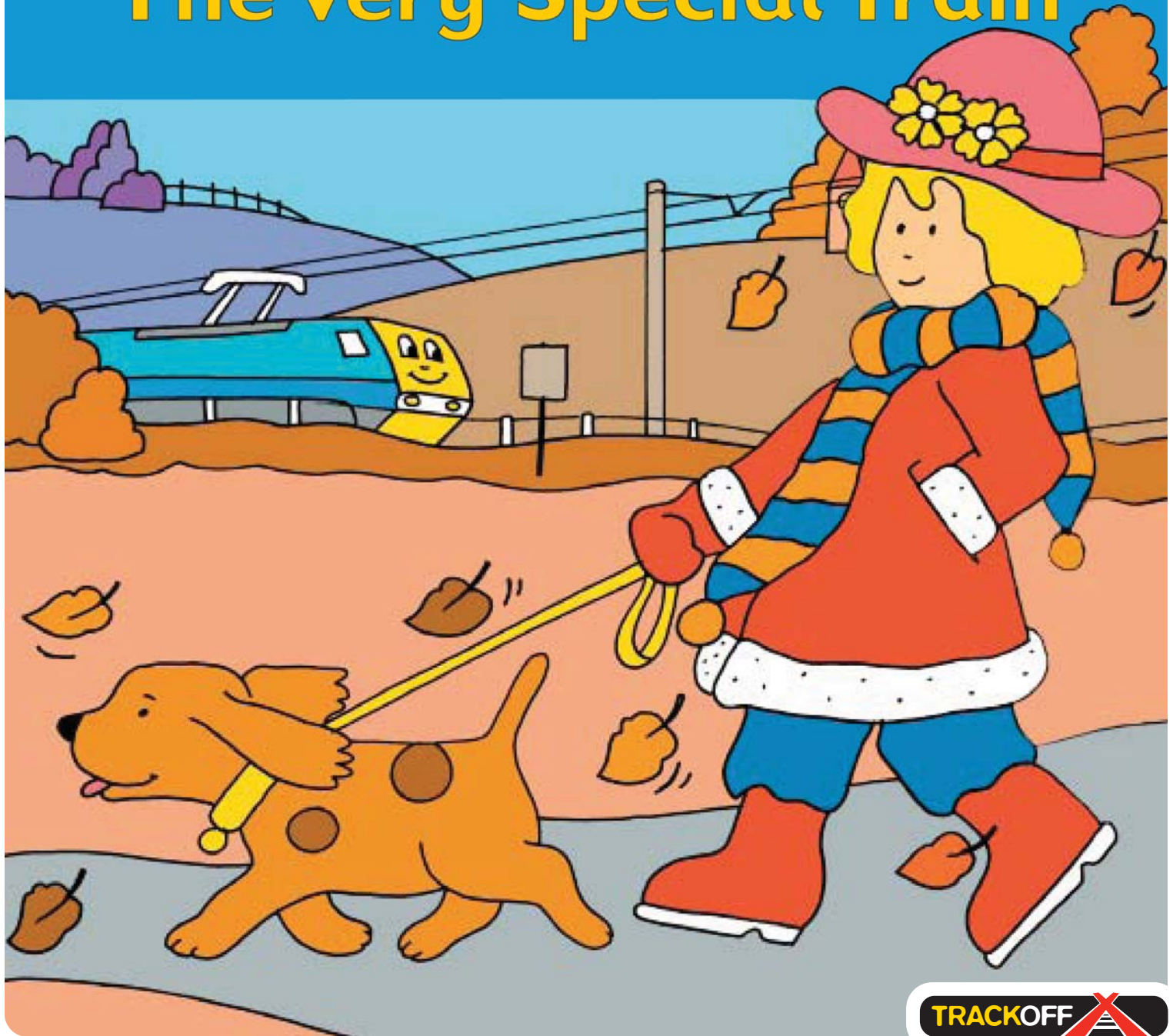


# The Very Special Train



**Hello everyone.** Railways can be dangerous places if they are not used properly. We hope that this book will show you what some of the dangers are. We want to help stop you from being one of the children who are killed or hurt each year on the railways as a result of misbehaviour or ignorance.

Happy travelling. **Policeman Len**



Hi everyone, my name is Alysha. I'd like you to remember the 5 golden railway rules.

**Rule 1** Never climb over or through a fence by the side of the railway tracks.

**Rule 2** Never climb on a bridge over the railway tracks.

**Rule 3** Never play with a ball or any other toy on a railway station platform.

**Rule 4** Never play with a kite or balloon near electric cables over the railway tracks.

**Rule 5** Never throw stones at a train or put anything on the railway tracks.

**Message to teachers/parents** Charlie the Crow appears on certain pages in the stories observing examples and consequences of dangerous behaviour on the railways. At the back of the book he gives information relevant to the activity he sees. You can use this to reinforce the message in the story.



