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- Meet The Authors -



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Published by It's a Secret, Tumut High School, 2/20 Bogong PI, Tumut NSW 2720. Elise Baker, Jaime Eastlake, Jonathan Haley, Emily Kelly, Allie Piper, Chelsea Rushton, Ashley Watling

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#### Table of Contents:

- Chapter 01: From the Future
- Chapter 02: TW3 Machine
- Chapter 03: Back to the past
- Chapter 04: To the movies
- Chapter 05: Sparks Fly
- Chapter 06: The Puppy Saviour
- Chapter 07: The Belief
- Chapter 08: Forward to The Future
- Chapter 09: Love Tested by Time

# CHAPTER From The The Future



The year is 4253 AD. Earth is a new world, and life is almost completely automated.

Oliver pushed the buttons of his food-inator, and watched as it buzzed, whirred, and spat out a perfectly cooked piece of bread. Oliver watches as the butter melts, seeping deeper into the golden toast. His hands twisted the top of his vegemite jar to open it. The soft crunch of toast kept him company as he made his way to the litro-train, and hurried off to work. Only the best of the best could be historians in a time where history was so far behind them. He wandered into his office, and glanced around at the large collection of artefacts that sat by him day to day. Oliver sat into his floating chair. It was time to work. Another early morning of diving into the past.



Electronic pictures floated around his desk as he looked for his new project. Face after face after face flickered on and off the holographic screen. One caught his eye. A woman, with blond hair that was like golden water flowing down her face, her eyes were hazel gemstones that glistened brighter than even the brightest sun. He needed to know more about this woman,

who he had seen on posters around the office, in children's movies, she must be something great to have so many people cherish her name and image.

His fingers swept through screens of information. At last, he saw it, a name to go with the picture. Abigail Wilson, an old name, but it was nevertheless a beautiful name. Fingers tapped along glowing keyboards and soon, he had collected lots of information. Abigail was a paramedic, something that he had never heard of before. He read on, learning about the heroes of the past, the way she had rescued so many people, then, on top of that, rescued puppies. He read about her little brother, who had inspired her to become the hero, the paramedic, that she was.

He brought up the video. With bated breath and large eyes, he watched the grainy footage, the peak of film technology in the past, and saw how she leapt into the Murray River, without a second thought. He witnessed, through the 3D projection, how she brought them to shore, and without so much as a shiver, she smiled at the camera. He needed to know more about this wonderful woman, who so embodied heroism that he finally understood all her fans, all the little girls who jumped for joy at her name, and hung pictures of her to remind themselves of this selfless woman. He knew there was one place he could go to find out more. It looked like he would be leaving work early.

### CHAPTER TWO #3 Machine



This was dangerous. Really dangerous. If he was caught, Oliver faced a lifetime of shame and punishment. But he can't turn back now. He'd spent weeks preparing for this trip. His plan is infallible, and if his thousands of calculations were correct (which they always were), there was no possible way for this to fail.



The TW3 Machine whirred with the raw power of 17 gigawatts. It was a rusty, barely screwed together tin can, and it was singing with electricity, in preparation for the very first unauthorised time jump in human history. He couldn't help but stand and stare, as the golden glow from the power cells began to spill across the white room, lighting him up with its radiance. With a clunking hiss, the tube doors slid open, revealing the elevator-like insides with a quiet exhale of pressured air.

It was now or never. Swallowing hard, Oliver slung his pack onto his shoulder and stepped inside, feeling the hum of the machine through his feet. He looked around at the endless colourful buttons that surrounded him, a little overwhelmed and extremely proud. But he didn't have time to bask in his creative genius.

It wasn't as if he hadn't tried. He had sent in a hundred applications to the Time Society to get his expedition approved, but they had continued to shut him down time and time again. The time zone was too long ago, and it was too dangerous to send someone there, for fear of interrupting the future timeline. But he knew the rules, and he was only going to meet Abigail Wilson, tell her how much he appreciated her work, and then leave. (And probably get a selfie). They had access to time travel, and he knew all the coding by heart, so he had simply created his own. It wasn't like he was trying to hurt anyone.

