smile of a man who really, really wants to talk about his wonderful pet project
and is now interested in illuminating every passerby to the point of boredom, and in the worst cases of suicide. Humidity recognized the type; they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in themselves kind and without malice of any kind, but they were invariably useful and in the worst cases of succession and the properties and the properties and the properties are also and the properties and the properties are also and th
earnestly: Well, sir, the steamer likes soft, sir, and the field is full of ups and downs, and steam and iron are heavy, and so put all this back together in the swine city seemed much more sensible to establish what we call the permanent t'permanent typermanent typerma
for the punters, however, Harry said. I keep telling the boy, short and agile, that's the kind of name people remember. I can't expect them to ride on something they can't Simnel radiant, and suddenly his cool face seemed to fill the world. Now, Iron Girder is greased, steamed and all on for you, gentlemen. Gentlemen. ready for a little walk? Drumknott had not
uttered a word, and stared at the haggling engine like a man watching his doom. Wet, pitying the little employee for once, half threw him away, half helped him climb into the small open cabin of the beast burned ardently, and filled the place
with even more smoke. And suddenly there was a shovel in Moist's hand, placed there by Simnel so fast that Moist couldn't help it. The engineer smiled and said, 'It may be t'stoker, Mr Lipwig. If he needs stoking, you'll have to open the firebox when I tell you. Ee, let's 'bird some fun.' Simnel looked down at the dazed Drumknott and said, 'Er, as for you, sir,
well, I'll tell you what. You, sir, can blow t'whistle, through this chain here. And as you can see, gentlemen, this is by way of being a functional prototype, with not many of the comforts of home, but 'old on and you will be fine as long as you don't put your head too far away. Today we're going to pull a few tons. Sir Harry was interested to see what it was made
of, and so, er, Mr. Drumknott, blow the whistle, please! Wordless, Drumknott threw himself into the chain, and shuddered like a banshee scream came from the engine. And then, well, he thought of Moist, there wasn't much, just a chuff, an idiot, another pair of chuffs, and another idiot, another chuff, and all of a sudden they were moving, not only moving but
accelerating as if the end of Iron Girder was trying to be in front. Page 16 Through clouds of moistened steam he looked behind the loads they were towing in the crunchy carts, and could feel the weight, and yet still the engine with his train was accumulating speed and momentum. Mr. Simnel was placidly touching his spheres and shift levers, and now here
came a curve, and the train twisted, and each truck followed the curve like ducklings following his dear old mother, shaking a little, certainly creaking, but nevertheless being a great thing on the move. Humidity had traveled fast before. In fact, a golem horse, that rare creation, could have easily surpassed them. But this, well, this was machinery, handmade by
men: wheels, bolts, brass knobs, dials, meters, steam and the snarling box of sizzling fire, next to which Drumknott was standing now, hypnotized and pulling the chain that blew the whistle as if he were performing a sacred duty, and everything shook and continued shaking like a red-hot asylum. Lord Vetinari and Harry came into view when the train ran
towards them on their first lap. And they disappeared behind Moist in the cloud of smoke and steam that remained in the air. Then, when Iron Girder dived, he burst into Moist's consciousness that this was not magic, nor was it brute force, it was, in fact, done, Coal and metal and water, steam and smoke, in glorious harmony. He stood in the ferocious heat of
the cockpit, shoveling in his hand, looking and wondering about the future, as the train cars collided around once more, squealing slightly at the second corner. Then, with the sound of tortured metal, he slid to a few feet away from observers in front of Iron Girder's spill. Now Mr. Simnel was in his arms and business, turning things off and shutting things down