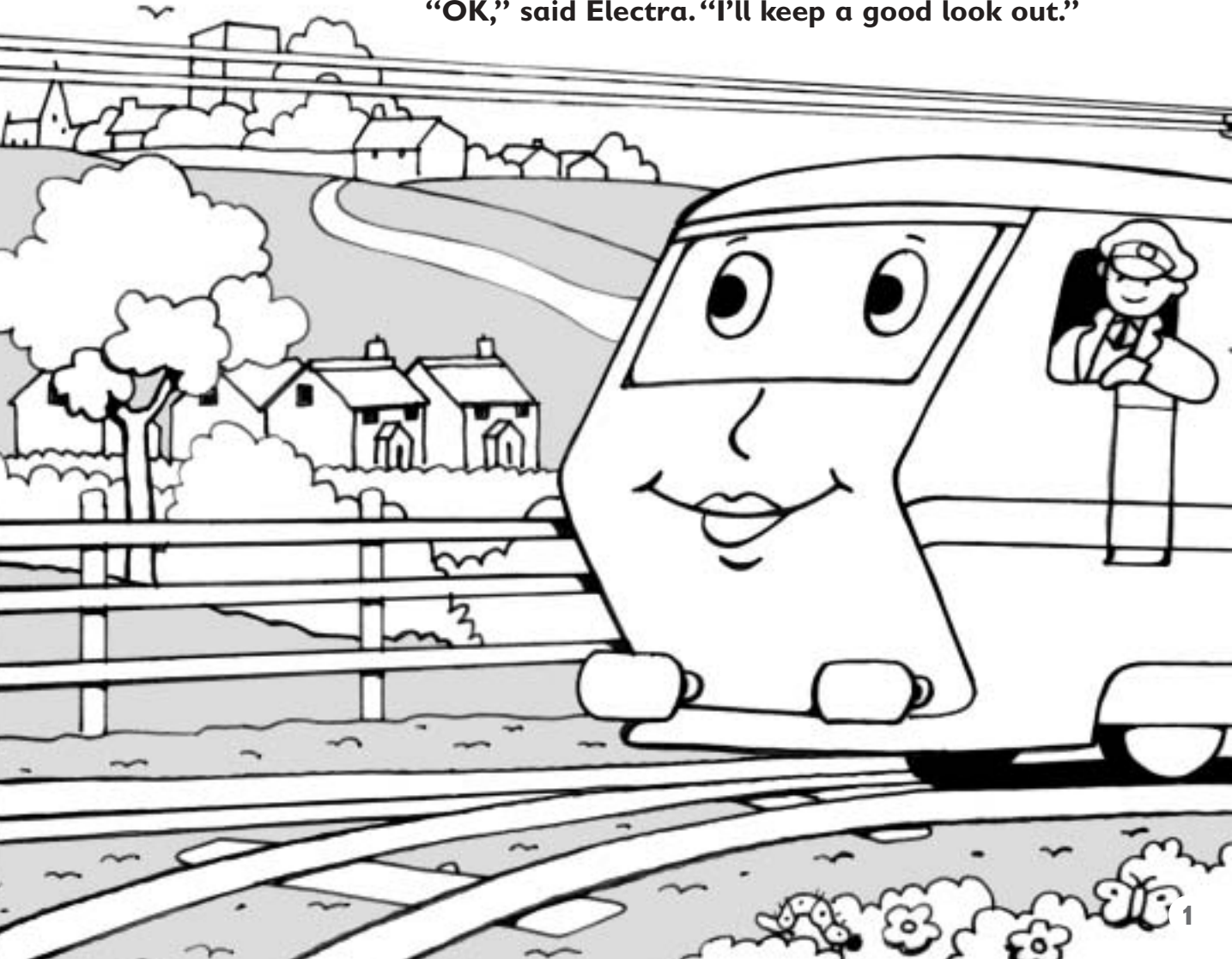
# Electra and the level crossing

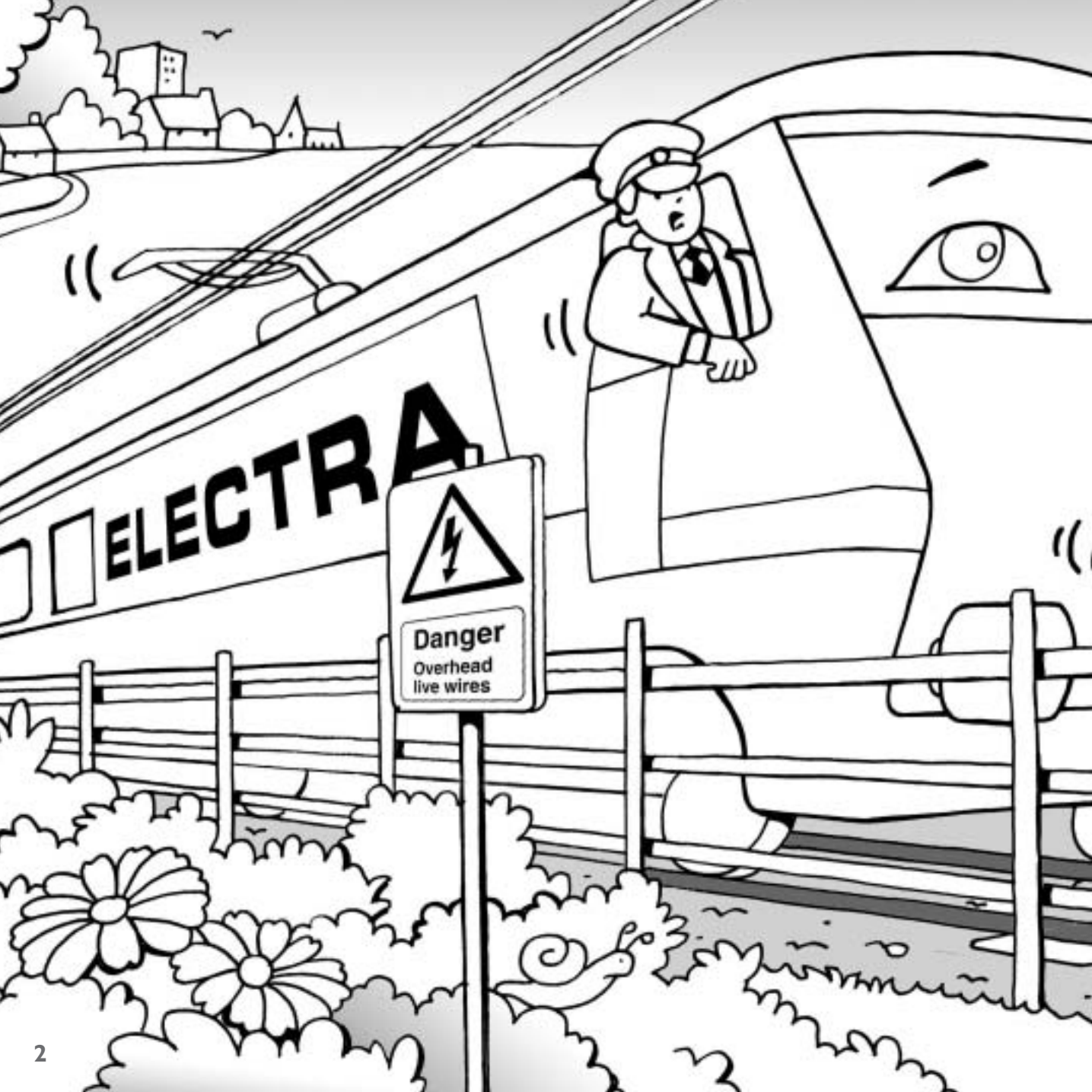
One day Electra, the very special train, was travelling down the track.

She was a very special train because it was electricity that made her go.

“Level crossing coming up Electra,” said Dave, her driver.

“OK,” said Electra. “I’ll keep a good look out.”