Turning to the control panel, Oliver punched in a sequence of numbers, calculating his flight to Abigail Wilson's time period, (the 28th of February 2018, to be exact) and took a deep breath as his fingers closed around the massive copper lever that would fire up his genius creation. This was it.

With a grunt, he pulled the lever down, and the TW3 Machine began to whine as the power capsules flashed. The doors shut around him, and he held his breath in anticipation as beeping filled the air. It's deafening, and the walls rattle under the force of the electricity. He heavily regretted using scrap material.

His hair stood on end as the static power swirled around him, and he let out a whoop as the world around him flashed and turned white.

And for a moment, he felt nothing.

# CHAPTER THREE Back The Last



The world swirled back into focus, and he stepped out of the tinny structure, flicking on the switches, letting light pour back into his previously closed eyes. The dirty air of the past swept into the machine. He took a breath and opened the door. Bright light filled his eyes as he squinted against the unfiltered sun. He was in the past. He had really done it. The soft grass bent beneath his reinforced shoes, the gentle breeze twisted his hair. He walked away from The Machine and closed the door with a resounding thud. The past was weird. He took out a tablet from his bag, and tapped away, recording everything he could. His fellow historians would be quite jealous of the information he was collecting.

People stared, as he made his way down the road, cowering from their intrusive gazes. He felt nervous. His whole life he had studied the past, like a distant thing, almost like it hadn't happened. Now, he was walking through a living, breathing, moment. A squawk pulled his attention.



"You're looking lost, Mate. Squawk!"

Oliver whipped his head around. No one else seemed to hear it, but he could swear that the magpie on the branch

beside him was staring at him.

"Well? Squawk! Are you just going to stand there? Or are you going to go get her?" The magpie was definitely talking.

"Who's her?"

"The amazing Abigail Wilson! Squawk! You are practically made for her!"

Oliver stared at his feet and shuffled his shoes. He felt the blood rush to his face.

"I can't, I don't know anything about people at this time. She's so... untouchable."

"But you've always wanted to ask her all those questions!"

"Who are you again?

The bird squawked indignantly. "I'm your wingman, pun intended! I saw the picture on your fancy tablet thing!" He nestled his wings before he continued, "I'm Adelaide, call me Azza! Squawk!"

Oliver instinctively curled his fingers protectively around his tablet. He needed it to calculate his way through

time, it was a danger to have it with him at all. His feet wandered, and he was accompanied by the flapping of wings. He wandered around. This paramedic, she must really be important, in a time where they didn't have the technology to fix themselves, you had to rely on others. She really was a hero.

His feet led him along the street, and he stopped short. A flash of strawberry blond hair snuck around the crowd. He glimpsed the face. It was her, the paramedic!

"This is your chance, mate. Squawk!"

He followed her into the crowd, until she stopped, leaning against a fountain, looking so at ease in her surroundings that she obviously belonged there. He wandered over, unsure. The crowd moved around him, like a river he had to swim across. At last, he made it to the other side, and he turned to her direction. She was there, still, talking to some children, laughing at something someone had said. It was time to meet his hero.

#### CHAPTER FOUR Fathe Marines



Oliver snuck a glance at Abigail, and looked back at Azza the Magpie. He took a step towards her, and watched as she looked around, deep eyes taking in everything around her, always vigilant. It was now or never.

"Hi, I'm Oliver". He said, as he fiddled with his sleeves.

From the corner of his eye, he saw the flash of black and white wings. He heard the squawk of Adelaide as he waited for the answer.

"Oh! I'm Abigail, Abby". She called, cutting through his awkward silence.

"So... I saw you around here before, I was wondering if you wanted to maybe see a movie or something?" He asked.

