

The First Portland Streetcar

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

SETTING

Portland, Oregon, January 1, 1890, onboard the first electric streetcar.

PLAYERS

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER, played by Stevie

ALICE, a pro-streetcar passenger, played by Safire

EDWARD, a pro-streetcar passenger, played by Michael

STREETCAR DRIVER

INTRODUCTION

Stevie: Introducing "The First Portland Streetcar," a skit by Safire, Michael, and Stevie. Now, let's go back to Portland, January first, 1890, on the first electric streetcar.

THE FIRST PORTLAND STREETCAR

EDWARD: Oh, excuse me.

ALICE: No worries. I'm Mrs. Alice Delgado.

EDWARD: I'm Mr. Edward Prescott.

ALICE: It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Prescott.

EDWARD: The pleasure is all mine. And please, call me Edward.

ALICE: Okay, we should sit. A hill is coming.

EDWARD: We should sit. I'm a little worried about this hill.

ALICE: As am I. How do you think the streetcar will take it?

EDWARD: I have no idea.

ALICE: Well, how is a little tiny wire going to pull an 11-ton streetcar?

EDWARD: Yes, I am worried.

ALICE: Me, too.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: We're not going to make it!

EDWARD: I'm sure we will. Why do you doubt the streetcar?

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: I don't doubt the streetcar... I doubt the wire.

ALICE: Why?

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Well, like you said, little wire, big streetcar. Figure it out!

EDWARD: I'm sure we'll be fine.

ALICE: I hope you're right.

(Streetcar makes it over the hill)

ALICE: Glad we're past the hill.

EDWARD: Me, too!

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Can't believe we made it!

ALICE: Have you ever heard of James Steele and H.L. Pittock?

EDWARD: I think so. Aren't they the men who founded the streetcars?

ALICE: Yes, they are.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Nincompoops!

EDWARD: I heard it cost them about two hundred thousand dollars.

ALICE: So did I.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: What a waste.

ALICE: Why? It's a great way to get around.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: They could have used that money to buy and take care of more horses!

ALICE: But this way the horses don't have to do so much work.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: That's what they're for!

ALICE: Okay, then.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: How much longer is this horrible ride?

ALICE: Well, we got on on Yamhill Street and I think we get off at Fulton Park.

EDWARD: Right you are.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Yes, but how long?

EDWARD: Not much longer. We'll be coming up to Fulton Park soon.

ALICE: To think that to get from Yamhill Street to Fulton Park only cost five cents!

EDWARD: Yes, it's very nice.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Nice. That's an interesting word for it.

ALICE: Didn't they put a second line on Second Street?

EDWARD: So they did!

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Sure, waste more money.

ALICE: I remember on December second, when these exact cars were attached to horses and were drawn up and down Second and Grant streets to be admired. I never thought I'd be riding one today.

EDWARD: Yes, what a thought!

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: This has always been a bad idea.

ALICE: (annoyed) Then why are you even riding this car now?

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Because... well...because I am!

EDWARD: Do you remember on December twenty-eighth, the large numbers of people that stood on Second Street looking at the streetcars?

ALICE: Well, of course. I most certainly do.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: I do.

ALICE: What time were the cars supposed to pick us up again?

EDWARD: They were supposed to get there at 1:30 but they were most definitely late.

ALICE: Yes, I saw them coming up the street at approximately 2:15 and we didn't get on 'til 20 minutes to three.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Yes, quite late, don't you think? They're so slow!

ALICE: They're faster than horses!

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER (muttering): Excuses.

STREETCAR DRIVER: Thank you for riding the streetcar today. Please exit to your left.

EDWARD: Well, it was lovely to meet you Mrs. Alice.

ALICE: The same to you, Edward. Good day to you, sir.

ANTI-STREETCAR PASSENGER: Good day.