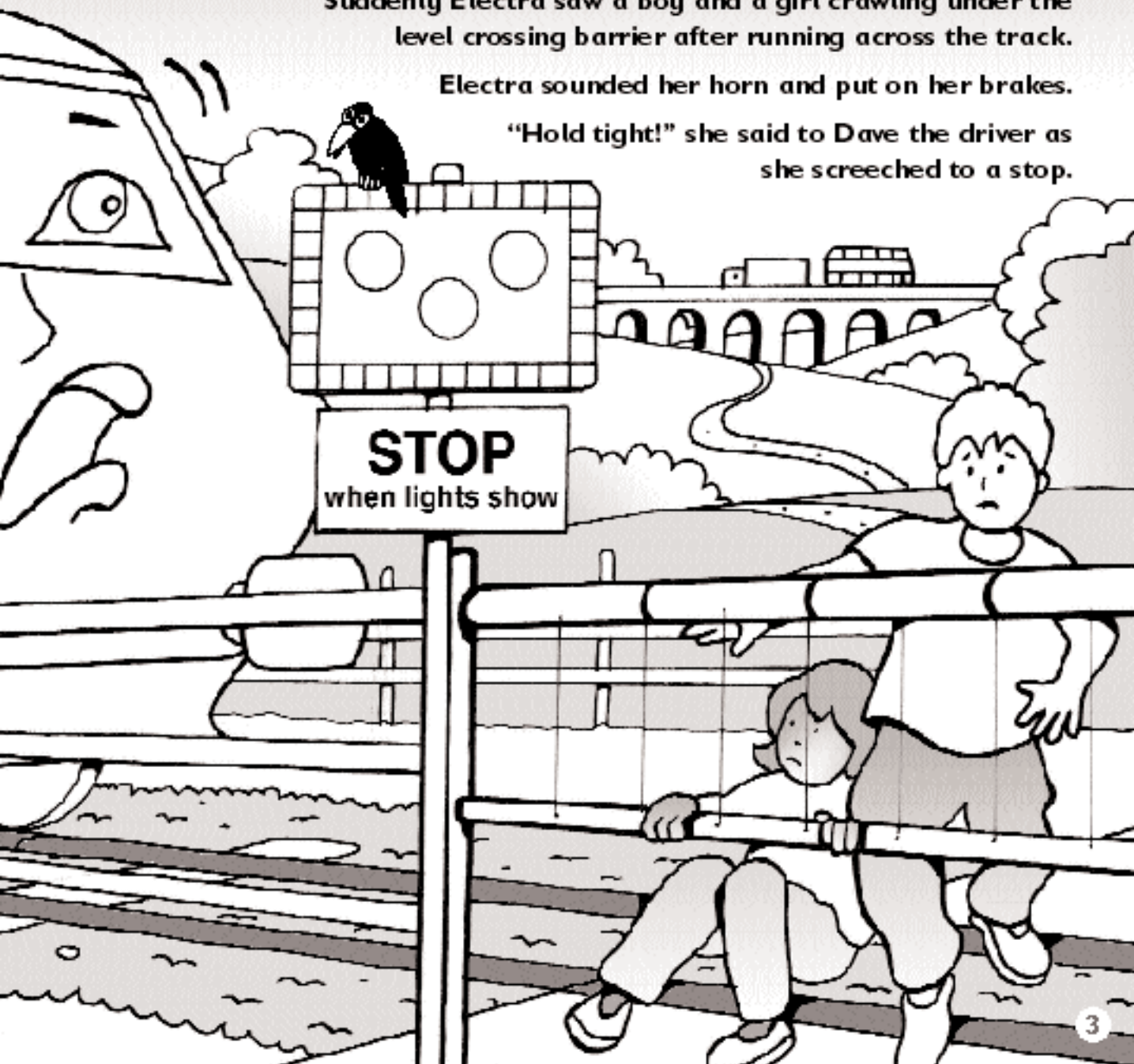




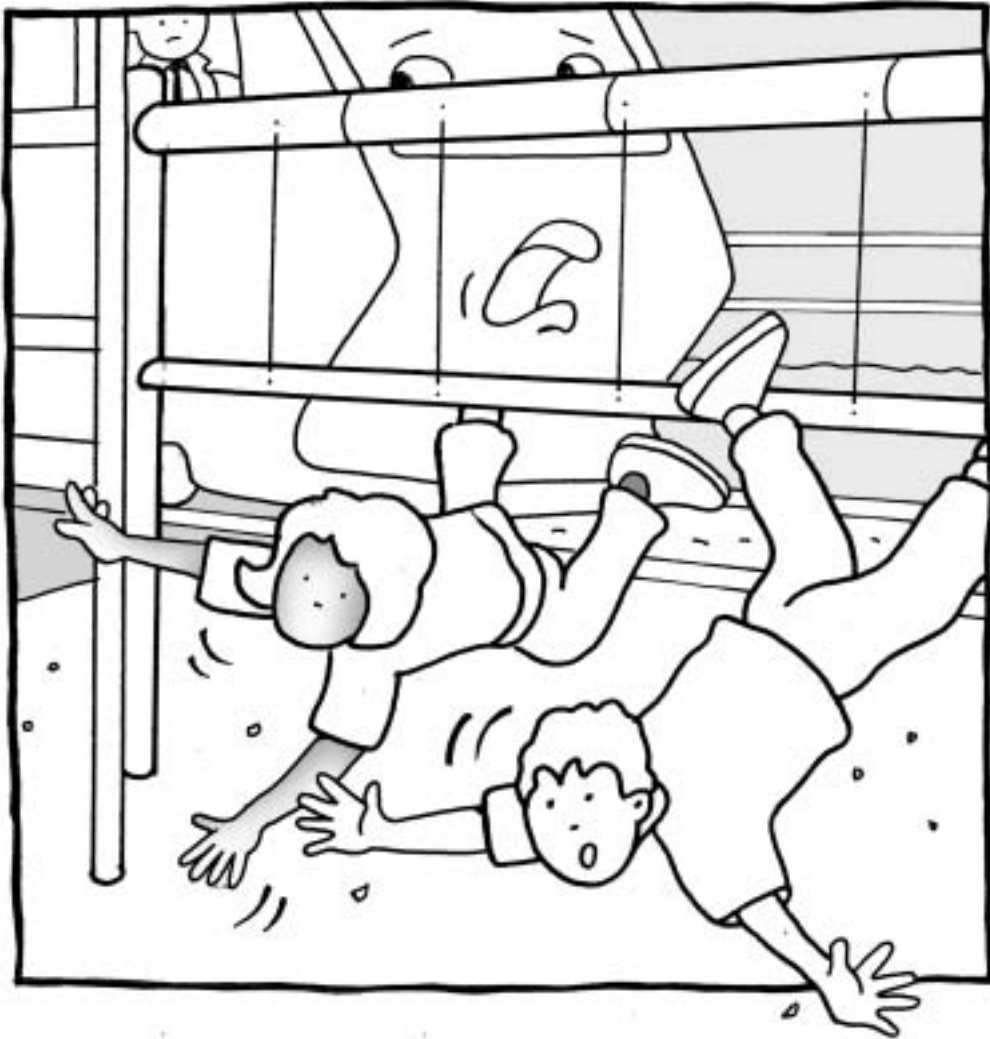
Suddenly Electra saw a boy and a girl crawling under the level crossing barrier after running across the track.