while the wonderful engine was dying. Moist corrected himself: he did not die, she was sleeping, but still haggling water and whistling steam and, inexplicably, she was very much alive. Simnel came down from the cockpit to a makeshift wooden platform and looked at his huge stopwatch, looked at the dial and said, Not bad, but I really couldn't open around
here. On the test track in Swine Town I made her go at almost seventeen miles an hour, and I can swear that she could go much faster if I could put a longer track! And he moved wonderfully, didn't he, gentlemen? With all that cargo, tons of it. He told his fellow engineers this. Yes, what is it? And this, in fact, was directed to a small wide-eyed hedgehog,
which seemed to have miraculously appeared next to the track. Simnel looked seriously as the hedgehog pulled a very small notebook out of his jacket pocket and meticulously wrote the number 1 as if it were a commando. And Moist, for some reason, couldn't help but say, 'Well seen, young man, and you know what? I rather feel like you're going to need a
much bigger book in no time. And the certainty came to him that, although Lord Vetinari's face was as impassive as ever, those of Harry King and some of the others in sight shone in the smoky light of the future to come. Given the numbers already bordering the fence, striving to see the train on their community circuits, the news was out and flying. Harry
King said, 'Well, gentlemen, isn't this iron horse unbelievable? He seems to be able to move anything, I assure you. Now, there's a good lunch waiting for us in my boardroom, gentlemen. Shall we go up there? ... There's a little cracking good meat. Mr. Vetinari broke his silence. Certainly, Sir Harry, and perhaps in the meantime someone could locate my
secretary? They looked at the engine again, which had come to a stop in a human way, not all at once, but settles down like an old lady making he feel comfortable in a favorite armchair, except that at that moment Iron Girder exploded a stream of bright water vapour, which normally does not happen with the old ladies, at least not in public. Drumknott, in the
cockpit, was still desperately pulling the chain for the next whistle, and seemed to be crying like a little boy stripped of a toy because sizzling got weaker. Atrapó Atrapó look, carefully gave up the chain, came down from the foot plate and almost tiptoeed through the sizzling steam and occasional unexpected mechanical creaking, as the metal cooled. He
walked with ginger to Dick Simnel and said, 'Could we do that again, please?' Moist saw Patrician's face. Vetinari seemed deeply thought out, then said windingly, 'Very well done, Mr. Simnel, an excellent demonstration! Do I have to believe that many passengers and tons of cargo could be transported through this ... Thing? Well, yes, sir, I don't see any
reason why not, sir, although of course there should be some extra work, decent suspension, and properly upholstered seats. I'm sure we could beat the stage coaches, who are a pain right in the ass, sir, and therefore our horse-drawn
carriages leaves much to be desired. A trip to Uberwald is a penance without a cause and no number of cushions seem to help. Yes, my lord, and riding elegant steel rails in a well-lit carriage would be the height of comfort. 'So soft, ' said Moist. Maybe people could even sleep in a proper car, if there was such a thing? he added. He was surprised that he said
it aloud, but, after all, he was a man who saw possibilities, and now he saw them in spades. And he saw the face of Lord Vetinari illuminate considerably. Iron Girder had mounted his tracks much better than postal horses drove with the flints and potholes of the high roads. There are no horses, he thought of Moist, nothing to tire of, nothing that needs food,
only coal and water, and Iron Girder had pulled tons of un moaned weight. Page 17 And as Harry led patrician to his office, Moist reached out to Iron Girder's warm live metal. This is going to be the amazement of the time, he thought. I can smell it! Earth, air, fire and water. All elements. Here's the magic, no magicians! I must have done something good to be
in this place here today, right now. Iron Girder gave a final whistle, and Moist hurried after the others headed for his lunch and the future of steam. In the comfort of Harry King's luxurious boardroom, all mahogany and bronze and extremely attentive waiters, Lord Vetinari said, 'Tell me, Mr. Simnel, could your engine go to, say, somewhere like Uberwald?'
