

“Allie. Allie! ALLIE!” Peter boomed in my ear, making me fall off my desk chair and onto the floor of my bedroom. I looked up and saw that Peter was laughing.

“What happened?” I asked, standing up and knocking my head on my desk. “Ow!” I exclaimed. This just made Peter laugh harder, which annoyed me because it had actually hurt.

“You fell asleep doing homework, I think,” Peter said, who had tried to stop laughing but looked like it was causing him pain. “It’s time for school. Come on!”

“But I haven’t finished Ms. Benski’s essay yet. It was due today,” I complained while picking up the half-completed essay about the 1960’s that fell off my lap when Peter scared me. “And I’m still in the clothes I wore yesterday!”

“Then hurry up. I’ll get some breakfast from your mom, but we only have ten minutes left until we have to leave,” Peter said, walking out of the door. “Finish the essay on the bus.”

I groaned, pulling on some clothes and trying to scribble the rest of the essay down while I brushed my hair with my other hand. I hated doing work on the bus, because I got jostled around, making my handwriting messy. It was also hard to concentrate with high-schoolers gossiping, laughing, and basically causing major calamity! Just before I left my room, I turned and looked at my accomplishment wall for luck and confidence. All four of my winning short stories were there, framed, and a picture of me shaking hands with the governor for winning the state writing contest. There was also a certificate commemorating my becoming a citizen of the United States, because I was born in China and moved here when I was twelve. I was starting to forget about my childhood in China even more, which made me cling to them even harder. I was proud of my accomplishments so far. Little did I know that something even more important was going to happen later that day.

When I got downstairs, I noticed that Peter was wearing his new, personalized lab coat and safety goggles. “Peter, come on. You can’t wear that to school,” I said, slinging my backpack over my shoulder and glancing at the clock, whose hands were pointing to 8:00. “We were

supposed to be at school an hour ago! Come on. You know I have a perfect attendance record I have to keep." I hadn't missed even an hour of school in five years, and I thought my record was ruined!

All of a sudden, my mom popped out from behind the counter, and she and Peter screamed, "April Fools!" I was so surprised that I jumped up and nearly fell over. Peter and Mom started laughing so loudly, I thought that halfway across the world, people in China would hear it!

"You guys almost gave me a heart attack!" I cried, dropping my heavy backpack and running toward them.

"I know," said Mom, who started chuckling again. "Now, what do you want for breakfast?"

After Peter and I had a delightful Chinese traditional breakfast of congee, which is like a Chinese porridge, and fried cullers, fried twisted dough strips, we said thanks to my Mom and walked over to Ben's garage.

Peter had been working on his 'project', as he called it, for almost a year now. I thought a more appropriate title for his 'project' was a miracle! Because, no one had ever invented something like he had before! He said that I was his partner, but I felt more like an intern because he was doing most of the work. Peter was the smartest one in our high school, and probably in any high school in the world right now!

Peter took out a remote in his pocket, and pressed a small green button to open his garage door. When the door opened, you could see Peter's lab. It had many computers with screens whirring by, and many wires sticking out of them. He had a lot of the new technologies, and I caught myself, yet again, wishing my family had enough money to have new things. You see, my single mom worked part time as a dentist's intern, because she couldn't find any other

job when we moved to America. I stopped myself, though, because I always forbid myself. Being jealous would only make me dislike my only friend, Peter.

In the middle of the room sat a bathtub looking machine. Yes, I did say bathtub. But it wasn't like any normal tub you could find. It was called PATTT, an acronym for Peter's Apparatus To Time Travel. And, yes, it was a time travel machine. It didn't quite work yet, and it could only transport you into the past. Peter still had to work out the glitches, too, like how you could only stay in the past for a few minutes until the machine went back into the past. If you weren't in a five foot radius of it, PATTT went back into the present without you. Today was my turn to try it out. It was my first time going. Before, we had only sent Peter's little sister Mary's hamster named Macaroni. Once, we thought PATTT came back without the hamster and thought we had to tell five year old Mary we lost her hamster, but we found him under a bucket in the lab a few hours later. He must have gotten back to the future without our knowing.

On the tub, there was a lamp, and a stool drilled into the center of it. There was a bunch of wires sticking out of it, all taped to the tub. A shower head above the tub gave off a reddish glow to the person sitting under it. I walked over and sat on the little brown stool, and faced Peter.

"Now, when I press this button on my remote, the lamp's head will move up and down, scanning you," he said, pointing to a purple button on his remote.

"Why will it scan me," I asked, glancing at the lamp, which showed no signs of movement.

"To go into the past, the machine needs to know how much your mass is so it knows how much mass to transport," he said. "After I press the purple button, I'll press this big red one. That will bring you to the past. You will stay in the past for twenty minutes, so you can look around. Get ready to be sent back to the '60s."

"I'm ready," I said, squeezing the side of the stool until my knuckles were white.

"One, two, three," Peter said, pushing the purple button. The lamp turned on with a purplish, reddish glow, scanning me. Then, Peter pressed the red button. The lamp's light turned bright yellow, blinding me. My stool started to spin, until I was spinning so fast I couldn't see Peter.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHH," I screamed, as the stool kept going faster and faster, until a strong force pushed against me from either side, squishing me. Now, all I could concentrate on was that I was going to die! Then, as fast as it had started, it stopped. I took a deep breath, filling my poor lungs with fresh air. I opened my eyes and gasped. The town looked so different. The buildings looked newer and cleaner, like they had just been built. Some buildings weren't even built, being new in my time. I looked around and realized that the bathtub was in a field, and the five houses lining the street, including Peter's and mine, were gone! They hadn't been built yet. It was turning to night, about 6:00.