Electra sounded her horn and put on her brakes.

"Hold tight!" she said to Dave the driver as she screeched to a stop.



The boy and girl got out of the way at the last minute.  
They were very frightened by their narrow escape.



“What a stupid thing to do!” said Dave the driver. “I’m calling Policeman Len.”

“Why don’t some of these children ever learn?” said Electra.

“The level crossing barriers are there for a reason.”

**“Can’t you read the warning sign?”** said Policeman Len who was very cross.

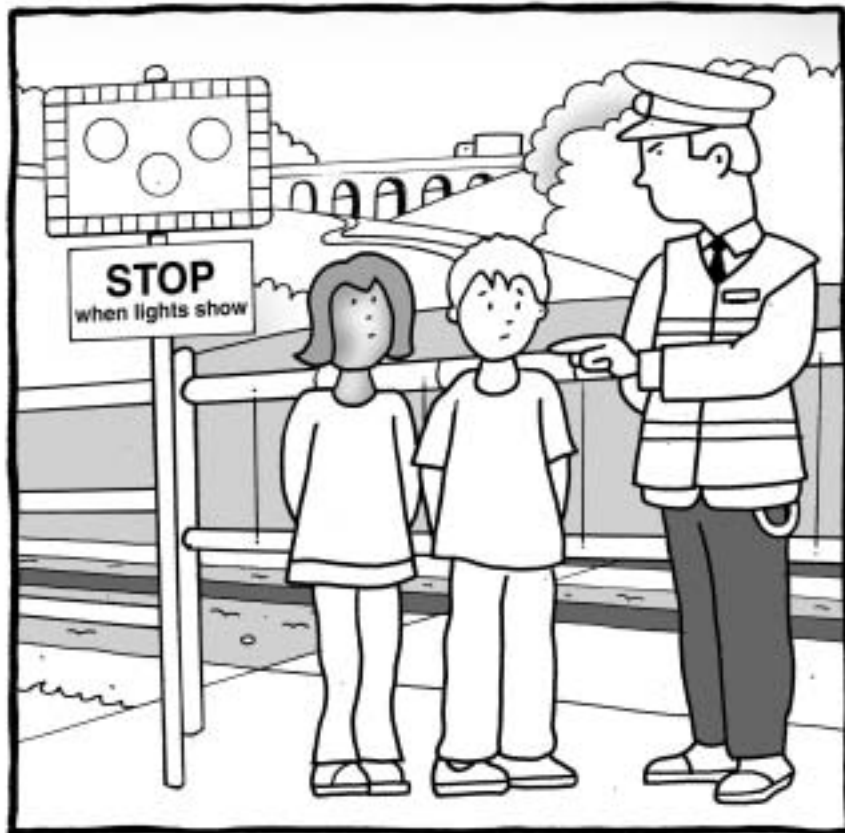
**“We were late for school and thought we had enough time to cross,”**  
said the children.

**“Only when the barrier is up and the lights have stopped flashing is it  
safe to cross,”** said Policeman Len.

Footbridge



Underpass



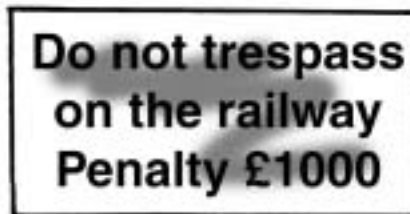
**“Other safe places to cross the railway are a footbridge or an underpass.”**

# Caught red handed

Policeman Len had a problem at the station.

It was a very serious problem.

Someone was spraying paint on the different warning signs.



On one of the platforms the sign that warned people about staying away from the edge of the platform had red paint on it.

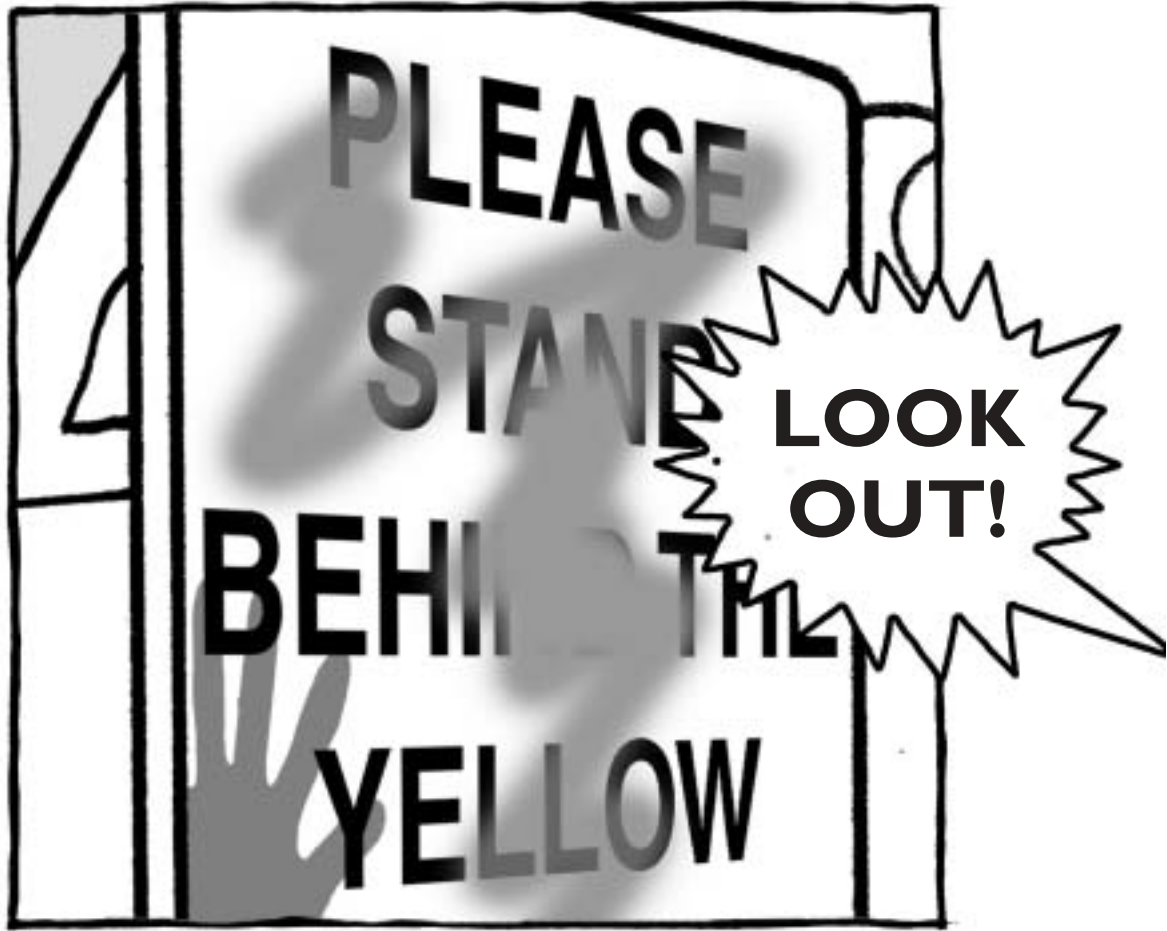
Policeman Len asked Electra, the very special train, and Dave her driver if they had seen anything.

