

2. It Looks Like Progress

Scott glanced everywhere as he and Trish worked together.

“We make a good team, Scott,” she said. “Dogbox is moved, Ruff is much happier. The rest of the scaffolding planks are stacked and there are just the scaffolding blocks to do now. Do you like pizza? I was thinking for morning tea.”

“Cool!” Scott said, realizing he was quite hungry. “Thanks, Trish.”

Trish looked across at the two men, Dan and Boyd, setting up the run-about with its forklift attachment. “They’ll probably be ready for a bite too. Let me order a couple.” She went to the shed to call the pizza place on the site’s mobile.



Wielding the spanner, Dan fastened every nut he could see but Boyd fussily counted them off from the instructions.

Dan mumbled swears whenever Boyd pointedly pointed at a nut that Dan had missed. “I would’ve come to it,” he complained.



“Lackadaisical is what you are,” Boyd said. “It’s not the way to stay alive when you’re working with electricity.”

“Good thing then that I’m not,” Dan said. He hopped onto the run-about. “Are you done?” He revved the engine before Boyd had said. “Whatever squeals or squeaks, will need loosening or tightening or greasing. Is how I figure the job is done.”

“Good thing you’re not my apprentice,” Boyd said. “If I was Bosley ...”

“You’re not,” Dan snapped. He walked away. Went to help Trish and Scott.



Pete of Pete's Pizzas rode his beautifully detailed motorbike down the bumpy track leading onto the peninsula.

Though he largely evaded the mud puddles, he could hardly believe anyone would decide to build a hardware store out here.

The poor unfortunates building it had to be going out of their minds about the state of this track! How many broken axles had they already been blamed for?

With two pizzas today for a skeleton crew of six ... "Hey, Lore!" he said. "Good to see you. Quite a long way from the beaten track here to be on watch at the gate?"

"Don't count your chickens before they hatch, Pete," Lore said. "I can see that calculating expression right through your visor."

Lore carried the pizzas to the planning table, then helped Trish and Scott move over a few scaffolding blocks for everyone to sit on.



“I’ve never worked at a place that had pizzas on the house,” Scott said.

Everybody laughed. “Nearly everybody here is ‘the house’, Trish said. “And we all need to eat.”

“How are we going with the legals of setting that up?” Lore said.

“Bosley & Co, you mean?” Drew said. “I’ll have some forms for you all to sign this time next week.”

All you could hear then was people eating.

“Better leave a couple of pieces for Wendy,” Trish said. “I hear the semi grinding along the track.”



Wendy parked the rig so that the load could easily be lifted off with the fork-lift. She grabbed the spanner-drill and removed the trailer's sides nearest the build.

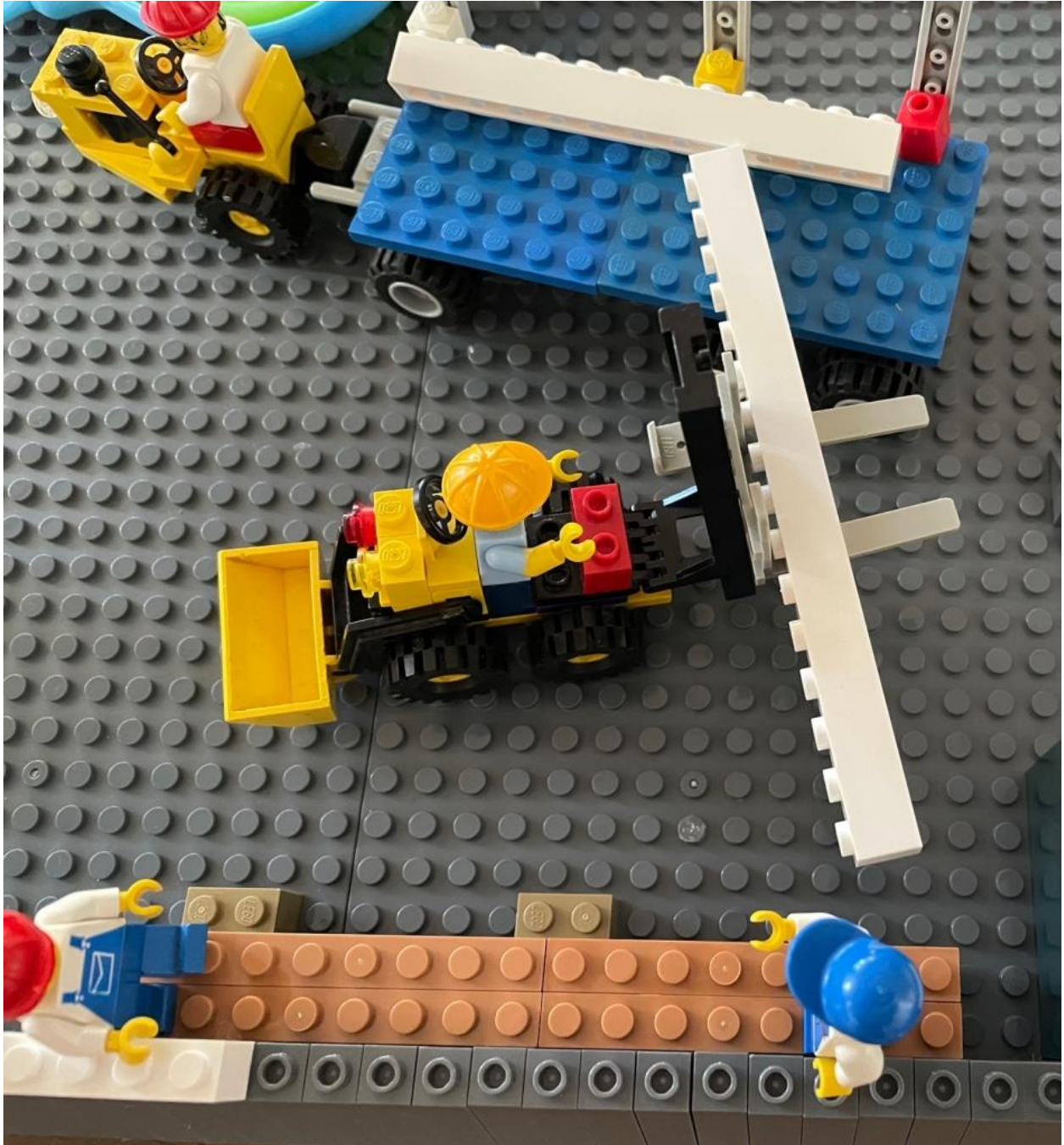
She had a lot of iffy news, which would have to wait while Bosley pushed his crew to get at least these few beams installed.

