

The Man with a Lost Purpose of Time

I was working at the old pawn shop one stormy night on a *very* old grandfather clock. It had been there longer than the pawn shop itself! The time was a little off so I was turning and twisting the dials and doing all kinds of stuff; that was when I pricked my hand... “OW! Well, I’ll fix that up later,” I muttered. Then suddenly I heard a click and the doors were blown open, “WHOOSH” I jumped up in fright and tiptoed over to the door, I peeked out and checked left and right; no one there... weird. I shut the door and turned back on the clock and gasped. The clock’s hands were spinning out of control, counter-clockwise. I hurried over to the clock and tried twisting the dial; nothing happened. I took out my screwdriver and unscrewed the hands, they were still spinning. I tried everything, nothing worked. Finally, I gave up, “Whatever, I’ll work on it tomorrow.” I got up, my joints aching, “This is going to hurt in the morning!” I said. When I got into bed, sleep came almost immediately, surprising considering the day’s disconcerting events.

When I woke up I felt well rested and my joints weren’t hurting anymore. “Wow,” I thought, “This is the best I’ve felt in ages!” I got up and immediately saw that something was awry; I wasn’t in my house. I realized I was back in my old apartment from when I was around 30 years old. I was getting really confused, but then I had a notion. I was still dreaming! I walked into my kitchen and looked at the calendar, Nov. 23 2003, weird. My birthday is today! I put on a coat and went outside, I looked around and what I saw amazed and surprised me. The world looked exactly how it looked 10 years ago; either I’m in a very detailed dream or this is really happening. I pinched myself to make sure I wasn’t dreaming, “OW!” A few people going by pause to look at me; ok, definitely *not* a dream. I’m getting a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach, if this is really happening then how come I’m in the past? I think and realize that this has something to do with the grandfather clock! Suddenly nausea overcomes me and I fall to the ground, the world around me gets blurry and I black out.

When I wake up I’m in my bed again, but this time I’m in my college dorm, *Oh no! It happened again!* I think. I look around; it’s 4:00 AM or so says the clock. *I’ve got to get to the bottom of this,* I think. I quickly put on some clothes and walked out of the dorm door; I step through the doors and go outside, I’m greeted by chilly air. I start to walk, but then I realize that the university is so far away from the pawn shop! I spot a cab and run over to it, I feel the insides of my pocket for money, \$50.00, which should be enough. I go

up to the cab driver and say, “Flagsdale, Ontario please.” The cab driver nods acknowledging me; I open the door and get in, the drive takes around 20 mins. I get out and run towards the pawn shop, it’s open, thank god! The owner, a 70-80 year old man, is at the counter and looks at me when I come in, he looks up and says, “Can I help you?” I look at him and growl, “What do you know about that clock?” “I-I d-don’t know what you’re talking about.” he says confused. I pound my hands on the counter; my head is getting dizzy, “Tell me!” I roared. He shook his head; “I d-don’t know!” he screams. I yell and throw myself at him, but fatigue overcomes me and I fall on the floor.

I wake up and I feel smaller and more energetic, I get out of bed, I’m about 10 years old! I look around, 1983; I had my Star Wars bed sheets and wallpaper. I walk out of my room and see my mother in the kitchen, “Hey, honey did you have a nice night?” my mom asks. *I wish*, I think. “Yeah mom but today after school can we go to the pawn shop down the street?” I ask. My mother looks at me strangely, “Earth to Zachary, are you ok? You never do anything except talk about Star Wars. Now, this?” she questions. “But its ok, I’ll take you to the old pawn shop today.” she says. “Oh my look at the time, you better eat breakfast or else you’re going to miss the bus!” she exclaims. “Ok mom.” I mutter. The school day goes by like a snail pulling a weight, I couldn’t stop this foreboding feeling, if I keep getting younger, will I disappear completely? Finally the school day ends and I go with my mom to the pawn shop. When we get there I go up to the owner and ask him, “Is there a history to that clock over there?” I point to the clock. The owner frowns and says “There is no real history to this clock, but there is an old wives’ tale about it, it goes like, ‘Ye who pricks thysself on the hands of the clock will suffer until the end of his days’ but of course that’s just a legend,” I start to tremble, and ask, “Was there a way in this legend to stop this curse if it happened to someone?” He furrows his brow, “No, not really but I’ve heard that the only way stop it would be to turn the dials back to the time you were born.” A wave of excitement engulfs me, *maybe there is a way to stop this*, I think. “Hey mister can I take a look at it?” I ask. “Sure, but I don’t know what a young boy like you would want with an old relic like this.” I sprint over to the clock and go to the dials, I start turning them and suddenly another wave of nausea overcomes me, I shake it off. My mom sees this and gets concerned, “Are you okay honey?” The edges of my vision are getting blurry, I just have one more dial to turn... but of course, I black out.