She tucked a stray golden hair behind her ear. "Well, I do have some spare time. The cinemas are pretty close. What sort of movies do you like to watch? I have to say, I'm a fan of adventure."

Oliver chuckled nervously. "I'm open to anything. You can pick."

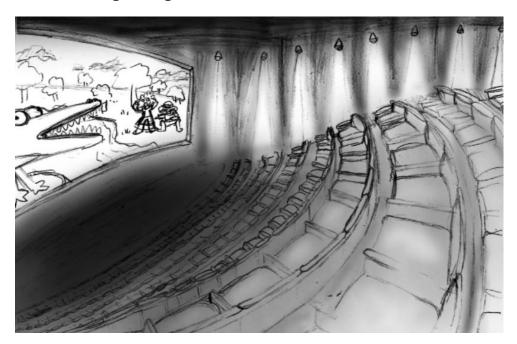
She gave a laugh, but it seemed more confident than before. Her face reflected the sun, only it was the

brightest star he had ever seen. She smiled at the clear sky.

"Let's walk together, I'm sure we can decide on something when we get there".

And so they walked. Through the town, Oliver took in everything he could see. Being a historian was one thing, but being in the past, being here with her, it made his heart flutter. His mind spun with questions he could ask.

The theatre was a grand building, so much more intricately detailed than the buildings he had seen in the future. The doors were large and held open. They stopped together at the counter. Oliver watched the popcorn crackle in the glass container. Together, they made their way into the dark of the cinema. The ruby red velvet seats were more comfortable than anything he had ever felt. Together, they settled into the cinema, and watched the lights go dark.





The light from the screen beamed across the cinema, blinding Oliver. He wasn't used to these ancient devices and their lack of concern for people's eyes. The past could be a scary place.

"How interesting, no automatic dimmer for eye protection" He muttered to himself.

"What was that?" Abigail asked, turning to face him.

"Oh uh nothing, nothing!" Oliver quickly turned away, picking up his drink to avoid conversation. He knew the conversation was inevitable, but never before had he needed to talk to someone as seriously as this.

"My family loves Crocodile Dundee, it's my younger brother's favourite movie." Abigail whispered with a soft smile.

"Oh, I've actually never seen it," Oliver mumbled nervously.

"What?" Abigail asked, clearly in shock.

"Uh, I mean... recently! I haven't seen it recently," He scrambled to find something to say "I just love it when the crocodile... uh dundees..."

"Right... well yeah, my sister loves it, I'll miss our movie nights when I move to Queensland".

"What? No! You can't do that!" Oliver cried.

A bit of popcorn came flying down and hit Oliver in the back of the head. He spun around, stunned.

"Oi! Keep it down, would ya? I'm tryin' to watch the show!" An angry man yelled down at them.

"Sorry, I'm so sorry" Abigail hastily called out, looking back at Oliver with a confused look.



Oliver looked back up to the screen and as he reached over to the popcorn, accidentally bumped Abigail's hand. Nervously, he pulled his hand away and she stifled a small giggle.

"Here" He mumbled, pointing the box towards him. Her warm smile brought him a sense of comfort, he

smiled back at her and took the box of popcorn. It certainly isn't anything like the food they have in the future, but it still is very tasty. Out of nowhere, Oliver felt a swift bump on the back of his chair and watched as

the popcorn went flying from his hands. A loud snicker erupted behind him.

"HA HA! You dropped your popcorn!" An immature voice called out.

"I'll help you, don't worry about it." Abigail quietly leaned down, starting to scoop up the popcorn.

"Thanks," Oliver mutters, he knows this is his chance.

"Abigail, we need to talk about something" his heart sat in his throat.

"What do you mean?" Her puzzled expression vaguely lit up by the light from the screen.

"Well you see..." Oliver's voice trailed off.
"Is this about earlier? I did have this hunch that maybe moving wasn't the best idea, but I mean there's jobs going for paramedics everywhere". She mumbled.