Simnel seemed to for a moment and then said, 'I don't see why not, your worship. It may get tough on Skund and, of course, it gets a little steeper, but I'd say the dwarves know how to hit the damn big oles in t'scenery when they want to. So yes, sir, I'm sure it is possible, over time, with a large enough engine. He struck a bolt of lightning and said, 'If we have
t'coal and and t'tracks, a locomotive engine could take you wherever you want. And it's open to anyone to build an engine, Vetinari said suspiciously. Simnel lighted up and said, 'Oh, sir, you can try, but you haven't had any of my secrets, and we Simnels have been steaming for years. We've learned from our mistakes. You can learn from yours. The Patrician
smiled faintly. A man behind my own heart, though laminating to the roof of the workshop is such a finite lesson! 'Yes, I know, but if I can be so bold, sir,' Simnel continued, 'I'd like to bid for post office work, here and now. Hit while the iron is hot, that's always been Simnel's motto. I know clacks can send a message as fast as lightning, but it can't make
packets and people can't do it. Mr. Vetinari's face gave nothing away, and then he said, 'Oh, really? I hit when I like it, but it doesn't matter, Mr. Simnel. Don't get me in the way of your exploration possibilities with Mr Lipwig, but I suggest that we should also consider the position of coachmen and farriers at this time of change.' Yes, think of Moist, there would
be changes. You'd still find horses in town, and Iron Girder couldn't plow, though Surely Lord Simnel could make him do it. Some people will lose and others will benefit, but hasn't that been happening since the dawn of time? he said aloud. After all, at first there was the man who could make stone tools, and then came the man who made bronze and so the
first man had to learn to make bronze as well, or enter a different line of work completely. And the man who could work bronze would be put out of work by the man who could work iron. And just as that man was congratulating himself on being smart pants, came the man who made steel. It's like some kind of dance, where no one dares stop because if you
stopped you'd be left behind. But isn't it just the world in a nut words? Vetinari turned to Simnel. Young man, I have to ask you, what do you intend to do next? There are a lot of people who want to see Iron Girder up close, I thought mebbe would hook me up in some small seats, and offer them the full chance of a ride behind her. If Sir Harry is nice, that's it.
Of course, there is a question of public safety, Vetinari said. Did I hear you say before that he's flown ... one or three I think it was the phrase? I had a purpose exploded, to see exactly how it was squeezed. That's the way to get the knowledge, you see, sir. You take your job very seriously, Mr. Simnel. And has any other engineer evaluated your findings.
What I'm asking, Mr. Simnel, is what is the judgment of Fellows? Simnel lighted up. Oh, yes, sir, if you mean Lord Lord Sir, he's our landlord in Sto Lat, but when I asked him, he laughed a lot and said it was amazing what people got up to and told me not to run Iron Girder in the pheasant season as they mated. In fact, Vetinari said. If I could rephrase my
question, what is the verdict of other engineers who have seen your wonderful machine running? Oh, I don't think anyone calls himself an engineer except me and my boys, he's ever seen Iron Girder, even though I've heard that in Nothingfjord a couple of guys have made a damn good steam pump to get groundwater out of the mines and such as. All very
interesting, but not as interesting as the Iron Girder he he hes. I'd like to go visit them for a pint and a talk one day, but as you can see I'm busy, busy all the time. Your Honor, Harry said, I respect Mr. Simnel because I've seen that he's one of those men who put their shirts in their pants and that tells me he's trustworthy. Now, there's a line of people
out there who really want to buzz behind the boys' house... Er... Locomotive. I think they'll pay a dollar to take a walk in the first of their kind. And the people of Ankh-Morpork are so thirsty for novelty that the whole city is, arguably, rushing the future for the great joy of seeing its progress. So I'm thinking that every man and child and possibly even his ladies
would like to have a ride on this wonderful machine. And should we count the risk, when simply living in Ankh-Morpork is shaking hands with risk every day of the week? murmured Your Honor. Mr Simnel, you have my goodwill, as it is, and I can see a glow in the eye of Sir Harry, a man who, if I may say so, looks like someone who intends to be an investor,
