



Eric the engine

Short story

One day there was a big storm. Lightning struck a mountain and a huge rock rolled onto the train line.

Seagull saw what happened. He called his friends: Rabbit, Fox and Mouse.

'We must move it. The 10:15 London train will be here in one hour,' said Rabbit.

The animals tried to move it. They pushed and pushed but it would not move.

'I know,' said Fox. 'Let's get Eric the Engine. He's stronger than all of us.'

'There's no time,' said Mouse.

'I'll get him,' shouted Seagull. 'Help! There is a rock on the train line and the London train is coming very soon.'

Eric tooted his whistle and called his friends. All the engines gathered around. Eric was big and strong but not very fast. He asked the express trains to go ahead. 'You go first. Then you,' said Eric, and he sent his friends ahead. 'I'll follow you.'

The engines raced along, but the London train was getting closer.

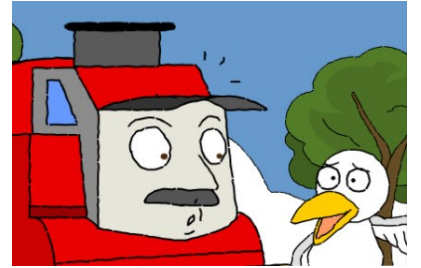
The trains arrived. The two express trains pushed, but the rock wouldn't move. The London train was coming over the hill.

Two more engines arrived and they pushed too. The rock moved a little but the London train was coming round the corner.

'They can't do it!' said Mouse.

Then Eric arrived. He tooted his whistle and pushed with all his strength. He pushed the four engines and the four engines pushed the rock. Slowly the rock moved. Then it rolled faster and faster until it fell over the cliff.

The London train arrived. It raced past the engines and the animals, who were waiting on the other line. The train blew its horn, 'Thaaaaank yooooou!'



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