



# Time Machine Adventures

A Story Studio Anthology by Young Authors (aged 5-13)



Story Studio is a charity that **inspires**, **educates** and **empowers** youth to be great storytellers.

We create innovative, 'fun-first' workshops that develop narrative capacity in youth, and celebrate young writers by crafting beautiful publications from their words.

This anthology is composed of stories written by children and youth across Canada, between the ages of 5 and 13 as a result of our December 2024 creative writing contest.

We asked young authors to write about a time machine adventure. We looked for forward-thinking tales that captivated readers with dynamic plots, compelling characters, and immersive settings.



#### THIS MONTH'S WINNERS

- **Ages 5-9 1st Place:** Pizza Planet by Peter (age 8)
- **Ages 5-9 2nd Place:** Shiny the Elf and the Christmas Lesson (age 8)
- **Ages 10-13 1st Place:** Returning Home by Firdaus (13)
- **Ages 10-13 2nd Place:** The Cursed Stone by Anishka (13)

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# Time Travel, Eh?

By Abby, age 13

**Journal entry: one**

**Status: just started**

**Recorder: Abatha Deen**

**Goal: Find the golden maple leaf.**

**Time: 7:25 pm**

My name is Abatha Deen, and I'm Canadian. I am the founder of the soon-to-be-existing time machine to retrieve the golden maple leaf, which was made in 1985 and soon was destroyed. Wow, that was a lot of data... eh? I am currently in my research lab with my daughter, who is 9.25 years old, and we are going to find our, uh, "test rat" to safely retrieve the golden maple leaf. I can't do it because someone needs to be in the lab and taking care of things if anything goes wrong, so my uncle Sam, who is living in the US, will take the job, but let me first figure out how to even make the time machine. (This journal is in case this does work and I get famous and can smear it to my relatives, haha!)

**Journal entry: two**

**Status: no idea**

**Recorder: Millie Deen**

**Goal: finding the golden maple leaf**

**Time: lunchtime?**

It has been two weeks since Mom started her time machine project. She looks tired, but I hope this doesn't last, and I hope this project works. Mom has been like this

from the time my friend Amelia's mom talked about why I should go to a "proper school," and I do, but they are all too far away, and Mom's job isn't supporting us with enough money since he left. My mom's coming; bye!

**Journal entry: three**

**Status: almost finished**

**Recorder: Abatha Deen**

**Goal: finding the golden maple leaf**

**Time: 3:37 am**

Must. Finish. This has taken me way too long for me to give up. I'm living off of coffee and the will to give Mills a better life; all I want is that golden maple leaf to solve all of the messes I made. But on the bright side, the time machine is finished with precise and accurate measurements and data, and I cannot wait for the trial to test it, but first, a gallon of coffee, of course.

**Journal entry: four**

**Status: final stage**

**Recorder: Abatha Deen**

**Goal: finding the golden maple leaf**

**Time: 5:07 pm**

Good news: We finished the testing with no incidents. In the end, Millie and I hugged and had the best time together. We also launched Uncle Sam in the machine and sent him back in time to retrieve the golden maple leaf, and he has it! Bad news: we can not get him back due to some machine errors. If we fix the errors properly, Uncle Sam can come back; if not... Well, keep your fingers crossed.

**Journal entry: five**

**Status: We did it.**

**Recorder: Millie Deen**

**Goal:?**

**Time: party time**

Oh my gosh, a few hours ago, when my mom's uncle was trapped in time, my mom went into full genius mode. She somehow figured out the problem and fixed it, and then nothing. We crossed our fingers and hoped for the best, and guess what? Mom's uncle came back in one piece, and so did the golden maple leaf, but when

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they came, she threw it on the ground and hugged us all. I guess maybe finding that we were all well and happy at the end was the goal. I'm off to the party. Bye!

**Journal entry: six**

**Status: ?**

**Recorder: Uncle Sam**

**Goal: ?**

**Time: ?**

I'm sorry, but did anyone think about me? Now I guess there's a happy ending? But honestly, I just want a cheeseburger. Millie's off to a great school, Abatha is just resting from all the work she's been through, and I, I just want a cheeseburger.