although of course that is entirely up to him and you. I'm no tyrant...' Page 18 There was a moment of silence around the table and Mr. Vetinari continued: That is, I am not a tyrant stupid enough to take a position against the zeitgeist, but, as you know, I am the man who can direct it with care and consideration. That's why I intend to speak to the Times editor
tonight to leave it, as he would say, in the loop. He always likes to be consulted, it makes him feel important. Your Honor smiled and said, 'Amazing, how do we think these things? I wonder, in fact, what will come next. The atrocity of the attack on the clacks tower in Sto Kerrig, which had so recently been a lifesaver for the world for the people of the city,
shocked everyone. While Adora Belle Dearheart looked at the remains at dusk, he was not surprised to see a very large and handsome wolf approaching speed and, unlike most wolves, carrying a package among his The wolf disappeared behind a haystack, and soon after from the haystack came a handsome woman, only marginally scruffy, wearing the
uniform of the Ankh-Morpork City Watch. Captain Angua, the most remarkable werewolf in the Guard, said, 'Oh, my God, you've certainly made a mess, haven't you? And you're sure only one of your people was hurt? Two elves, Captain, but they bounce well. Quick, too. Can you imagine, they managed to send a final message saying that their tower was
under fire from dwarves before they told her. Very conscientious, the elves, when it comes to machinery. They're always better on the night shift. I can say, Captain, when I find out who did this, I'm going to press you and put a lot of pressure on you, to a point where a police officer like you would have to look the other way for fear of seeing something they
didn't want. I wouldn't worry about that, Miss Dearheart. Your Honor believes that interfering with the clutches is interfering with the proper functioning of the world. Betrayal not only to your own state, but to all. At the moment, my friend Shatter of the Icicle, the main elf of this tower, has a bit of batter, but it will certainly help find the dwarves who did this.
However, I don't know where Shine on the Moon has come from. I'm going to prowl the area until my backup arrives. I'm waiting for the car and the Igorina for forensics,' Angua said. If you hear anything screaming it could be me, but don't worry. Commander Vimes doesn't have time for pointless sabotages. There was a pause, and Adora Belle said gravely
There's something I think I should see. Look under this pile of wood: this dwarf looks very, very dead and horribly mutilated. I guess he probably tripped and fell when he was on fire to the tower. What do you think, Captain? Carefully, Captain? Carefully, Captain? I guess he probably tripped and fell when he was on fire to the tower. What do you think, Captain? Carefully, Captain? Carefully, Captain?
understand that when the elves get angry they all really go frisky and look for memories.' But I'm pretty sure, of course, that none of your elves would be getting to do something like that, would they? Angua asked. Distantly, Adora Belle replied, 'Yes, being almost burned alive by dwarf extremists would shrug like another day in the office and not something to
get excited about.' He looked at the captain with questioning, who said: All right. Undoubtedly, any injury was caused by the incompetence of the terrorists themselves. Why, yes, indeed, yes, said Adora Belle. Wasn't it amazing how one of them managed to chew his own ear? Angua watched. So, can Shine on the Moon come out of hiding now? I'm sorry,
Angua said carefully, I didn't hear what you said about the cracking of the tower. The silence in Lord Vetinari's studio was However, the footsteps of Drumknott's approach managed to make it even quieter when the clerk handed her lordship a small piece of paper and told her that a second tower of clacks had been set on fire by people calling themselves, in
translation, 'The only true dwarves'. Drumknott waited while not a muscle moved in Lord Vetinari's face before saying, 'Let it be known that enemy action in the clack system will be followed by the death not only of those who ordered it to be done, whoever they are. Send this to all embassies, consulates and heads of state. Action
tonight, please. Still speaking calmly, Lord Vetinari continued: It is also time, I think, to let the dark employees deal with the most unusual suspects. I'm sure your concludium has given you some clues, Drumknott, and of course we'll help you in any way possible. The Lower King must be ... unhappy about this. Although the afflicted clack tower was ours, we
