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I've always thought it would be great to travel through time. To go back and see what happened during some particular era, or even go into the future to see what it would be like a thousand years from now. I know it's not possible, but it sure would be cool.

But when my grandpa said that once, every fifty years, you could do just that—using a window through time—I didn't believe him. I thought he was just telling me a story.

Grandpa said that once, every fifty years, on June 28th, at exactly 3:05 in the afternoon, a window through time would open up. A window that would allow a person to step through and travel in time, but only for a period of seven days. He said that the

window was in a field not far from where I lived. His father had told him about it, and his father before him. That's how he knew about it.

Yeah, right. Like I was going to believe *that*.

But on June 28th of this year, at exactly 3:05 in the afternoon, I found out that my grandpa hadn't been trying to fool me. Because my friend Summer and I found the window through time . . . and what followed set off a chain of events that the city of Detroit wouldn't soon forget.

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On the morning of Monday, June 28th, I was awakened by the lawnmower outside. Dad was working in the yard, and so was Mom. Dad works overnight at the factory, so he gets home at about eight in the morning and usually goes to work in the yard for a while before he goes to bed. Once a week he mows the lawn, and this was one of those mornings. When that mower fires up, it's no use trying to sleep anymore. It sounds like the space shuttle taking off!

But I suddenly remembered something: today was Monday.

Not just any Monday.

It was Monday, the 28th of June. This was the day Grandpa said that the window through time would open.

That is, of course, if there even was such a thing – and if I could find it.

I got dressed and sat down in the kitchen for a quick breakfast. The phone rang while I was eating a bowl of *Froot Loops*.

“Hello?” I answered, picking up the receiver.

“Nick? It’s Summer. Are we still going today?”

Summer McCready is one of my best friends. She was one of the first people I met when I moved to Detroit, and she’s pretty cool. We go to the same school and ride the same bus. Yesterday, I told her about the window through time. She didn’t laugh like I thought she would.

In fact, she was fascinated.

“Let’s go find it!” she’d said excitedly. I told her to call me in the morning, and we’d make plans.

“You bet we’re still going!” I replied, chomping on my cereal. “Otherwise, we won’t have another chance for fifty years.”

“Do you really think it’s true?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” I pondered. “I asked my dad, and he just laughed. He said that Grandpa had told

him about the window, but he didn't believe it. He never went to look for it."

My excitement was growing by the second, but so was my fear.

What if we really found the window? Would we travel back in time? Would we travel forward? That would be cool!

Either way, I was more than willing to spend an afternoon trying to find the window through time.

We agreed to meet at one o'clock at a corner store that wasn't far from my house. From there, we would ride our bikes to find the field that Grandpa talked about.

I got to the store just before one, and went inside. I bought a Coke for each of us, along with a couple *Slim Jims*, and a camera. One of those disposable ones that they sell for a few dollars. If there really was such a thing as a 'window through time' I wanted to have pictures of what we saw.

Summer showed up right on time, as usual, and we biked for miles . . . through neighborhoods, down strange streets, past tall buildings. I know my grandpa said the field wasn't far from where I lived, but man . . . I think we biked ten miles!

Just before three o'clock, we found the field that my grandpa was talking about.

It was just like he'd said. The field was strewn with large rocks and old junk that had been placed there long ago. The rusted-out shell of an old car sat alone like a huge steel skeleton. Insects buzzed in the afternoon heat, and a chipmunk darted in front of us, chattering angrily at our presence.

On the south end of the field stood a large clump of trees. The trees were big . . . much bigger than Grandpa had described them. But I guess you'd expect them to be, since Grandpa hadn't seen them in fifty years.

That was where the window through time was supposed to open up. Within the stand of trees at the south end of the field.

There was too much debris strewn through the field to ride our bikes, so we walked, pushing them alongside. We drank the Cokes and ate the *Slim Jims* as we walked.

When we reached the shade of the trees, we stopped. Summer's long blonde hair swept gently in the light afternoon breeze.

"What are we supposed to be looking for?" she asked, her eyes searching the field.