There's a long pause and Oliver felt his heart start to race.

"Well," His voice begins to speed up, "I'm a historian from the future and I've always wanted to travel in time to meet you because everyone loves you and you're just so cool and powerful and I guess I kinda always wanted

to be like that and you can't move to Queensland because you need to be here because you're a hero!"

"I'm a hero?" Abigail laughed in disbelief, "I'm no hero...
I'm just me".

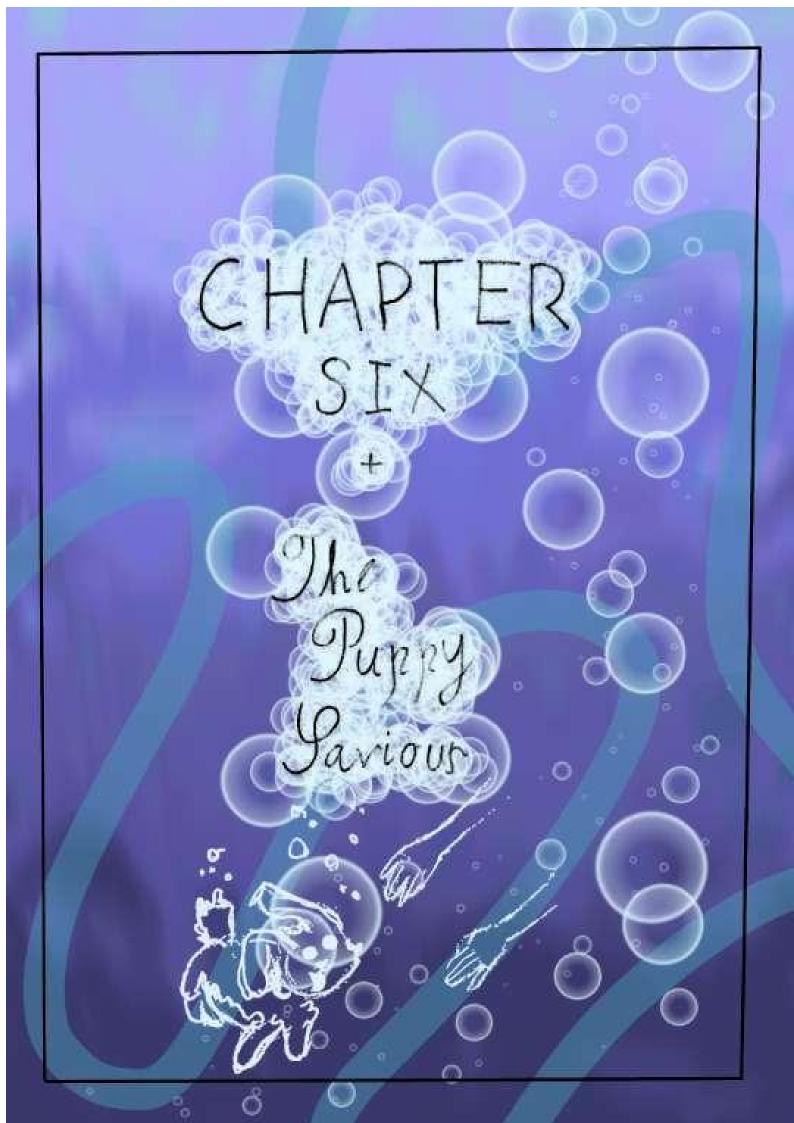
"But you are a hero! You're Abigail Wilson, everyone knows that, everyone knows that on the 28th of February in 2018 Abigail Wilson saves 24 puppies from the Murray River!"

"What? That hasn't happened, and today is the 28th of February, you're crazy" Abigail sat up, brushing herself off.

"What time is it?" Oliver scrambled up on his seat.

"Like 1pm why?"

"We need to go!" Oliver grabbed Abigail's hand and scurried out, stepping over seats and popcorn.



