

## **Streetcar Chat about Accidents**

by the students of Southwest Charter School, Sarah Anderson, teacher

### **SETTING**

Waiting at the streetcar stop and on the streetcar

### **PLAYERS**

AUSTIN, played by Austin

JOSEPH, played by Joseph

VINCENT, played by Vincent

### **INTRODUCTION**

Joseph: Austin is waiting at the streetcar stop. Joseph and Vincent walk up to the stop and strike up a conversation with Austin about an awesome streetcar project they are working on. They begin telling stories and exchanging facts about early streetcar accidents.

### **STREETCAR CHAT ABOUT ACCIDENTS**

JOSEPH and VINCENT: Hi, Austin. How are you doing?

AUSTIN: I'm doing good. How about you guys?

VINCENT: Austin, you waiting for the streetcar?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

JOSEPH: So where are you heading today?

AUSTIN: I'm going to the Central Library, downtown.

JOSEPH and VINCENT: Cool! So are we!

VINCENT: Austin, are you going for any particular books?

AUSTIN: Actually, yeah. I am going to look for books about Portland streetcars.

JOSEPH and VINCENT: No way!

VINCENT: We are actually doing a project on early streetcar accidents in Portland.

AUSTIN: Really? But there haven't been any accidents since I have ever ridden on it.

VINCENT: Did you know that when the streetcar first came in 1889, there were a lot of accidents?

AUSTIN: No, I didn't know that there were a lot of accidents back then. Tell me about some accidents that happened back then.

VINCENT: Here is the streetcar. Let's go guys!

JOSEPH: The first one happened on February 19, 1890. A horse was pulling a laundry wagon down the road when suddenly it decided it wanted the whole road. It began to run towards the streetcar and the driver couldn't stop the horse. At the last minute, the horse swerved and the wagon crashed into the streetcar. The driver was thrown off and got bruises all over his legs. The horse started kicking the streetcar, bronco style.

AUSTIN: I wonder what happened to the horse. This is why I don't trust horses. Got any more stuff to tell me?

VINCENT: Another one happened on March 17, 1890 at 2 p.m. A streetcar was coming in from Fulton Park and it jumped to track just this side of the curve at the head of Front Street. Luckily no one was

seriously injured. One lady was thrown from the car and bruised her face. A young man's wrist was sprained and several others were badly shaken up and frightened.

AUSTIN: Seriously? Tell me about more accidents.

VINCENT: The most dramatic one that happened was in 1893 when a streetcar plunged off the Madison Bridge into the icy waters below. Seven out of the 20 people aboard lost their lives.

AUSTIN: (gasps) That's really tragic. I hope they passed safety laws that keep these things from happening anymore.

JOSEPH: Yes, they've actually passed safety laws to make the streetcars safer for people to ride.

AUSTIN: Thank god that they are safe to ride now. Well, here's my stop.

JOSEPH and VINCENT: Watch your step!

Austin: (trips) Whoops! Thank god Portland streetcars are now safer than I am!

JOSEPH and VINCENT: Bye, Austin!

AUSTIN: Bye, guys!