

CHAPTER X -Tom Swift and His Electric Locomotive

Mr. Wakefield Damon, a friend of Tom Swift and an enthusiast for inventions, frequently visits the Swift's workshops, keenly interested in Tom's latest project—an electric locomotive designed to surpass any in the market. Damon reminisces about his past experiences with Tom's inventions, humorously noting their effectiveness, including an instance where an electric fence efficiently dealt with nuisance cats. Tom discusses technical details of the locomotive, aiming for a groundbreaking forty-four hundred horsepower output, driven by direct-current and boasting twelve driving wheels for unparalleled speed and power.

Ned Newton and Mr. Damon express their unwavering faith in Tom's endeavor, contrasting it with existing patents and forecasting its success even in its unfinished state. Tom's commitment to the project is clear, working in secrecy to ensure the innovative aspects of his locomotive remain confidential. The workshop buzzes with speculation and anticipation as Tom and his team assemble the massive machine, stirring interest within the community and beyond. The narrative subtly hints at external scrutiny, with competitors and observers closely watching Tom's progress.

The chapter takes a turn as Ned Newton, handling financial errands for the Swift Company, overhears a suspicious conversation in a bank, mentioning an "invention" and an ominous "good-night" to it in five hours. This snippet, although seemingly disconnected, stirs Ned's concern, connecting it potentially to Tom's electric locomotive project. The stage is set for intrigue, combining technological ambition with elements of mystery and potential sabotage, highlighting the broader impacts and interests Tom's inventions garner from various quarters.