

The Army taught evasion tactics, but they didn't include playing dodge-a-cop among the boxcars. He zig-zagged through lines of waiting freight. Risked jumping a few flatbeds that were still rolling, earning shrill whistles and shaking fists from the switch engine's driver.

His pursuers didn't miss a trick. When he thought he'd given them the slip in the narrows between two lines of freight, they popped through on both sides of him. Five of them, now. There was little he could do but drop the axe and hope this thing would remain civil.

A yard bull glared at the axe. "Bo's know better than to be carrying that kind of crap." He slapped his truncheon in a broad palm. "Nothing here but a common rail tramp, boys."

"Came here to give the axe and this satchel to the Baldwins," he explained between breaths as the men surrounded him.

All he got was the kind of snickers that preceded bar fights back home. Alex backed into the gap between two cars. Hell with it. "No need for me to shove those clubs up your asses," he added with a growl, setting the blueprints aside. "But if you insist."

"Don't you *dare!*"

That little girl voice again. The cops froze. He froze.

A whoosh of hot steam knocked caps off his assailant's heads. The gray cloud whirled into a column between him and the yard bulls, the mists collapsing into what he could best describe as a ghost girl stepping out of a Victorian ball. Right down to the square spectacles over her snub little nose.