know that the impact of this problem falls on the last event on the King himself. Therefore, send him a message in the black claws and let him know that me and no doubt Lady Margolotta will support any new plans she chooses to make. The grags have once again broken a solemn agreement and which, the drum knot, bats the pillars of the world and not
inconsiderably. After all, if you can't trust governments, who can you trust? There was a subtle cough from Drumknott and his smile at the time was more like a grimace. Before the secretary was released to his private office and other intrigues, Lord Vetinari continued to fish in his own stream of consciousness, and said, 'I rarely get angry, Drumknott, as you
know, but now I'm angry. I'd appreciate it if you'd send Commander Vimes in his other incarnation as Blackboard Monitor Vimes. I need your help and I don't think he's a happy man, which, from my point of view, has no problem in these circumstances. Please put the message to Mr. Trooper that this is not the time to be a good person. Page 19 continued:
'This is not war. This is a crime. There will be a punishment. Rhys Rhysson, Low King of the Dwarves, was a dwarf of acute intelligence, but sometimes wondered why someone with that intelligence would enter dwarf politics, let alone be the King of the Dwarves. Mr. Vetinari had it so easy that he must hardly know he was born! The King thought that humans
were, well, reasonably sensible, while there was an old dwarf proverb that, translated, said: Any three dwarves who have a sensible conversation will always end up having four views. It wasn't as bad as all that, but it was close enough these days, he said to himself, as he looked the assembled members of his council in which, according to the rules, he was
the first among equals. He had read somewhere in the who owed him loyalty, whatever it was. It sounded like some kind of porridge. When his secretary, Aeron, had returned from a recent visit to Ankh-Morpork, he had described a standing match to the ball he stood for, which had, at his center, an referee. At this point, Rhys was feeling some of what the
referee had to go through as all the balls were kicked at him. How could you be the Low King in a realm where even factions had factions and those factions and advice to his countless subjects. After which they said thank you, something the
Lower King did not hear very often. Diamond King spoke for every troll everywhere. The dwarf race, however, had now fractured almost to the point of disorder and all this ended as a problem that the Lower King had to deal with. Today there was obviously an agenda or, rather, a regrettable number of agendas, one for each faction. Rhys wondered what the
word was for a large number of agendas, and decided that the term should be a living death from agendaritis. It was the deep grags that gave him nightmares because, well, there was something offensive about those thick leather clothes and conical hats. After all, he thought, we're all dwarves together, aren't we? Tak never mentioned that dwarves should
cover their faces in their friends' society. Rhys was surprised that this practice was deliberately provocative and, of course, negoded. Now, on the eternal agenda, the dwarves of all mines complained about the exodus of young people to the big cities. And, of course, everyone had reason why this might be the case, all of them wrong. Anyone who was not a
dwarf who preferred to live in the dark, in all that the word meant, knew that the reason why the younger generation was overwhelming Ankh-Morpork, for example, was simply up to those same whining and activities. On the other hand, those in whom he considered progressive dwarves, the guy who would happily have a troll as a friend, were falling on him,
the King, on the tendency of his race to conduct himself in a kind of purdah. There was a great cloud of misunderstandings in the Room of the Low King, which on all sides seemed almost intentional, as if any dispute, however insignificant, had to be crossed to the bitter end. It was something in the dwarf psyche. We spent too much time inside, Rhys thought.
He sighed when he realized that Ardent, whose voice had become unbearably strong, now had the floor. Ardent was a dwarf that the King would have liked to see present in a mining disaster, preferably beneath him. However, Ardent was a dwarf that the King would have liked to see present in a mining disaster, preferably beneath him. However, Ardent was a dwarf that the King would have liked to see present in a mining disaster, preferably beneath him.