“We just missed two boys who had been spraying paint on the wall,” said Dave.



“Sorry we didn’t see who sprayed the sign,” said Electra.

“Don’t they know the signs are put there to warn people about a danger?” said Dave. “How stupid they must be!”



Suddenly there was a loud shout.

The warning was too late. An old lady had slipped on the wet floor and fallen down. Policeman Len dashed to help.



“I couldn’t read the sign,” said the old lady to Policeman Len.  
“Someone had sprayed paint over it and left their hand prints.”

Policeman Len went over to the sign. The blue paint was still wet!

“They’re not far away!” he said. In the distance he saw two boys running towards the doors of the station.



Policeman Len quickly spoke into his radio and all the exit doors suddenly locked shut.

Please  
keep your  
luggage  
with you at  
all times



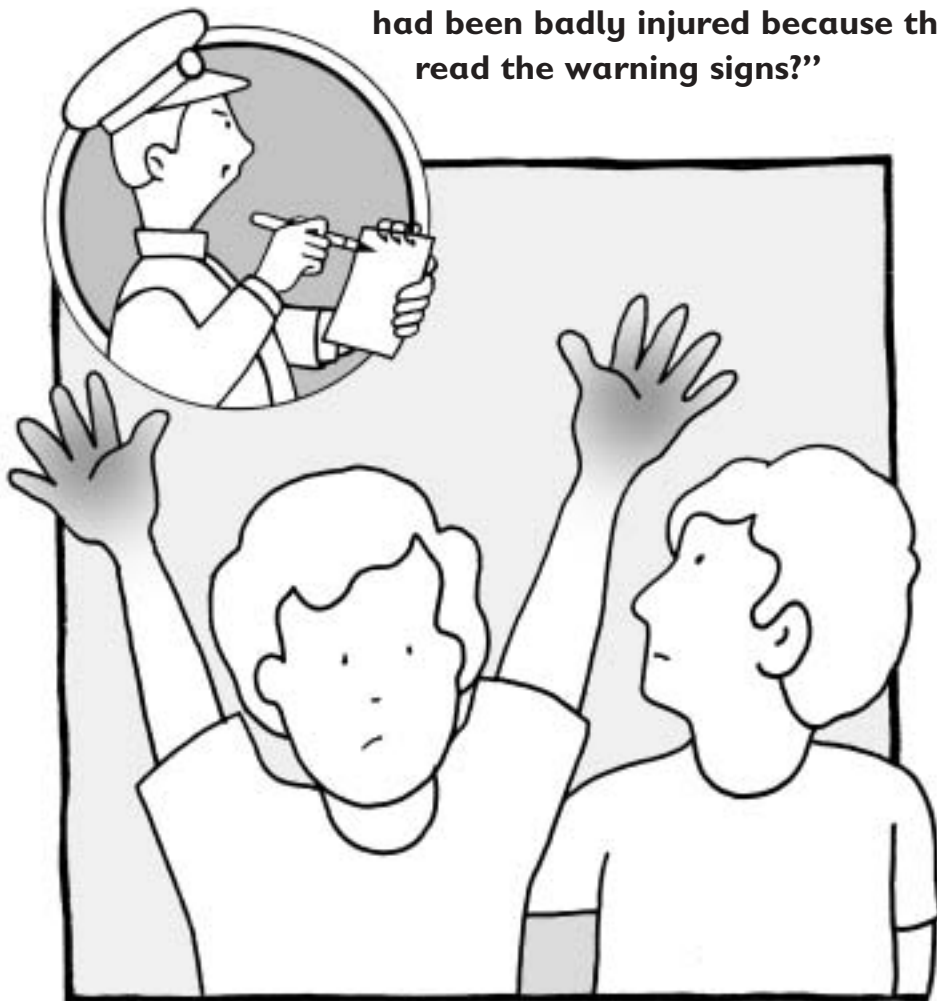
**Policeman Len walked quickly over to the two boys.**

**“It wasn’t me,” said one boy. “I didn’t do anything,” said the other.**

**“Let me look at your hands,” said Policeman Len.**

One boy's hands were covered in red paint, the other boy's in blue paint.

“How would you feel,” said Policeman Len, “if someone had been badly injured because they couldn't read the warning signs?”



The two boys looked ashamed as they gave their names. That evening they were given an official warning in front of their parents by Policeman Len.

# Suzy saves the day

It was a very windy day.

Electra saw a little girl she knew called Alysha.



