

# The Tiny Toy Train

The passenger train, streamlined and diesel-electric, is stopped at the station. Passengers get off and on. They are quite tiny. From this distance, they can't be more than two, maybe three, millimeters tall.

It looks like a southbound train but it's not. There are no such trains out of this station, it's just pointed that way. If there were such trains I would ride them, every weekend or maybe once a month, back and forth to see my friends and family southbound of here.

As it is, I do nothing.

Tiring of this, I tap a fingernail on my front teeth. I don't recognize the tune.

I sit in my office chair and look out my office window at the non-southbound train with its tiny passengers stepping down, stepping up. Street bridges arch over the tracks to one side (the south side) of the station; tiny cars drive over in groups determined by cycling traffic signals at cross-streets at the feet of the bridges. Pedestrians can be seen. They are quite small and some of them are jaywalking.

Beyond the tracks and bridges, beyond the train and cars and buildings and infinitesimal people, small red-and-silver water-bombers take off from a tiny airport to fight forest fires in the little blue mountains southbound of here.

To the north, I have no view. Or rather, the view is of the wall of my office, littered with framed certificates attesting to my accomplishments and worth.

Looking at it this way—not at the wall, but out the window—the train will run right for a little ways, then turn left. When all is well, it will follow its curving tracks eastbound, skirting the little blue mountains. In three days, it may reach the ocean.

I look out the window at the bridges and streets and buildings, the tiny toy train and cars, the minuscule people. I had such a town when I was a child. It didn't have trains or cars, pedestrians or passengers, or cycling traffic signals, but it had tiny

toy soldiers and warplanes, the war having just been won.

The tiny toy train is about to leave the station. I see that the passengers are all aboard. They appear all to be civilians, though from this distance, it's hard to tell.

I see that the water bombers have strayed off course, have turned north, are heading my way and exploding in the sky.

In a moment, the train begins to move. Water-bomber pieces, looking like smoldering confetti, rain down on the tracks.