"I'm not really sure," I replied. "My grandpa said that it was just a big—"

Had I been able to finish my sentence, I would

have said the words 'shimmering window'.

But I didn't get the chance to finish what I was saying . . . because right before us, at exactly 3:05, a thundering roar tore through the sky. It was the screeching sound of metal on metal, and it was *loud*.

Summer cupped her hands over her ears, and I did the same. I was shocked by the sudden noise—but it was nothing compared to the shock I received when I saw what was happening in the air right before my eyes.

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Right before us, the window appeared! It opened like a nightshade, sweeping down toward the ground. It was about twenty feet wide and very high . . . taller than a house! It was as if a fuzzy gray sheet had been placed in the air right in front of us.

Then the grayness began to fade, giving way to a shimmering, clear window. I could see right through it! However, objects on the other side of the window – tree trunks, leaves, branches – they seemed to sway and bend. It was like looking at something through wavering heat waves.

I couldn't speak. My mouth was open, but I didn't know what to say. The noise had stopped, and all we could hear were a few birds chirping, and the

sounds of the city in the distance.

The sun beamed down, and a trickle of sweat dripped down my forehead. I reached up and swept it away.

"Oh my gosh," Summer whispered. *"It's here! It's really here!"*

The window shimmered in front of us.

Did we dare? Should we step through?

I could think of a million reasons why we shouldn't.

But I could think of a *billion* reasons why we *should!*

"You wanna do this?" I asked hesitantly.

Summer turned her head and looked at me. "What do you think?" she asked. Her voice was soft, and maybe a bit fearful. Now that we had discovered that my grandpa was right – that there really *was* a window – we weren't too sure about the whole idea of time travel.

"Let's try," I urged, nodding my head. "You hold onto my hand, and I'll step through. If there's a problem, you can pull me back. Simple."

Summer looked at the shimmering window, then turned and looked at me.

"Okay," she agreed. "Let's try it."

I took a step toward the window, and Summer

followed. She held her hand out, and I took it in mine.

“If I squeeze your hand really hard, pull me back,” I instructed. She nodded, understanding.

“Good luck, Nick,” she said.

I turned and faced the strange, wavering window, took a deep breath . . . and stepped through.



I'm not sure what I expected, but I'll tell you what: there was *nothing* I could have imagined that would have prepared me for what I saw.

I found myself in a jungle! The air was thick and humid, and the sky was overcast and gray. Enormous ferns grew close by, and giant trees with wide, thick leaves towered above me. I could hear a creek babbling not far off.

And a volcano! Miles away, I could see a smoking volcano, spewing out ash and black smoke into the sky.

Where had I traveled to? Had I traveled back in time . . . or forward?

In two seconds, I had my answer, and it came

from out of the sky. I heard a loud screech, and suddenly a gigantic bird appeared! It was far bigger than any other bird I had ever seen before. It looked like a small plane coasting over the treetops.

Wait a minute! I thought. *That's not a bird at all! That's . . . that's a flying reptile! It's a Quetzalcoatlus! I know it is!*

A Quetzalcoatlus is a winged reptile that lived during the Cretaceous period, about 65 million years ago. They're huge, with wingspans of nearly forty feet! It's the largest flying animal ever discovered. I learned all about them when we studied dinosaurs in science class.

The giant, winged beast flew overhead, finally disappearing into the thick trees.

Wow! I had traveled back in time 65 million years! Back to the land of dinosaurs!

I was still holding Summer's hand. When I turned to see her, I got a surprise.

The window looked the same on this side as it did on the other! I could see trees and ferns on the other side, but they seemed to waver back and forth. Summer was nowhere to be found.

I looked at my hand, but—

It was *gone!* It had vanished just above my wrist!

Where my hand met the window, it disappeared – like I had dipped my hand into a pool of gray water!

But I could still feel Summer’s tight grasp. She was holding on firmly, just like I’d asked her to do.

She had to see this. I pulled, wanting her to come through the fuzzy, shimmering window.