"How weird!" I exclaimed, aware that I was the first person to go back in time. I tried to stand up heroically, but fell out of the bathtub, still dizzy from the ride. I walked towards the town, knowing I'll have twenty minutes before I had to get back to the tub. Peter told me that if I wasn't at least five feet from the tub, only the tub would go back to the present, not me, and I would be stuck here, forever. That would mean that when I would meet Peter for the first time, I would be sixty five! What a scary thought!

When I reached the middle of the town, I knew I only had about ten minutes before I should start going back, because it was a five minute run to get to the field. Everyone I passed stared at me, which made me uncomfortable, but I knew it was just because my style of clothes wasn't invented yet. I was wearing a t-shirt and jeans, but all the other girls my age were wearing mini- skirts or mini-dresses, pillbox hats, and leather boots. All the men I passed either wore suits or tie-dye shirts and 3 inch too short pants.

"How crazy they look," I thought to myself. "Then again, I probably look weird to them!"

I knew all about the '60s because of Ms. Benski's essay. I'd have the best essay, now that I visited the actual place (or time, I guess)! I'd have to fix my paper when I get home, to get an A! I looked at my watch, but realized it wasn't set to whatever time it was now. And even if it was, I didn't know the time I got here. I estimated that it was ten minutes until I should be touching PATTT. I had ten dollars in my pocket, and I was really thirsty, so I went into a cute coffee shop, remembering that in my time, the hot chocolates at the same place fifty years later were delicious. Hoping the recipe was passed down from the past generation to the future shop, I went up to the counter to order.

"I'd like one hot chocolate, please," I said to the waitress, who looked about my grandma's age.

"Five dollars please," she said, looking me up and down. "What in the world are you wearing, child?" she asked me. "Back in my day, people wore respectable clothes. You teenagers are the worst generation yet, I'm telling ya." She gave me my hot chocolate, and I walked out with it onto the street.

I started to walk toward the tub, thinking I was almost out of time, when I saw a police car coming. It stopped right in front of me, and a big, tough policeman stepped out. He took out his megaphone, and said into it, pointed at my face, "WHAT YOU ARE WEARING IS AGAINST THE LAW. PLEASE STEP INTO MY CAR SO WE CAN TAKE YOU DOWNTOWN!" he said, the mega phone magnifying his voice so that it almost blew me away.

"Uh-Oh," I thought. "Officer, please, I need to go somewhere right now, so can you please let me, sir. Besides, these clothes aren't even illegal"

"Now you're violating code twenty three, talking back to a police officer," he said stepping into his car, and dragging me with him. I tried to struggle, but it was no use.

"I wasn't going to make it back to my time anyway," I thought to myself miserably. "Why did I have to buy the stupid hot chocolate?" As I sipped it, I thought of something!

“Sir, I have go to the bathroom?” I asked.

“No.”

“Please! It’s an emergency”

“No.”

“I need to go RIGHT NOW!”

“Fine,” he said, shaking his head.

He stopped at a store and led me inside, and up some stairs to the bathroom. He stood right outside the door, probably making sure I don’t escape. But I was desperate to get back to my time! I went inside, and looked around. It was a really nasty place in the store, and in the bathroom it was even nastier. The floors were brown with dirt, the paint was peeling, and it smelled like rotten garbage. I spotted a grimy window on the opposite side of the room. I stepped onto a sink, and reached toward it. Thankfully, I was just tall enough so I heaved myself onto the windowsill. I looked out the window and saw a fifty foot drop. My stomach lurched in protest, making me want to turn back. But I couldn’t. There was a tree next to the building, just far enough so that I couldn’t reach a sturdy limb. I tried to, and grabbed a bunch of leaves and almost fell forward. I positioned myself to standing position (which was frightening), and leaped as far as I could to a branch. The branch was just out of my grasp as I started to fall toward the sickeningly hard cement below me. I forced myself not to scream, thinking to myself that I was dead, when I remembered to reach up and try to grab a branch. I tried twice, but it was no use! I finally grabbed the lowest branch ten feet from the ground. I jumped off as steadily as I could from just falling fifty feet and broke into a run across town. I tried to remember which way we had driven. After a minute, I heard the police siren and knew I was being followed. I looked around and spotted a side road. I stopped, and turned around to face the officer. Just before he reached me, I turned and ran into the side road. The car was too far down the street to turn, thank god. I ran into the field with the tub, where they couldn’t follow me. I saw the purple

light turn on when I was still ten feet away, and knowing I wouldn't reach it in time, I jumped, landing on the ground next to it just in time.

I felt that sensation of spinning again, shorter this time. I felt the air leave my lungs, and when I tried to take another breath, I couldn't. I started to panic, needing air. I saw stars in front of my eyes, and then felt myself losing consciousness. My last thought was, "This is it," before everything went black.

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"What happened?" I asked, standing up and knocking my head on my desk. "Ow," I exclaimed. This just made Peter laugh harder, which annoyed me because it actually hurt.

"You fell asleep doing homework, I think," Peter said, who had tried to stop laughing but looked like it was causing him pain.

I smiled the widest smile I possibly could at him, knowing I'd never tell him my secret adventure into the past. It would then seem unreal, sharing it with someone. It was mine to keep.

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PATT
Category 6-8 Grade