games for you had to move all the pieces in the hope of finding a place where the whole image came together. At the time Ardent was insinuating that, in truth, the extraction of fat in Schmaltzberg's fat mines was not really dwarf, a commentary that led an elderly dwarf, whom the king recognized as Sulien Heddwyn, to stand up. Heddwyn put his hands on his
axe and said, 'My father was a fat miner. My grandfather was a fat miner and I was a fat miner and I was a miner when I was underage. My mother gave me a small selection as soon as I was old enough to hold it. Each of my relatives back to the Fifth Elephant dive was a fat miner and I will tell you, the export income of the
Plains for our purest fats is what keeps this city running. So I'm not going to take an insult like this from a b'zugda-hiarafn21 too afraid to look at the sun. The sound of metal in the metal re-kept around the room, followed by silence, with everyone waiting to see what was going to happen next. And that meant Rhys Rhysson had to break that silence. After all,
wasn't he the Low King, the Low King, the Low King of all dwarves? He smiled, aware that a wrong word from him would send shock waves around the result, whatever it was, would be his fault. Such is the fate of those who work only for the spread of peace over war, and the path of the facilitator of conscience is a path riddled with thorns. He looked at the
angry councillors brandishing weapons around the huge table. It was as if being a dwarf meant that you lived in a permanent state that the grumpy term simply could not convey. A dwarf lecture was, in his language, a confusion of dwarves. His voice low, Rhys spoke. For what purpose am I the King? I'll tell you. In a world where we formally recognize trolls,
humans and, these days, all kinds of species, including elves, the unrebuilt elements of dwarfism persist in their campaign to keep the grags auditing everything that is dwarf. He looked sternly at Ardent as he continued: 'Dwarves from all areas where the dwarves live in sufficient numbers have tried to modernize, but in vain of those of Ankh-Morpork, and the
shame of this is that often those determined to keep dwarf skin in the dark have somehow instilled their flocks to believe that the cosmos as sour as an ocean of vinegar. This can't be! Page 20 His voice rose and his fist crashed on the table. I'm
here to tell you, my friends and, indeed, my smiling enemies, that if we don't unsent against forces that wish to keep us in the each other and not spend all our time in a huge that the world is no longer entirely ours and, in the end, ruins it for everyone. After all,
who would deal with like us in a world of new elections? In truth, we must act like sapient creatures! If we don't move with the future, the future twists and rolls over us. Rhys stopped to accommodate the inevitable burst of shame! And it's not like that! and all the detritus of rotten debate, and then spoke again. Yes, I recognize you, Albrecht Albrechtson. The
floor is yours. The old dwarf, who had once been the favorite to win the last election for Low King, politely said, 'Your Majesty, you know that I don't particularly like the way the world is going, or some of his most modern ideas, but I was surprised to discover that some of the most important taps are still orchestrating attacks on the clack system.' The King
said, 'Are you crazy?! We make it clear to this council and to all the dwarves, after the message we received from Ankh-Morpork about their applause being attacked, that this stupidity must cease immediately. It's even worse than the nugganites, fn22 they were, to be sensible about this, totally and absolutely crazy. Albrecht coughed and said, 'Your Majesty
in this case I find myself standing shoulder to shoulder with you. I'm dismayed to see things go so far. What we are more than precisely communicated communication creatures is a benison to be appreciated by all species everywhere. I never thought I'd say this, but the news I've been hearing lately, and I'm expected to delight, I'm
ashamed to call myself a midget. We have our differences and it is right and appropriate for us to have them, and discourse and commitment are cornerstones in the proper world of politics, but here and now, Your Majesty, you have my full and unequivocal support. And as for those who stand in our way, I call a murrain in them. I say, a murrain! There's and commitment are cornerstones in the proper world of politics, but here and now, Your Majesty, you have my full and unequivocal support.
fuss and there's a fuss and this fuss stayed up for a long time. Finally Albrecht Albrechtson put his axe on the table, dividing the wood from top to bottom, bringing terrorized silence through the assembled dwarves, and said, 'I support my King. That's what he's a king for. A murrain, I said. A murrain. And a Ginnungagap for those who say differently. Rhys
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	al
	nd are the control of
for movement, new horizons, distant places, anywhere that is not here! No doubt the railroad was going to turn coal into gold. Excuse me, young man. Sergeant Columbus and Corporal Nobby Nobbs, who had noticed the line of expectant tourists queuing for a ride on the train, looked with uncertainty. It had been a long time since Sergeant Columbus had	l

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