I could feel her resisting. I think that maybe she was trying to pull me back, but I wanted her to see what I was seeing. She just *had* to see this!

I pulled with all my might. Suddenly, she came tumbling through the window. I lost my balance and I fell, and she came crashing down on top of me.

“I thought you were in trouble!” she exclaimed, standing up and brushing herself off. “I thought that –”

When she noticed where she was, she stopped speaking, not finishing her sentence. Her mouth hung open like a dead fish, and her eyes swirled about as she took in the strange surroundings.

“It’s . . . it’s” she stammered. She was too stunned to speak.

“It’s the age of dinosaurs!” I finished for her. “We traveled back in time, millions and millions of years!”

We stared for a long, long time. Neither of us moved. Strange, animal-like sounds came from the thick jungle. It was all too bizarre, too unreal to even believe. I have seen paintings and drawings of what scientists believe the dinosaur era was like, but this was just too far-out to even imagine.

"Come on," I said, taking a few steps toward a clump of ferns.

"Where are you going?" Summer asked, her voice filled with astonishment.

"I just want to go and check this place out a little more. Come on."

"What if we get lost?" she asked. "What then?"

She had a point. We couldn't wander too far from the window, or we might not be able to find our way back to it. Then, we'd never make it back through time. Dad would ground me for a month.

Wait a minute, I thought. If we never made it back, how could Dad ground me?

Either way, it wasn't a pleasant thought.

"We'll stay close by, I promise," I assured Summer. "Come on." I extended my hand, and she walked toward me.

"Okay," she reluctantly agreed. "But let's not go far."

As fate would have it, we wouldn't get very far

at all. We hadn't taken more than ten steps when we heard a loud noise in front of us. It was the sound of crunching branches and limbs.

Summer and I ducked behind a thick stand of small trees. The noise grew louder, and the heavy snapping and crunching drew closer. We nestled into the leaves, hoping that we were hidden.

Suddenly, we saw it, and I gasped out loud.

A dinosaur!

It was only twenty feet from us – and it was HUGE!

But what was even stranger: I recognized the beast!

"It's a Triceratops!" I whispered to Summer. *"I've seen them in my dinosaur books!"*

"Great," Summer replied. *"At least we know what kind of dinosaur we're going to be eaten by!"*

I shook my head. *"No,"* I assured her. *"The Triceratops is a plant-eater. They don't eat meat."*

"Let's hope so," Summer said.

Triceratops is a cool-looking dinosaur. They have three horns that protrude from their face, and a large, bony plate behind the back of the skull. One short horn is perched above the dinosaur's bird-like beak, and two longer horns stick out just above the creature's eyes. The dinosaur walks on four strong,

thick, legs. Triceratops looks like a huge rhinoceros.

We watched the creature as it continued slowly on its path. It didn't pay any attention to us. It acted as though we weren't even there.

I quickly thrust my hand into my pocket, pulled out my disposable camera, and clicked off a couple pictures of the Triceratops.

Suddenly, the huge dinosaur stopped—and chewed on some leaves!

"See?" I whispered to Summer. *"Just plants. I don't think that he'll hurt us."*

I was right, of course. The Triceratops wouldn't hurt us.

What I didn't know was that there was a creature sneaking up behind us at that very moment that *could* hurt us.

And I was about to know the real meaning of fear—because we were about to come face-to-face with a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

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The Triceratops was moving away when we heard a noise behind us. It was a long, deliberate crunch, like something heavy was advancing slowly through the brush.

Like it was stalking something.

I turned, and the sight behind me almost made me faint.

The beast that was towering above us was unmistakable. I'd seen drawings before, and I'd seen the movie *Jurassic Park*.

It was a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

I knew right then we were in deep trouble.

Summer turned, and when she saw the terrible beast looming over us, she screamed. I quickly grabbed her arm and told her to stop.

"No!" I hissed. "Be quiet! Maybe the T-Rex can't

see us!"

But Summer was too frightened. She jumped up and did the worst possible thing she could do.

She ran.

"Summer!" I shouted. *"Stop! STOP!"*

But it was too late. She had already sprang from our hiding place.