**The End.**

# The Cursed Stone

By Anishka, age 13

I turned the knob of the wooden door, revealing a room shrouded in shadows. The dusty windows filtered the late afternoon sun and cast an eerie gloom. I stepped inside, my footsteps echoing off the walls. A beautiful antique vanity stood by the window, and a small leather-bound book sat abandoned. Curiosity took the best of me as I slowly made my way towards it. On the first page, there was a handwritten note reading: *'To touch the stone, is to touch time itself. Beware the consequences, for when you use the stone, you too become trapped in time.'*

A wave of uncertainty washed over me, but I shrugged it off, marking it as a poem or scribble. Suddenly, a loud **CLANG** echoed through the room. It appeared to be coming from the attic. I slowly crept through the stairs, and pushed open the trapdoor.

The air in the attic was thick with the scent of decaying wood, and the room was draped in dust. Cobwebs hung from every centimeter of the place, and it reeked of neglect. A small, round window lay at the back of the room, its glass long since shattered. A strong breeze crept through, and the shutters of the broken window clashed against the wall sending a loud **CLANG** across the room.

Relief swept over me, and as I turned to go, my eye spotted an antique wooden box in the corner of the room. A heavy veil of dust lay on top, but beneath it all, it had elaborate carvings of delicate carnations. I picked a hanging cloth nearby, brushed the dust off, watching as a massive cloud rose off the box. Once the dust was gone, it

revealed rich, dark oak and beautiful gold etchings dancing across the surface of the box. I carefully opened its lid; the soft creak of its hinges filled the silence.

Inside lay beautiful blue crystal, radiating a soft glow into the darkening room. I carefully picked it up, mesmerized by its beauty. The surface was cold, yet something felt familiar, though I'd never seen it before. Pain pricked my finger as the sharp edges of the crystal drew blood. Though the sight of blood didn't bother me, I felt lightheaded. Before I could tell what was happening, the stone began to shine brighter and vibrate with unseen energy. The ground beneath my feet started shaking; my body fell onto the cold floor. All of a sudden, a flash of light erupted from the stone and blinded me. As the light faded, everything around me looked the same, except the journal; it was no longer the aged book I remember, the pages looked untouched, and the leather was fresh. I looked out of the now undamaged window; the sky had changed - the moon was replaced by the sun. Confusion glazed over me, *'What is happening?'*

I then recalled the cryptic warning from the book, fear pumping through my veins. I looked around, desperately trying to find the crystal. It was nowhere to be seen. I searched for what felt like hours before I realized it was hopeless. But I couldn't give up yet.

I got up and sprinted to the attic door. I pulled at the rusted handle, conveying all my power to open it. But the warning in the book was right; there was no use, it was locked. Panic set in and I frantically banged on the door, tirelessly screaming for help. My efforts were useless, as the house was empty and I was too far up. My breath came in ragged gasps and the walls of the attic threatened to close in on me. I looked for alternate routes of escape- but the window was too high up, if I jumped out, it would be instant death. Still, it would be worth a try. I grabbed a nearby baseball bat and slammed it into the glass, over and over again. Releasing all the panic and desperation I had, I uselessly swung again and again. I threw the bat aside and sank to my knees. It was a lost cause. I was trapped in the past. Forever.

**The End.**



# Returning Home

By Firdaus, age 13

I broke the universe.

Standing on that stage with my teammates, I thought we'd change the world, and make it a better place for everybody. Cameras flashed. People clapped and cheered. The applause thundered in my ears. "The first machine ever to dare defy time," I had said, my voice strong and confident, filled with pride.

And now? I can barely even remember what it felt like to belong to that moment, in that timeline.

The machine worked, well of course it did. But that is exactly the problem. If only it didn't.

I don't really know when it all started to go wrong, but at some point it did. Maybe it was the first timeline I was teleported to, where everything was nearly perfect. Where my mom would smile at me like always, where I aced all my tests, missed all the embarrassing moments I had once lived. But something was still missing in that world. If only I could remember what had driven me to use that time machine once again. Or maybe, it was the tenth jump, where I had met people I hadn't before, where my parents' eyes were cold and distant.

At first, it was quite intoxicating, to unravel different timelines and explore new possibilities of the childhood I had once lived, in an attempt to find the perfect alternative version. But the more I had searched, the more I realized how wrong it all

felt. None of these lives were really mine. None of them really felt like myself. And that's how I came to realize just how ungrateful I was with the childhood that I had already lived. The childhood that had shaped me, and made me myself. My true self. All these timelines that I have made, they were like echoes, shadows of what I thought I wanted. And somewhere along the way, I lost track of where I started.