"Look!" Oliver pointed over to the bridge, still sprinting away from the theatre, towards a nearby gum tree where Adelaide was sitting.

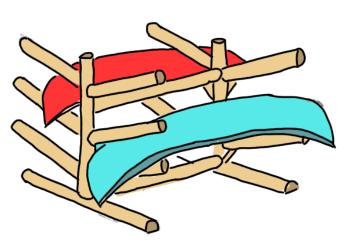
"What? It's just the bridge, there's nothing there" Abigail asked, out of breath and desperately trying to keep up with Oliver.

As if on cue, a white Holden ute driving across the bridge hit a bump and the crate on the back went flying into the river. The small cry of puppies trailing down with it. The ute came to a sudden halt.

"My puppies!" a loud devastated voice boomed from the front seat of the ute.

Abigail's face dropped, and she turned to Oliver, who was beaming with excitement.

"Well, go on girl". Adelaide squawked, "It's your moment in the sun! Squawk!"



Without any further hesitation Abigail lept into action, sprinting over to a nearby canoe rack.

"Don't worry sir, I've got them!" She yelled out to the driver, "How many are there?"

"24!" He wailed, pulling over and following her towards the river. With what seems like superhuman strength Abigail picked up the canoe and started running towards the river.

"This is it mate, squawk," Adelaide looked down at Oliver, "look at 'er go".

Abigail shoved the canoe into the river and lept into it.

"Be careful!" Oliver called out, "Oh who am I kidding, you're Abigail Wilson, you don't need to be careful," His eyes glowed with anticipation.

The crate sunk further into the river as Abigail sped her way through the water, arms cutting through it like knives in butter. She looked unstoppable.

"Someone be ready to help me pull back the canoe once I get the puppies out!" She yelled, diving out of the canoe.

She tore open the door and frantically started pulling out puppies.

"Here, I've got one!" She threw her head back above water and placed the puppy on the canoe.

"Tex!" The owner shouted happily.

As quickly as she could Abigail continued to pull out puppies and load up the canoe, one after the other until only one was left.

"That's only 23. Where's Penny?" The owner called out, repeatedly counting the puppies on the canoe.

Diving back under again, Abigail swam her way around the crate, searching for one more puppy.

"Squawk! floating down the river!" Adelaide cried.

Oliver looked down the river and saw the smallest of the puppies being dragged downstream. "Abigail!" Oliver screamed.

Hearing her name, she pulled herself up onto the canoe, spinning around searching for the final puppy.

"Penny! She's floating down the river" Called out the owner, bouncing around nervously.



"Don't worry I've got it!" Called Abigail pushing the canoe to the edge of the river and starting to swim downstream after Penny. The water threw Abigail around, making reaching Penny an impossible task. With every attempt to reach her only making it harder than before.

"I can't reach! What do I do? What do I do?" Just as she said it, the idea hits her. Abigail grabbed onto a nearby stick and pointed it down to the puppy.