Not knowing what else to do, and thinking that the huge dinosaur had probably spotted us by now, I jumped up and ran after her.

Behind me, the T-Rex let out a terrible, loud screech. Trees snapped like toothpicks as the horrendous beast began charging after us.

The problem was, he was attacking from behind us—cutting off our way back to the window through time! We were trapped!

"Nick!" Summer shouted from in front of me. *"A cave! There's a small cave up ahead!"*

I couldn't see the cave that she was talking about, so I had no choice but to follow her and hope she was right.

Suddenly, she fell to the ground and scrambled forward on her hands and knees.

She was right! At the bottom of the wall of solid rock was a small opening. In a flash, Summer was gone.

By now, the giant dinosaur was right behind me. The ground quaked with every thundering step it took.

I couldn't afford to waste any time. I leapt forward, landing on my elbows . . . but it was too late! The T-Rex attacked, and caught my foot in his mouth!

"Ahhhhhhh!!!!" I screamed at the top of my lungs. I was scrambling forward into the cave, trying desperately to pull my foot away from the terrible grip of the dinosaur. *"Aaaahhhhh!!!!!"*

In the darkness of the small cave, Summer grabbed my hands and pulled. I was in a dangerous tug-of-war between Summer—and a vicious, bloodthirsty dinosaur!

Suddenly, my shoe slipped off of my foot—and it saved my life! Only my shoe was taken—not my foot.

I jerked my leg into the cave, and just in time. I could see the T-Rex's huge jaws at the mouth of the cave, snapping and chewing, trying to get us.

And on top of that, his breath was awful!

After a few terrifying minutes, the dinosaur became frustrated. The noise outside the small cave stopped, and the ground shook as the beast stormed away to search for other forms of food. As the giant dinosaur thundered off, I leaned down, held out the

camera, and snapped a picture.

"I can't believe that just happened!" Summer gasped. "We were attacked by a *real live* dinosaur!"

I knelt down, peering out the opening of the cave, making sure the dinosaur was gone. After a few minutes, I felt it was safe to leave the shelter of the cave.

"Come on," I said. "We've got to get back through the window. It's too dangerous to stay here."

We climbed out from beneath the rock ledge and stood up. Looking around, it was still hard to believe where we were.

"Nobody is going to believe us, Nick," Summer whispered. She turned her head, her eyes scanning the trees and sky.

"Yes, they will," I said confidently, holding out my camera. "Here's the proof right here. Come on. Let's go back through the window."

Thankfully, we weren't far from the window through time. From where I stood, I could see the strange glistening window through the trees.

We crept cautiously toward it, wary of any dinosaurs that might be around.

We were almost to the window when Summer suddenly stopped in her tracks.

"Look!" she cried out, pointing toward some

bushes. I stopped and turned, looking to see what she was pointing at.

Beneath a tree, in a clump of dried branches and leaves . . . was an *egg!* There was no mistaking it.

"It's a dinosaur egg!" I said excitedly. "It's a *real* dinosaur egg!"

I snapped my head around to make sure there weren't any dinosaurs nearby, then sprinted to the large, oval object.

It was an egg, all right. It was just a bit bigger than a bowling ball, and shaped almost like a chicken egg, only a bit rounder. It was a dirty gray color, with black specks all over it.

I knelt to the ground on one knee and touched the egg with my finger. It was smooth and warm. Then I reached both hands around it, and picked it up.

"What are you going to do with that?" Summer asked, her voice filled with apprehension. I'm sure she already knew what I had in mind, and I don't think she liked the idea one bit.

"Just in case the pictures don't turn out," I said, "this will be our proof. We'll have a real dinosaur egg to show everyone. This will *prove* that we traveled back through time."

I could tell Summer didn't like the plan, but she didn't say anything more. Besides . . . I was going to

return to the future with the dinosaur egg whether Summer liked it or not.

And that's how this whole mess got started. Two worlds were about to collide . . . bringing a panic and terror that the city of Detroit had never before known.

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