I wake up and I’m in my old bedroom back in 1976, darn it I’m 3 years old. I try getting up and see my chubby, little self in the mirror. I try walking

and even that needs a little getting used to. I waddle to the kitchen and see my mother. She's gigantic, I think. I start to talk, "Mommy, can we go to the pawn shop down the street?" I'm surprised how high-pitched my voice is. My mother bends down and says, "All right honey, we'll go in an hour," She kisses my head, "In the meantime, I've made your favorite, pancakes!"

Boy, those pancakes were good. I feel the sudden urge to suck my thumb, I have no idea why. My mom tells me to get into a stroller and I happily comply. *Better save my energy for when I really need it*, I think. When we get to the pawn shop I see the clock immediately; it's one of the biggest things in the shop, so distinctive. I get out of the stroller once we are inside and I waddle over to the clock; wide and tall looming above my head. My mother starts talking to the owner. *There's no time to waste, I better get this over with before the owner sees me*, I think. I'm not tall enough to reach the dials, so I look around searching for a foothold. Then I see an antique chair, I drag it over quietly, and get on. The dials are within my grasp. I twist and turn and suddenly the owner sees me. "Hey, get your son off of there!" he yells. I look back and quickly start turning the dials. My mom comes and lifts me off, but fortunately a piece of my shirt hung on to the dial. My mom pulled and the dial turned just enough so it was on my birth year. That was when time froze. I looked around everyone was frozen. Suddenly a brilliant white light flashed and I am back in my own bed, in the year 2013. It is morning and I get up my joints aching. *Was all that a dream?* I think. But then I notice something is wrong, the water in my glass had spilled over but the liquid hung suspended in the air. *Time is still frozen!* I think. I put on a jacket and run outside. It was raining and the particles of rain are frozen in mid-air. *Time is still messed up, why?* I think. I have to get to the pawn shop or else time may never be right again. I hurry to the pawn shop where I see the clock, "There's got to be something I missed." I mutter. I examine the clock and find weird engravings on the side of the clock; the engravings are pictures of numbers and letters. *Hmmm...: H.4, M.7, S.54, MO. 6, and Y. 1973*, I think. These numbers... they're coordinates in time! I don't have much time I can tell as my vision starts perforating. I start turning the hour hand, 4 hours, minute hand, 7 minutes, and second hand which is 54 seconds. I can't see anymore, I drop on the floor, *I can't fail now or else I won't get another chance!* I push myself up, months and years. I manage to turn the month dial, 6 months; June! Then the year 1973;

my birth year. I start turning it and the clock shudders, a steady whir fills the room. I quickly turn the dial to 1973, nothing happens. I slump to the ground, all my energy spent. I had tried everything; my life was going to end this way, at the hands of a cursed clock. My thinking turned into rage, *this clock dares make my life this way!* I get up my rage fueling me now. I rush at the clock and wrap my hands around it like a football player. I smash it down to the floor; the clock shatters the shards fly up immediately freezing in the air. A wind rushes from the remnants of the clock and knocks me over; the last of my rage long gone I drift into unconsciousness. I wake up in my own bed I look around, the water had spilled on the floor, the birds were chirping and the sun was streaming through the window. With the clock gone the situation is peaceful and finally for the first time in a while I drift into a sleep that I have decided to go into.