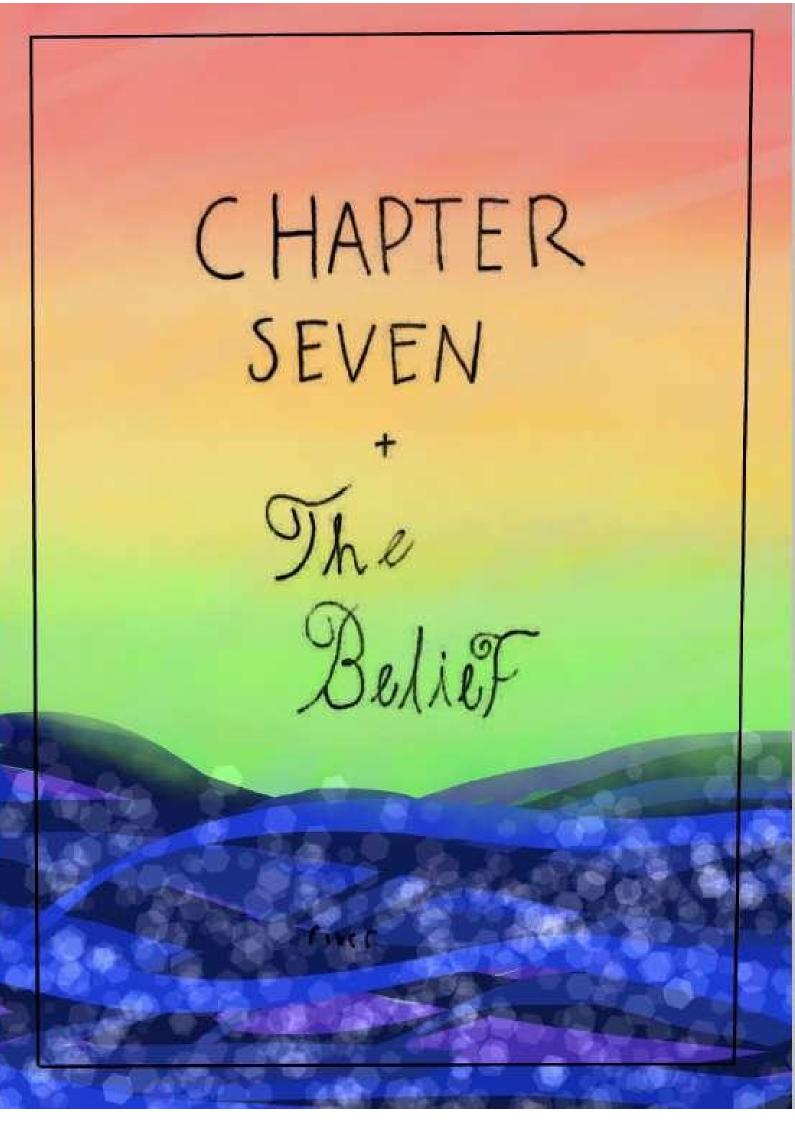
"Good puppy, who wants to play with the stick? You do!" She giggles.

Exactly as Abigail planned, Penny bit onto the stick, excited and ready to play, allowing Abigail to pull her closer and grab onto the dog.

"I've got her!" She cheered.

Abigail looked over to the owner, only just realising how much of a crowd had built up over the time she spent in the river.

"Penny!" The owner cried, overwhelmed by joy.



Anxious, Oliver ran down to the riverbank, watching the water sweep by until Abigail broke the surface, swimming powerfully towards him. Breathing heavily, she pulled herself out onto the sand and lay there, exhausted. She smiled at the people watching.

"You did it! You saved them!" Oliver cheered, dancing around her, unable to contain his excitement. "You were amazing! You didn't even hesitate!"

Abigail sighed, lifting her hand to hush him, trying to get her breath back. The puppies were slowly climbing out of the canoe, shivering from the cold water and snuggling up with each other. Penny licked her face, wriggling out of her arms to join her brothers and sisters.

Oliver closed his mouth, helping her sit up and wrapping his jacket over her shoulders to keep her warm. She looked up at him with her wide hazel eyes, and didn't say anything for a long moment.

"How on Earth did you know that was going to happen?" She demanded quietly.

Oliver smiled, resting his hand on her shoulder. "I told you. I'm from the future."

"I still think you're crazy. But...I think I believe you now."

He grinned, and helped her stand. The puppies barked at their ankles, and Abigail reached down to pat one. "Come on. Let's get these little guys home."

Linking their arms, the historian and the paramedic led the puppies back up the path, where a crowd had formed from shock. The driver from the ute came running towards them, shouting and cheering as his puppies trotted back to his side, and soon he was swarmed with their fluffy love. He was crying from relief.

"Thank you, lassie! Thank you so much! I thought I'd lost them!" He sobbed, kneeling down to hug his many small dogs with joy. The puppies, having forgotten why everyone was so worried about them, happily rolled around and sniffed at his feet.