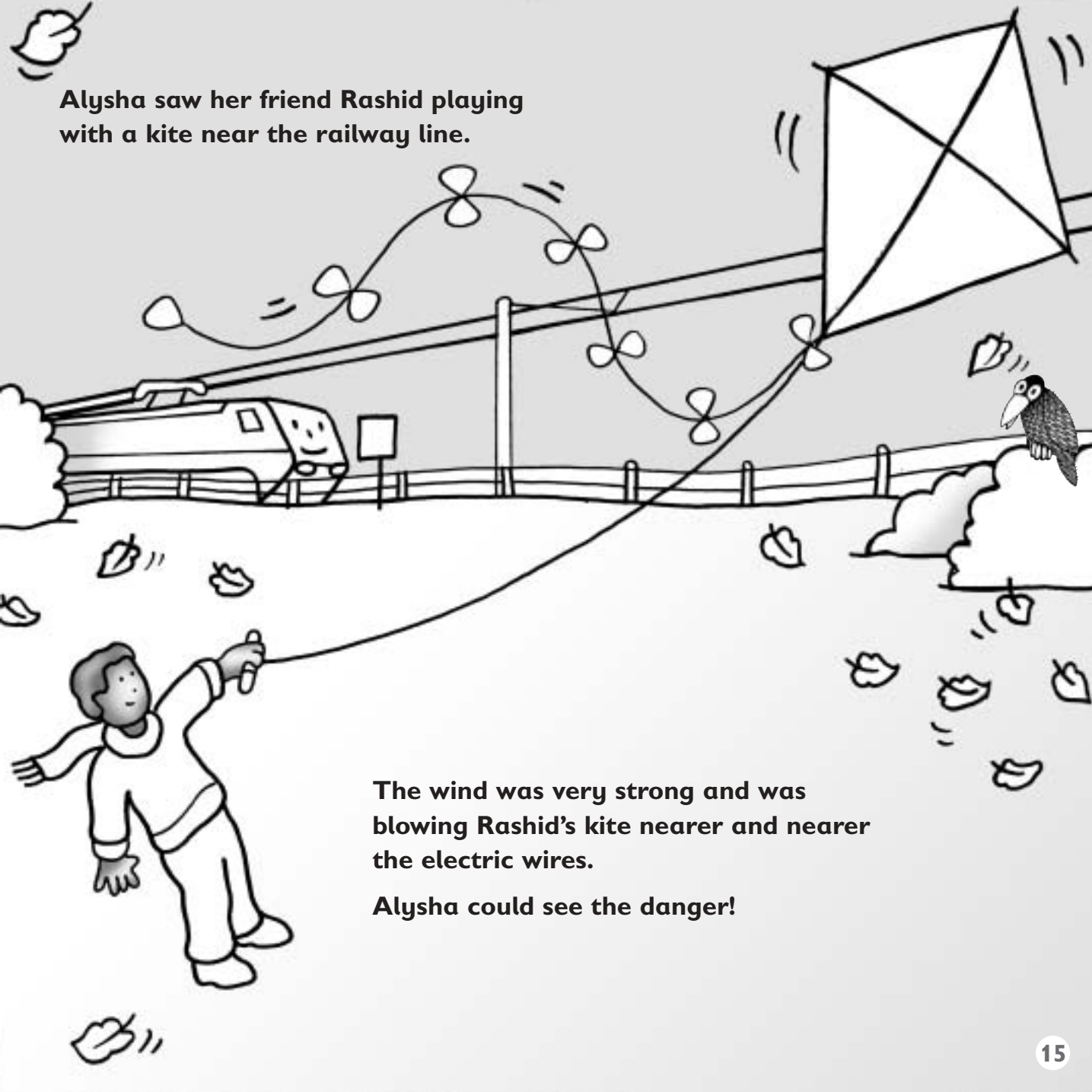
Alysha was walking with her dog called Suzy.

Electra sounded her horn and Alysha waved.

**Alysha passed one of the electricity warning signs.  
She remembered the things she had been told about electricity.**



**“We must not go anywhere near the electric wires Suzy,” said Alysha.  
“Electricity in overhead wires can jump across gaps and hurt you.”**