Then, finally, I found it. Or, well at least, I thought I did. The timeline that felt just right. My house looked the same. My friends laughed the same way; my best friend Sam smiled at me the way she did back in the original timeline. My mother hugged me like she always had. Relief washed over me, and for the first time in what felt like forever, at last, I can breathe again.

So, I broke the machine. Smashed it to pieces, so that it could never pull me, or anyone else, into the fractured mess of timelines I'd created ever again. I thought I was safe. I thought the universe was back to the way it should be.

But I was wrong.

One morning, I woke up, surprised. The room I was in wasn't mine. It was Jess', Sam's older sister. I stared at unfamiliar hands, trembling as I realized I was in her body. At breakfast, her siblings, Alex and Maia chatted casually, and her parents didn't notice anything unusual, thankfully. But Sam did. She narrowed her eyes and leaned closer.

"You're not like yourself today, Jess," she said, her voice low but sharp.

Later, after everyone left, I decided to confess everything. "I'm not Jess. I'm Celeste."

Sam's jaw dropped, disbelief flashing in her eyes, but after some convincing, and well, a frantic afternoon of searching, we found the truth; Jess was stuck in my body.

Fixing this wasn't even near easy. We had to rebuild the time machine, something I had sworn never to do again. It took months of hard work, trial and error, and late nights in secret, but at least I knew what I was doing this time. Sam stuck by me, and even Jess, trapped in my body, helped where she could.

Finally, we finished it. The machine was ready. Sam and I stepped in together, inputting one final command: to return home. To the place where we truly belonged. To a timeline where the machine would never exist again.

I look Sam in the eyes, and smile. She grins back at me. Our friends glance at us as they whisper, confused, but their words feel distant, unimportant. Why are we so close all of a sudden? Honestly, I don't know.

Or maybe... I do.

It's weird, like we're both remembering the same dream but can't quite say it aloud. The silence between us doesn't last long. We're laughing a moment later, talking like nothing's changed.

But something has. And though I can't quite explain it, I think I'm okay with that for now.

**The End.**

# My Death Date

By Nina, age 11

Sparing. Trying to stab Rainsford. Almost got him. Almost, almost. Owf! Stabbed. Blood spilling from my guts. Rainsford's eyes glinted at me. Rainsford went inside.

My life flashed before my eyes as I lay on the ground. My father happily brought me to the hunting range. The joy in my mother's eyes when I killed my first beast. I remembered the book that my mother had gifted me. My mother's death.

Stabbed, I was tied back. Helpless. Slowly regaining energy. The rage. The anger. I was helpless.

I sprung up. I signaled to Ivan. Turns out he was faking. Such a mechanism can't harm such a thick-skinned giant like Ivan. He brought me to my manor, as he grabbed bondage, I lay on the bed thinking of my next move. Then I got it. Ivan took out the little dagger stabbed in his flesh as he bandaged me up. I was filled with adrenaline. I felt like a spider rebuilding its web, I felt immaculate!

I went upstairs where my wonderful bedroom was just to see Rainsford. "How wonderful I see you up here my dear friend Rainsford!" I called.

"Wha- what? How are you? How are you still-"

"Alive? Still alive?!" My anger rose. After all of this he was still lying on my bed relaxing. He didn't bother to stand up either.

"I have a proposal for you, but it's not one that you can deny."

"Well, I defeated you once, and I'm willing to defeat you again General Zarroff."

"Oh, what a pity. I just needed you to hunt with me."

"Hunt? Hunt with you? So like none of you hunting me, right?" Rainsford remarked.  
"Okay. I accept."

Ivan grabbed the pistol behind him. When Rainsford came I thought I would have so much fun hunting with him. I wonder if I could redo the game? Nevermind, stop getting off track.

After explaining my plan to Rainsford, Ivan put his pistol in his pocket. We headed off to the cities. The air smelt like smoke, and the buildings were stacked up high. We traveled to the nearby park, where the air was much more fresh. The sweet honey smell from the nearby food carts got traveled by the wind to the park.

I was thinking about the three main suspects I had. I'd need to explain to Rainsford who they were so we could figure out a plan. I first signaled Ivan to get Rainsford and I some food from that food cart as a proposal gift. The smell was delectable, I have to admit, but the taste was amazing, the food called cinnamon roll, was the food Ivan bought for us.

As Rainsford was eating, I explained the three suspects.