"I love you Charlie, and you Rowan, and you Robin, and you Jaime, and Allie, and Elise, and Jonathon, and Chelsea, and Bartholomew, and Freddy, and Maxwell the first, and Maxwell the second, and Stevie, and Fluffy, and Oscar, and Ashley, and Emily, and Chunky, and Pippin, and Rose, and Tex, and Milo, and Stephanie, and of course you Penny!"

Oliver and Abigail exchanged a look. There were a lot of dogs.

"Come on little ones. Let's go and sponge you off!"

Around them, the gathered crowd began to cheer, applauding the efforts of the young paramedic. Abigail blushed, nervous under all the attention. "Oh I didn't really do anything..."

"Yes you did!" In his excitement, Oliver grabbed Abigail's hand and held it up. "Everyone, this Abigail Wilson! She saved all 24 puppies all on her own!"

The crowd exploded with cheers, and Oliver cheered the loudest. Abigail went even redder, and a sheepish grin grew on her wet face.

Her strawberry blonde hair was dark and stuck to her face with the slimy river water, and her clothes hung heavy and sodden against her body, but to Oliver she had never looked more beautiful, standing with a roaring crowd praising her achievement, and he glowed with pride at the fact he was here to see it all.

"They're making such a fuss." She whispered. "It was only a few puppies."

"No, no! You don't understand!" Oliver grabbed her hand again and dragged her to the high edge of the riverbank. "This is just the beginning for you! This is what spurs your paramedic career forward! People read all about

this, and you become the most famous paramedic in history!"

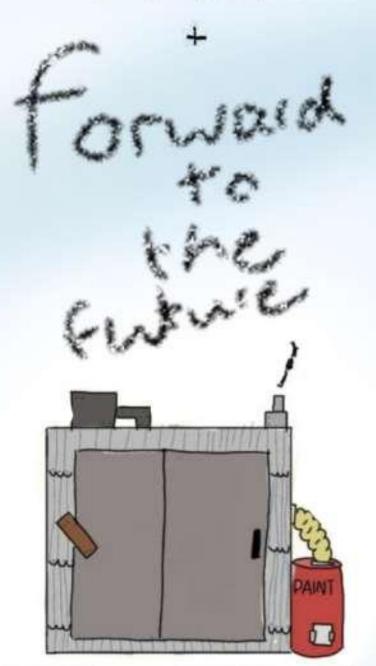
Abigail didn't look convinced, and rolled her eyes. "I'm nothing special."

"Abigail, in my time, there's no such thing as paramedics. Everything is automated and emergencies are handled within seconds. Your occupation is a legend to us, and your people are gone now. Your legacy is so inspiring to us. To me. That's why I came all the way back here to meet you."

"How do I know you're telling the truth?"

He held his hand out. "Let me show you."

# CHAPTER



"It...uh...get's a little stuck sometimes..." Oliver grunted as he shoved his shoulder against the TW3 Machine's door, where the rusty hinges had decided to embarrass him and stick together to prevent the door sliding open. Abigail giggled, and waited until the door scraped open to step forward.

"It doesn't look like a time machine." She said, taking his hand and stepping inside the snug box. Oliver reached around her and punched his own time into the panel. The power cells began to whir once more, and Abigail jumped as Azza swooped in beside her and perched on her shoulder, letting out a squawk!

The magpie waved a feathered wing out at the world in farewell, warbling its cheerful song as the door shut around the trio, sweeping them into the gold and white light of time travel.

Oliver, prepared for the shaky landing, giving Abigail a moment to settle her stomach, before leading her towards the massive silver building reading "MUSEUM", barely giving her time to take in the sterile and shiny utopia of a world the future has become. Flying cars flashed past her, and robot dogs bark their metallic barks. A man with legs that extended like springs strode over them.

Awestruck, she watched as names and faces she'd both heard of and hadn't flash by in the museum hallways, and she barely notices where they are until Oliver stopped in front of a particular display. The sight made her heart glow with awe and delight.

