

Time Travelers' Graveyard

written by

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FADE IN

INT. TECH COWORKING SPACE - DAY

An AI prompt is typed out on a laptop screen:

ON SCREEN:

(File ChucksFunkyFunc.java attached)

Chuck: Fix ma damn code this time, you artificial dumbass.

A mouse cursor clicks to send.

AI: All fixed!

A terminal window shows "ChucksFunkyFunc updated". Another window pops up and a cursor clicks to schedule an appointment. The year is typed in as 3030.

A confirmation message in the output section proclaims "ERROR: 4,765 conflicting appointments."

SOPHIA, early 30s in business casual, is looking over the shoulder of CHUCK, mid 20s, pudgy, wearing a video gamer shirt, at a laptop in a trendy-looking coworking space.

SOPHIA

(exasperated)

Chuck, the whole idea is that our software handles anything, anytime.

CHUCK

It's fine for the next millennium.  
No one's gonna care, Sophia.

Sophia points to her right and Chuck turns to look. DARREN, late 20s with glasses, rubs his chin while clicking his mouse.

SOPHIA

Darren's automated tests should be enough. He's really good at writing them.

CHUCK

(grins cheekily)

How about I show you what I'm good at?

SOPHIA

Coding, yes! We need to pass his tests, okay?

Sophia smiles expectantly. Chuck pauses, then relents.

CHUCK

Fine, okay.

Chuck shakes his head as he walks off.

SOPHIA'S DESK - LATER

Sophia, slumped in her computer chair, clicks, then waits. Her eyes widen in relief. She stands, straightens out her clothes, and looks up.

SOPHIA

*A problem with the time zone,  
An hour off, I should have known,  
That cursed daylight savings,  
Caused calendar misbehavings.*

Coworkers at nearby computers stand up and sing in unison.

COWORKERS

*All them sched'lin' quirks,  
They're a bunch of jerks,  
Find where they lurks,  
Fix 'em till they works.*

SOPHIA

*Events, multi-day enduring,  
Especially reoccurring,  
Cannot be scheduled during,  
Holidays, conflict-free ensuring.*

COWORKERS

*All them sched'lin' quirks,  
They're a bunch of jerks,  
Find where they lurks,  
Fix 'em till they works.*

SOPHIA

*Then some dates were lunar,  
If they only told me sooner,  
But now, I'm outta here!*

DARREN, late 20s, with glasses, rushes in, and sings.

DARREN

*But have you tried a leap year?*

Sophia's smile goes nervous. Darren switches to non-singing.

DARREN

*Sorry, Sophia, there's another  
failing test.*

(MORE)

DARREN (CONT'D)

An event every Monday and  
Wednesday, and another every 9 days  
-- only on leap years.  
I'm assuming Chuck still needs to  
iron out those Y3K conflict issues.  
Also during this morning's smoke  
test I found anywhere between 2 and  
5 appointments are fine but outside  
that range we get breakage on  
cross-date boundaries, especially  
with lunar calendars. And it  
produces a different result when...

Sophia looks on the verge of a breakdown as she hears only  
muffled static.

Chuck barrels through the door.

CHUCK

All the tests passed! My function  
handles everything!

DARREN

Heh, I'm sure your code isn't all  
in one function.

SOPHIA

It handles leap years now?

Chuck gleefully bounces.

CHUCK

Easiest bug EVER.

SOPHIA

I could kiss you.

DARREN

Nice! What was the problem?

Chuck tilts his head, thinking.

CHUCK

It said it was something time-  
related...

Darren gives Sophia a look.

SOPHIA

Heh, well, at least it works,  
right?

DARREN

Maybe we document it? In case  
someone else needs to understand  
it?

SOPHIA

Anyway, we should celebrate. Who's  
up for some paintball?

CHUCK

(grinning, pointing)  
Oh, it's on. Y'all goin' down!

SOPHIA

Bring it, Chuck. You won't know  
what hit you!

Everyone laughs as Chuck and Sophia high-five.

DARREN

(deadpan)  
Can someone please shoot me now?

EXT. PAINTBALL FIELD - DAY

The sun lights up the multi-colored paint on wooden barriers  
in an open field. Darren crouches behind a particularly  
flimsy barrier in a paintball field, looking around  
nervously.

DARREN

C'mon guys, I just really think we  
should document stuff.

Sophia and Chuck stand not far apart in the open, guns  
lowered, with watchful eyes.

SOPHIA AND CHUCK

(singing together)  
*We've got him now. We've found our  
prey.*

DARREN

(singing)  
*Just listen to what I have to  
say...*

SOPHIA

*We've done enough.*

CHUCK

*It's time to play!*

DARREN

*Years from now you'll rue this day!*

SOPHIA

*He's in my sight.*

CHUCK

*Let's make him pay!*

DARREN

*(singing)*

*Why does no one care?*

SOPHIA AND CHUCK

*(singing together)*

*Maybe run away?*

Darren gets up and runs. Sophia and Chuck both shoot Darren, covering him in paint. Sophia and Chuck laugh. Chuck nudges Sophia.