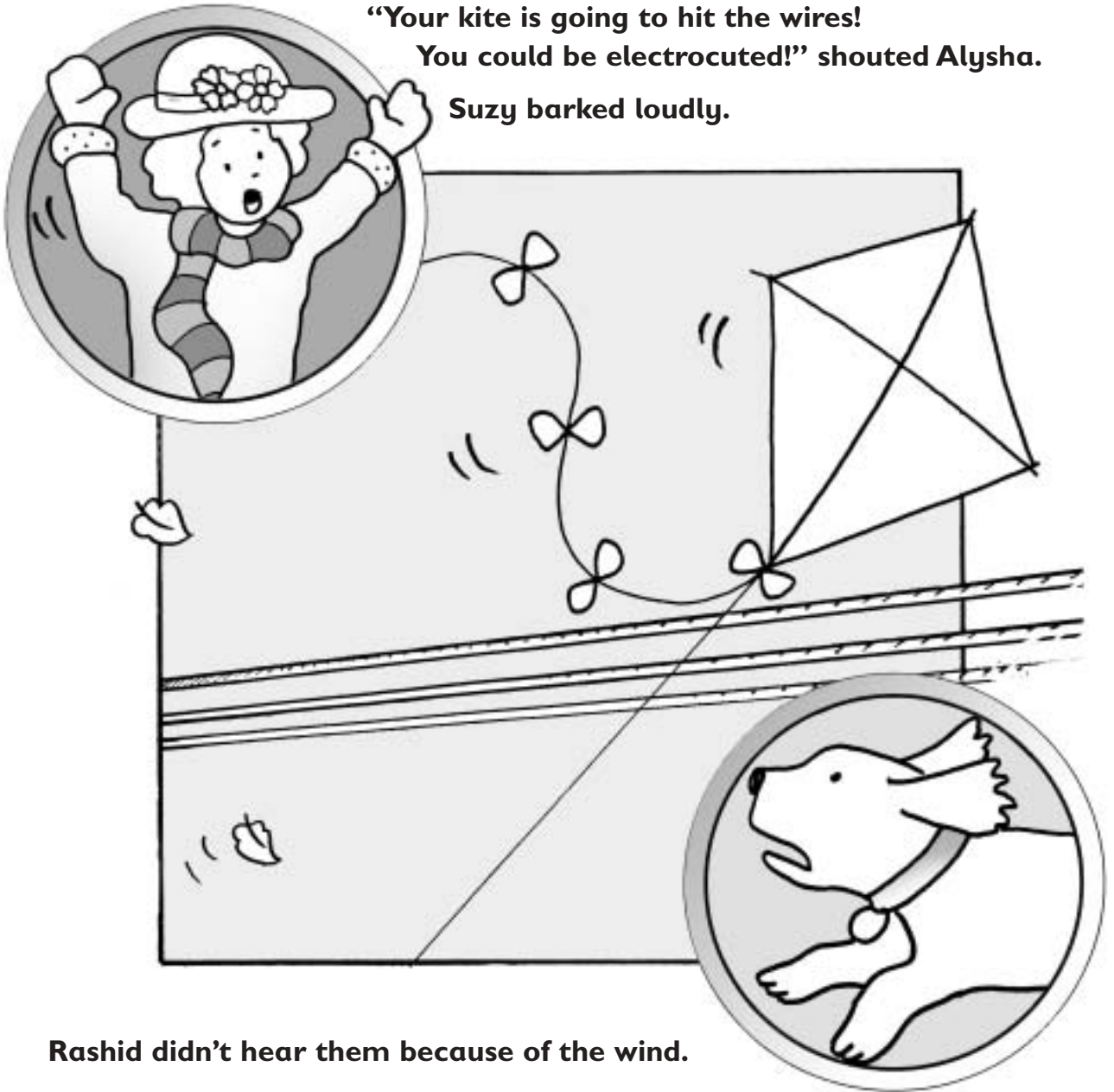


**Alysha saw her friend Rashid playing with a kite near the railway line.**

**The wind was very strong and was blowing Rashid's kite nearer and nearer the electric wires.**

**Alysha could see the danger!**

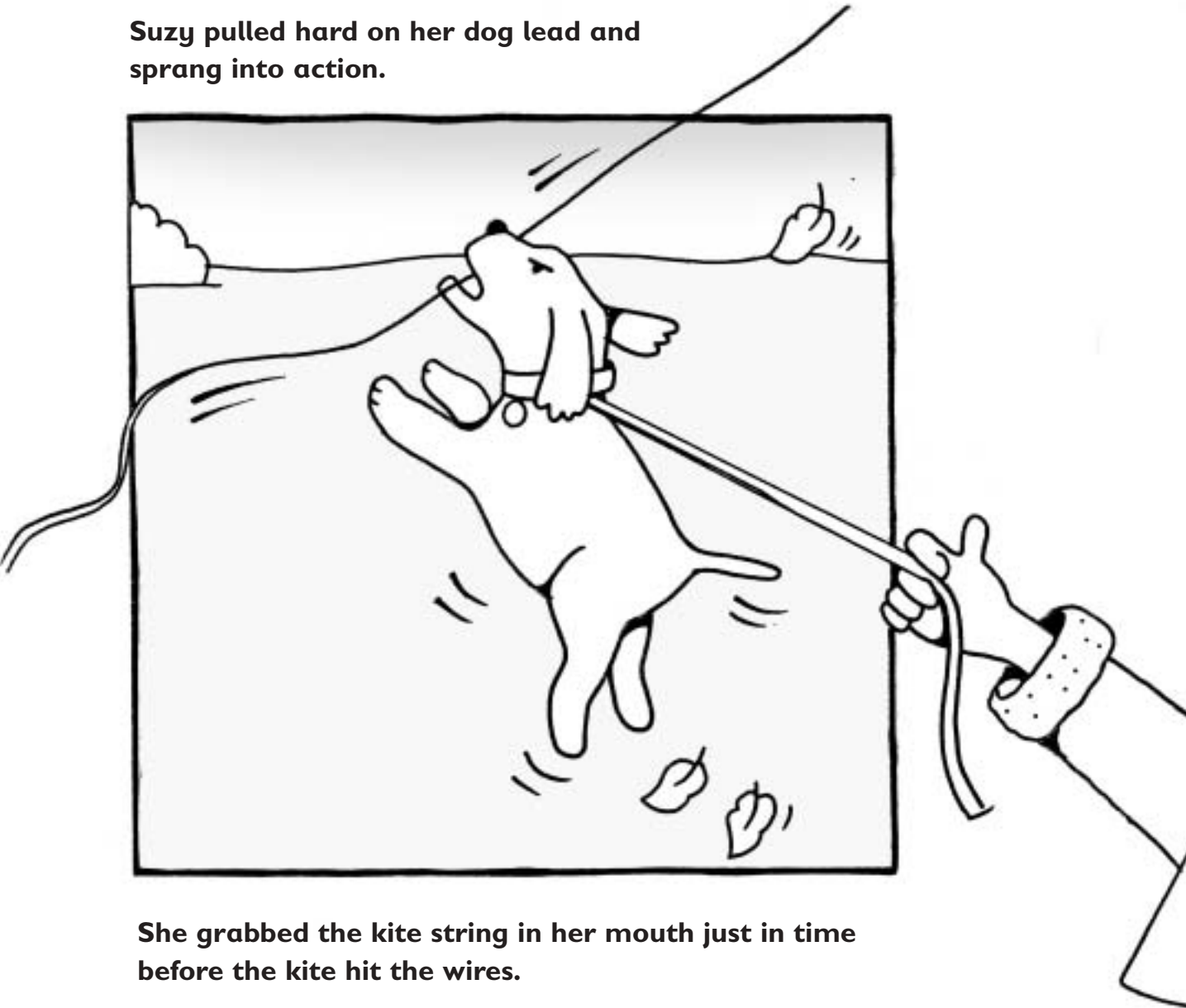
**“Your kite is going to hit the wires!  
You could be electrocuted!” shouted Alysha.  
Suzy barked loudly.**