Under the massive banner of "Histories Heroes: Paramedics", a smaller plaque read "The Story of Abigail Wilson", with a photo of her smiling face beside it, and a passage about her life. Her paramedic uniform, the one she was currently wearing, was on display behind a sheet of glass.

She moved forward to read it, but Oliver held her arm to stop her, smiling gently. "Spoilers."

She grinned, and he grinned back, and they hurried arm in arm back to the entrance before someone got suspicious and asked about her uniform. It's not every day a historical figure appears in the very museum they're honoured in.

With a deep breath, Abigail took in the endless shine of the city. "Where are we?"

"Sydney."

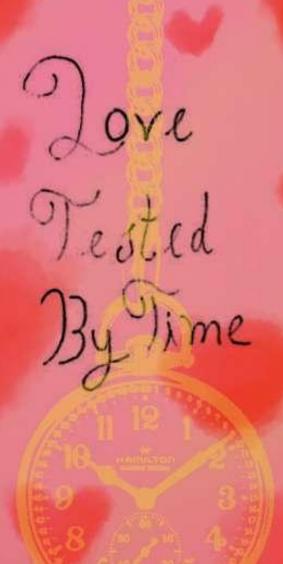
She stared at him, and then shoved his shoulder. "No we are not."

Oliver laughs. "We are! This is New Sydney."

The wind ruffles her still-damp hair, and she smiles. New Sydney. A perfect future.

Oliver watched her excitement, but he felt the twist of guilt in his heart. She didn't belong here. She was called to be a paramedic, to be a hero of her world. She couldn't stay here.

# CHAPTER NINE



"This is incredible" Abigail exclaims as she again sees the vast skyscrapers and the ever-shimmering deep blue skies, "I can't wait to show my family!"

Upon seeing Oliver's face however, she frowned. "What?" She asked, "What's wrong?"

Oliver sighed, "The machine can only handle one more trip" He said, downcast. "You can stay here with me, or I can send you back home."

"No!" Abigail cried, "There must be another way!"

"I'm sorry but there isn't. You're needed at home. You save so many lives, and so many families, and without you there, who knows how the future could turn out." Oliver said sadly.

"There has to be another way!" She cried, grabbing him. "This is the future, surely anything is possible, surely there are other time machines? We could...we could alternate between them."

Oliver looked downtrodden. "I shouldn't have brought you here. I'm breaking so many rules by bringing you here." But then abruptly, his face lit up. "I have an idea!"

She watched him with tear filled eyes and he smiled gently, placing a hand on her shoulder.

"What if I returned with you? We can live in your timezone."

Abigail removed her hands from her face, looking up at him with her eyes full of hope, though doubts still flickered in those hazel irises. As she continued to think about it, Abigail nodded slowly.

"You would... leave your timezone for me? What about everything you know and love here?"

Oliver shook his head, and blushed. He anxiously fiddled with his fingers and looked down at the ground, before confessing that he didn't have much but his books back home. Abigail couldn't help but to laugh, Oliver seemed like the man who would befriend his books instead of other people.

"Thank you, Oliver. If you need, I can help you settle down... our times are different to yours".

Without thinking he replied, "Yes, I would greatly appreciate that".

"Excellent then!"

With a big grin, Abigail turned around and began her walk back to the TW3 Machine with a slight skip in her

step that wasn't there before. Oliver watched her walk to the machine with a bright smile on his face, and he looked over the city that he used to call home, one last time.

After a minute, he followed suit behind Abigail. Together they entered the machine and the door shut behind them. A bright blinding light shone through the area, and the high-pitched whine of the TW3 filled the air, before the machine was gone with them inside, leaving only a wisp of smoke to signify that they were ever there at all.

"And that", Azza whispered, pruning his wings, as the machine appeared in the past, "Is the start of something fantastic, *Squawk!*"