CHUCK

*Let's get out of here?*

Sophia grins wickedly and pulls Chuck away, surprising him. They disappear into the woods. Darren, peeking from behind a tree, sighs in relief.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK/NIGHT

Sophia sits in the woods, staring daggers at a strange lawnmower-like sound from below. In her lap lies a snoring Chuck.

SOPHIA

*Wake up already!*

Chuck startles, smiles awkwardly, then walks off. The sound of urination motivates Sophia to stand.

CHUCK (O.S.)

*Was I good?*

SOPHIA

*(rolling her eyes)*

*Let's just head back.*

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Crickets call from the shadows of a forest trail. Sophia and Chuck are still wandering, clearly lost.

CHUCK  
Uh, how do we get back?

SOPHIA  
Darren would have documented that.

They enter a moonlit clearing, shrouded in mist, with gravestones scattered throughout.

CHUCK  
(chuckling)  
This graveyard looks right out of  
D&D... wait, is that a typo?

Sophia inspects the gravestones.

SOPHIA  
The birth years are all in the  
future...

An ominous dark figure steps into the clearing, his breath wheezing. Sophia and Chuck's hands clasp.

JAMES  
Yes, we all made that sacrifice,  
(coughs) in our search for the  
creator.

CHUCK  
Dude, are you roleplaying? This is  
a LARP, right? We will help you  
find the creator!

SOPHIA  
Excuse me, Sir, but we're just  
trying to find the paintball place.  
Can we borrow your phone?

JAMES  
"Sir". I wasn't so old when I first  
time-traveled, but after forty  
years, I've fallen ill. Soon I'll  
join my fellow seekers in our  
failure.

SOPHIA  
Wait... time-traveled?

CHUCK  
You're saying all these graves were  
other time-travelers?

JAMES

You should see the size of this graveyard in 500 years!

SOPHIA

Maybe we can help somehow? Just need to make a quick call.

CHUCK

Let the Legion of Tunatech aid you in your quest!

JAMES

Wait, Tunatech? Who are you?

CHUCK

Well, I'm Chuck and this is...

JAMES

Did you perhaps write a function called... ChucksFunkyFunc?

CHUCK

Yes, I did! We're out here celebrating--

SOPHIA

Chuck, stop. No one should have seen our code yet.

JAMES

Could it be? You... (coughs) you are the creator?

SOPHIA

How did you get Chuck's code?

JAMES

Don't you see? Time machines have been invented, but we get stuck in the past because they all use your scheduling software!

James swivels toward Chuck.

JAMES

You put everything in one incomprehensible function, and something's wrong with it. All of humanity has been unable to decipher it for hundreds of years.



James goes silent as he gazes toward the stars. Suddenly, he breaks into a catchy song.

JAMES

(singing)

*That ChucksFunkyFunc,  
It looks like you were drunk,  
Our time travel is sunk,  
We hate you, little punk.*

(with frustration)

*It's got lots of useless gunk,  
Half the tests will flunk,  
The names you chose are junk,  
No useful logs in Splunk.*

(trembling with sadness)

*READMEs and wikis all defunct,  
Our guesses are debunked,  
Our fixes are rethunk,  
Our coders go kerplunk.*

(collecting himself)

*Your code smells like skunk,  
We forget it chunk by chunk,  
Keeps freezing with a clunk,  
Our hopes and dreams have shrunk.*

*That ChucksFunkyFunc,  
It looks like you were drunk,  
Our time travel is sunk,  
We hate you, little punk.*

James coughs once, and falls silent, staring Chuck down.

SOPHIA

*I didn't know. I'm so sorry. I'll  
fix this -- I'll rewrite Chuck's  
code personally.*

CHUCK

*Uhh, well...*

SOPHIA

*Apologize!*

CHUCK

*Sorry dude.*

INT. TECH COWORKING SPACE - NIGHT

Chuck sits, shadowy and backlit at his computer in the coworking space, alone in the late hours. He stands and sings a remorseful ballad with a scratchy voice:

CHUCK

(singing)

*I thought I was clever, just  
getting by,  
But now I see clearly, that was a  
lie,  
It's not just about making the code  
run,  
Documentation matters, to everyone.*

DARREN

(singing in the  
background)

*Why does no one care?*

CHUCK

*No more cutting corners, I'll take  
the blame,  
Good code's more important than any  
video game,  
Tests for my functions, comments in  
between,  
Intuitive errors, and code will be  
cleeeean.*

DARREN

(singing while walking to  
Chuck's side)

*Why does no one care?*

CHUCK AND DARREN

(singing in harmony)

*Why did no one care?*

CHUCK

(to Darren)

*And Darren, I know, I should be  
more kind,  
I'll try to do better, I'll keep it  
in mind,  
But I cannot lie, I have to  
confess,  
It is so fun to shoot you... I'll  
try to do it less.*

Darren turns to camera, eyes pleading.

FADE OUT