

The Time Machine

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Prologue

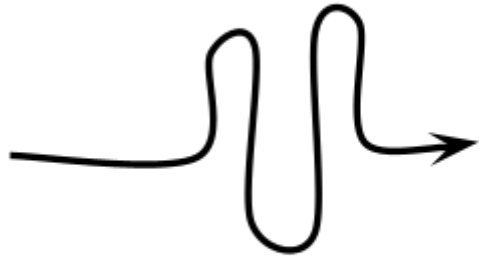
"Why are you taking our computer science class, Ms. Roberts? Where is Ms. Monisha?" asked David, the #1 computer science geek at his school.

"She's absent," said Ms. Roberts.

"Absent?!! Again?!" exclaimed David. This was Ms. Monisha's 5th day in a *row* that she was absent.

"She just said she was busy," said Ms. Roberts. David sighed.

Oooh, look! A
diagram!



Chapter 1: A “Lift”, a Beep, and The Milky Way

After school, David decided to go to Ms. Monisha's house.

He saw Ms. Monisha working on something that looked like a lift but it wasn't embedded in a wall and had no sliding rails. It was connected up to a laptop, with Ms. Monisha clacking away at the keys.

Now she stopped typing and clicked a button, before entering the lift thing.

Then she cursed, before seeing David watching her.

"Hello, David!" she greeted, "How are you?"

"Fine, thanks, but why is your hair grey? Why were you absent?" asked David.

"I've been working on a project," she said, walking over to the lift thing and leading David in.

Inside, David saw that it was NOT, in fact, a lift. It had walls like a lift, floors like a lift, a ceiling like a lift, and doors like a lift, but everything else was different.

Instead of a lift's traditional buttons, it had a few other things. There was a screen that said

The Time Machine

Please enter the DATE, TIME and COORDINATES of the place you want to go.

Below it was a box that said PRESENT. Inside it were 7-segment displays containing the current date, time and coordinates. Below that box was another one that said WHERE TO GO. In it were 7-segment displays, but they were empty. They were labeled DATE, TIME and COORDS. Below it was a kind of keypad to input stuff into the empty displays.

"Woah!" said David to Ms. Monisha in awe, "Did you really build a time machine?"

"Well... I tried," said Ms. Monisha, "it doesn't really work that well. Let me show you."

She input 23.06.2385 into the DATE box and pressed GO. A bunch of errors showed up and the time machine went dark.

Then there was a loud BEEEP and it was bright again.

"That's better than the last bug, where it turned my hair grey!" exclaimed Ms. Monisha.

"Have you tried going back in time, to the past?" inquired David.

"Not yet, let's try it out!" She typed 01.03.1990 into the DATE box ("The day I was born," she said) and pressed GO once again.

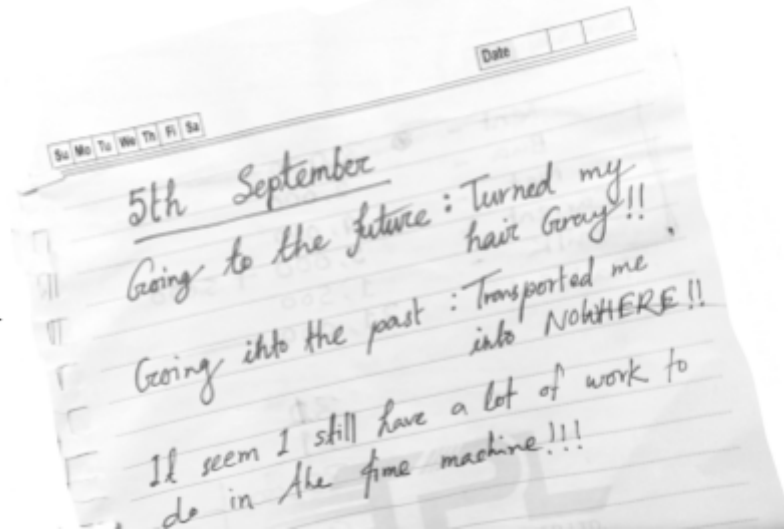
This time, they could see through the glass doors that they were floating in space in a cloud of dust.

"Whoops!" said Ms. Monisha, "The time machine has overshot us into the formation of the Milky Way!"

"Quick, take us back!" cried David. Ms. Monisha typed in the present date and time and a moment later, they were back in Ms. Monisha's garage.

"I will need to make some tweaks," said Ms. Monisha, "So see you tomorrow!"

Excerpt from Ms.
Monisha's project log on
"The Time Machine"



Chapter 2: A Ghost, Ekdala, and Nowhere

The next day, David was bursting with impatience waiting for the school day to end.

At last, it finally did.

David rushed out of the classroom and into Ms. Monisha's garage.

"It hopefully is a bit more reliable now," said Ms. Monisha cheerfully.

Ms. Monisha had added a CURRENT LOCATION box which showed what date, time, and coordinates the time machine was at.

She entered in 01.03.1990 again and this time something else happened.

They were in the middle of a forest.

"Hey," exclaimed David, "it's 1593!"

"Those coordinates look suspiciously like Ekdala," observed Ms. Monisha.

Sure enough, through the trees they could see Ekdala besieged by Firuz Shah Tughlaq's army.

"Oh no!" cried David, "I see Firuz Shah Tughlaq at the edge of the forest! We're going to get discovered!"

"Do something!" cried Ms. Monisha desperately.

And David did the best thing he could think of. He put his hands around his mouth and said "WHOO-HOOO-HOOO! Who dares disturb the Ghost of Ekdala? HOO-HOO-HOO!"

It worked. Firuz Shah Tughlaq promptly picked up his robes and ran for his life.

So if you're wondering why Firuz Shah Tughlaq only spent two days on the battlefield in the siege of Ekdala against Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah before going home, that's why.

"He's gone; let's go back home," said David. Ms. Monisha agreed.

She typed in the present date, but then something unexpected happened.

They were transported to a meadow, with trees and lakes and pretty flowers.

Strangely, the time machine was very confused about where it was.

```
+----- CURRENT LOCATION -----+
| DATE:    [00.00.0000           ] |
| TIME:    [00:00:00             ] |
| COORDS:  [Error                 ] |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
```

"What the..." started David.

"Damn it! I'm back in Nowhere once again!" yelled Ms. Monisha.

"Nowhere....?"

"Yes, Nowhere! It comes up when you do naughty things with physics I guess."

"How are we going to get out?!"

"There's a calico cat around here. If we ask her nicely, we can go back home," Ms. Monisha explained.

"I think I can see her!" said David, pointing excitedly to where the calico was lapping up water from a lake.

"Oh, Pretty Miss Calico, Queen of Nowhere, with superior knowledge of physics, could you please (with a cherry and blueberry and whatever you want on top) grant us safe passage home?" cooed Ms. Monisha.

"Of course, strangers. Where do you want to go?" asked the calico.

Ms. Monisha told her the present date, time and coordinates, and a moment later, they were in the garage once more.

"Why did you have to suck up to the calico like that?" asked David, disgusted.

"She wouldn't listen otherwise," sighed Ms. Monisha.

"So I'm gonna be present at school tomorrow. I'll take a break from the time machine for now," she said.

"Okay," said David, and he went back home.

And sure enough, Ms. Monisha was present and teaching computer science the next day.