**Rashid didn't hear them because of the wind.**

**The kite kept moving nearer and nearer the wires.**

**Suzy pulled hard on her dog lead and sprang into action.**



**She grabbed the kite string in her mouth just in time before the kite hit the wires.**

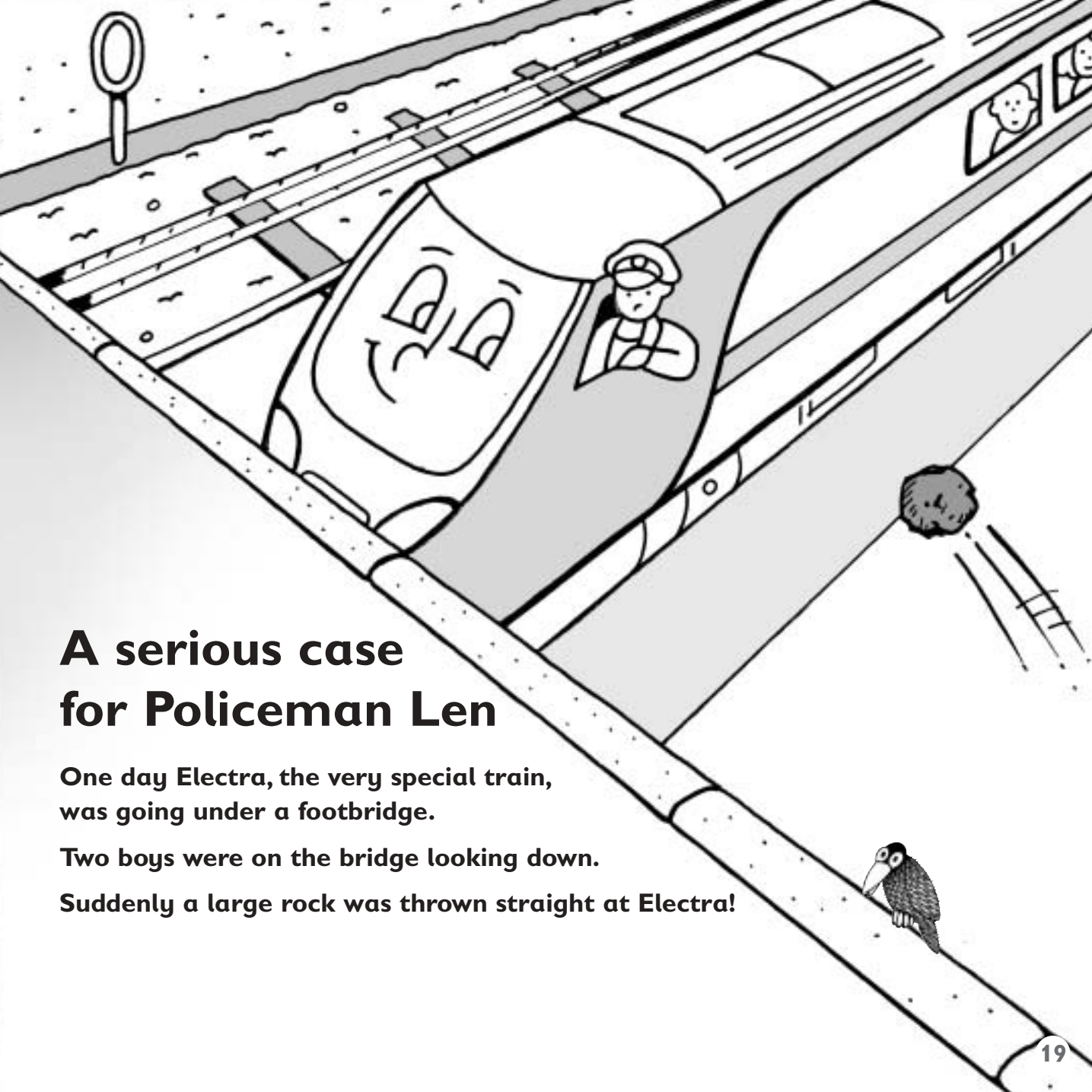
**“Well done Suzy!” cried Alysha. “That was close!”**

**Alysha invited Rashid for tea at her house.**

**She told Rashid how electricity on the railway can jump across gaps,  
go down the string of a kite and badly injure you.**

**Rashid thanked Suzy for helping him and promised Alysha  
he would never fly his kite near the electric wires again.**





## **A serious case for Policeman Len**

**One day Electra, the very special train,  
was going under a footbridge.**

**Two boys were on the bridge looking down.**

**Suddenly a large rock was thrown straight at Electra!**

**The rock missed Electra and Dave but went crashing through a window of one of the carriages.**



**Susan was sitting near the window. She was coming home from college to see her mum, dad and young brother.**

**She couldn't move in time and the rock hit her face.**

**Electra stopped at the next station.**

**Policeman Len and the paramedics took Susan to hospital straight away.**

**She had been knocked out and blood was pouring from a bad cut on her head.**



**“I hope she’s alright,” Electra  
said to Dave.**

**Policeman Len called for help to find the boys, as this was a very serious case.**

**The British Transport Police used helicopters, motor bikes and cars in the search.**

**However there was no sign of the boys.**





**On his way home the local school head teacher had seen two of his pupils on the bridge.**

**When he heard the terrible story on the radio he rang Policeman Len at once with their names.**

**“That’s funny,” said Policeman Len.  
“One of the boys has the same surname as Susan, the young woman who was injured.”**



**A few months later the local newspaper told the story about the boy who had thrown a rock at a train.**

**It had hit his sister who was coming home from college.**

**Susan got better slowly but will always have a large scar on her face.**



**Her 13-year-old brother was very, very sorry.**

**He had a long time to think about what he had done.**

**He was in a young person's prison for the next 12 months.**



## Trespass

Children as young as five years old have been caught trespassing on the railways, including playing games of 'chicken' in front of high-speed trains. If the driver puts on his emergency brakes when a train is travelling at 125 mph, it takes up to 2,000 metres (1¼ miles) for the train to stop.

Page 3



## Electricity dangers

Many rail routes are electrified with overhead power lines carrying 25,000 volts or with a 'third rail' on the ground carrying 750 volts. These do not have to be actually touched for children to be badly maimed, burned or killed - electricity at high voltages can "jump" gaps.

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## Vandalism

Each year there are thousands of reported incidents of objects being placed on tracks, thrown at trains or dangled from bridges in front of trains. Most of these crimes are committed by young people - children as young as five years old have been caught putting objects on the tracks.

Page 19



## Graffiti

Spraying paint on trains or railway property is not only unsightly and costly to remove but such activity often involves trespass and leads to more serious criminal behaviour. Painting over railway warning signs can result in innocent lives being lost if the message cannot be read.

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## It's not worth it!

British Transport Police may visit the parents of young children who have been caught trespassing, committing criminal damage or misbehaving generally on the railways. Older children may be prosecuted. The transport police make regular patrols and, in partnership with the railway industry, use security cameras, helicopters and other initiatives to catch anyone committing acts of railway crime.

Please remember what happened in the stories.

**PLAY SAFE and STAY SAFE - DON'T PLAY ON THE RAILWAY!**

## The Very Special Train

Electra, the very special train, is worried when she sees children doing dangerous things on and near the railway.

Her friends, Policeman Len and Alysha, are soon called into action.



The Track Off education campaign is funded by Rail Safety and Standards Board  
on behalf of the rail industry and associated organisations

[www.trackoff.org](http://www.trackoff.org)