"Wen," Lore said. "You're looking toe-y. Not bad news, I hope."

"News that will wait for Boz," Wendy said. She suspected that Lore made mischief with the things that she ferreted out.

“Hope you’re at least a little hungry,” Trish said. She served Wendy the remaining pizza.

“Oh, good. Pizza again,” Wendy said.



Drew worked the forklift, lifting the beams from the truck. Boss and Dan stood ready to steer the beam into place.

“How come Drew is driving and I’m not?” Dan said.

“You’re learning supervising while Drew is getting practice on the runabout,” Boss said. “We need to have two of every skill in the crew. In case one of you is off sick.”

“Who’ll be boss when you get sick?” Dan said. “You think people will listen to me?”

“Watch out!” Bosley said. “Here comes the beam!” They’d be able to do only another two rows of beams today, deliveries that slow. At this rate the contract would give out years before the end of the build.



“Just the base and these screens to go,” Boss said.

“Then we finally knock off for what’s left of the weekend?” Dan said. “If I was boss, I wouldn’t come in at all on the weekend.”

“Mmm,” Boss said. “If you were boss, we might really go broke.”

“Temper temper,” Dan said.

“Yeah, I am in a temper. Go home. Don’t let me take it out on you.”

“Gee, Boss! Too nice,” Dan complained. “Toughen up.” He helped finish and stayed on-site till Bosley walked him to his truck. Drew had already left, Dan saw from the tire marks. He had a nasty suspicion that Bosley intended staying the whole rest of the weekend.



Arriving early, Trish and Wendy tripped over a bunch of stuff piled in the middle of the work yard.

“There goes your tidy-up,” Wendy said.

Trish laughed. “What do you think this great big pink thing is?”

“Let’s try and get it installed before anyone else gets here?” Wendy said.

“You mean before Boss comes out of hiding in the shed?” Trish said.

“I’ll help you with that,” Boss said, stepping from the shed. “It’s part of the kid’s playground.”

They dragged the slippery-slide and the orange staircase to the back corner of the build and installed them.



“Need to finish the back wall this week,” Boss said. “Three rows of greys today.”

“The six of us should have no problem knocking that over,” Dan said.

Trish laughed. “No knocking over, please. Hello there on the gad-about ... do we know you?”

Boss stepped forward. “Sorry. Tim is a friend of mine. We were talking and he got interested. I said he should come over. Try the work, see if he likes it. Anyone have a problem?”

”You’ve got a lot of friends for a person who rarely leaves the work site,” Dan said.

“I’ve got a problem with him,” Wendy said. “As safety officer. He isn’t wearing a hard hat and neither are you, Boss.”

“I have it at the top of the shopping list,” Drew said. “Hard hats.”

“Boss and I have been sharing I’m sure you’ve all noticed,” Dan said.

“Could be there’s a spare cap in the shed,” Boss said. “And keep out from under wonky overhead structures, Tim. Until we get more hard hats.”

“Roger that,” Tim said.



Boss drove the run-about to where the crew stood taking-five. “What’s up?”

“We were about to send Dan to get a tree to put on the highest point,” Drew says. “Since the back wall is done.”

“And discussing what we’ll do to celebrate,” Wendy said.

“The front wall will be higher,” Boss said. “Plan a doozy for when that’s up.”

“You driving my run-about?” Dan said.

“Keeping in practice,” Boss said. “You’re riding my gad-about?”

“It needs work,” Dan said. “It has a screw loose. Seriously,” he said at everyone laughing.