Number one, Gerald, from the hunter's association. He was always jealous of my mother's skills. Second suspect was Jane, who was jealous of my mother's good looks. Wait, it couldn't be her, the killer had black hair. Moving on, the last suspect was AJ, who was jealous of how animals were attached to her, making it easier to hunt.

I figured it wasn't Jane, as she didn't have short, black hair. Next was Gerald, it could have been him, as he was known to be envious, but still. He was a kind hearted man. Also afraid of my father, who was one of the world's best hunters. So the only person left was AJ. Rainsford figured to use his weakness of animals to kill him. Smart and easy. I got a rat and injected it with what I thought was poison.

We set the rat towards AJ. As soon as he spotted it he kneeled down to pet it.

**CRUNCH!** Rainsford and I chuckled, although it didn't last for long, as we saw a giant

mutated rat human. We began another hunt, and surprisingly this was easier to hunt than the one I hunted five years ago. We took it down and began to chuckle again. This time, I cut it short. I pointed a knife to his neck, with Ivan pointing a gun at his head. **BANG!** Ivan shot. **STAB!** I stabbed him. I knew it was him all along. We gave Rainsford a proper burial. AJ seemed fine, so we let him be. Ivan and I began to return to the mansion. Except... **BANG!** Police came.

**The End.**

# Pizza Planet

By Peter, age 8

Once upon a time there was a grandpa named James and his wife Janice. James was seventy and Janice was sixty-nine. One day, James went to his workroom and made a time machine! He was so excited, so he called his wife.

"Janice! Come quick!" he yelled.

Janice came to take a look and was curious about a big red button on the time machine. She pointed her finger to press it.

"Noooooo!" James shouted.

But she already pressed it! **WHOOSH!**

They flew into the future and fell down onto something squishy.

"Where are we?" James said.

They looked around them and saw what looked like floating pizza. James sniffed the air and smelled melted cheese.

"What on earth?" said James.

"Darling, I don't think this is earth," said Janice.

There were no other people around them, just pizza! Pizza clouds, pizza rivers and pizza trees! Did they go to the future of another planet?! But how were they going to get home? James wondered. James didn't have time to grab the time machine to take it with them before Janice pressed the red button. So, it seems they were stuck on this pizza planet.

"What should we do now?" James asked.

But Janice was already walking towards a big pizza tree. She began to chomp on the pizza tree trunk so it would fall down.

"This will make a nice boat," she said, chomping.

When the pizza tree finally fell, they pushed it onto the river and jumped on! In the river they saw pizza fish, pizza sharks, and pizza seals. They saw a place on the riverbank that looked nice, so they stopped.

They walked around and suddenly they heard a bark! A pizza dog was running towards them!

"Let's keep this dog and build a house here!" said Janice as she began to gather house materials.

So, that is the story of how grandpa James and grandma Janice went to Pizza Planet and stayed there forever (and only ate pizzas!).

**The End.**



# Shiny the Elf and the Christmas Lesson

By Seulah, age 8

Once upon a time on Christmas eve, Shiny the elf was walking through the snowy forest. She went deeper and deeper, but she wasn't scared because she knew the woods well. But soon she saw something on the path in front of her that she had never seen before. It was a small box with a big red button on the top. She bent down and **click** - she pressed it! The box began to spin, slowly and then super-fast!

"Uh-oh!" Shiny squeaked.

She was terrified because everything around her began to change. Her world was spinning and twirling! And with a big bump everything stopped. Shiny was dizzy but after a while she got a better look around her. She saw herself and her dad, Rudolph, walking on the path in the woods. It seemed to be the exact time that she went to the haunted house two days ago. That box was a time machine!

She thought hard about why she was back to this exact time. Shiny really didn't like this day because she doesn't like to go anywhere scary. Even when her mom, an icicle fairy, says it's okay, Shiny still gets scared! It was because Shiny wasn't a brave elf. Maybe that was the lesson she was meant to learn, Shiny thought.

So, she followed her past self and her past dad to the haunted house again. But this time Shiny thought that it was okay to cry. She knew deep down that nothing strange lasts forever, and suddenly all the scariness went away.

*'Is this what it means to be brave?'* Shiny thought.

She walked back to where the time machine box was sitting on the path and pressed the button again. She went home and lived happily ever after as a brave elf.

**The End.**

## STORY STUDIO ANTHOLOGIES

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