

Time Travelers' Graveyard

written by

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FADE IN

INT. TECH COWORKING SPACE - DAY

In the dreary corner of a tech coworking space, SOPHIA, early 30s, in business casual, sits slumped in her computer chair, relieved. 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 a failing
test. An event every Monday and
Wednesday, and another every 9 days
-- only on leap years.*

Sophia looks on the verge of a breakdown.

CHUCK, mid 20s, pudgy, wearing a video gamer shirt, barrels through the door.

CHUCK
All the tests passed! My function
handles everything!

SOPHIA
What? Even leap years?

Chuck gleefully bounces.

CHUCK
Easiest bug EVER.

DARREN
Nice! What was the problem?

Chuck tilts his head, thinking.

CHUCK
Something time-related...

Darren gives Sophia a look.

SOPHIA
Heh, well, at least it works,
right?

DARREN
Maybe we document it? Chuck writes
spaghetti code with extra
meatballs.

SOPHIA
Sure, yep. 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

Darren crouches behind a 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.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Sophia and Chuck, wearing their paintball clothes, are lying in a cozy spot in the woods, making out. They pause, and Sophia rests her head on Chuck's chest.

CHUCK

I need to get up for a sec.

Sophia sits up while Chuck walks behind a tree. The sound of urination begins.

CHUCK

I don't suppose you grabbed my phone? I want to check in with my Discord buddies.

SOPHIA

(rolling her eyes)
Let's just head back.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Sophia and Chuck are still wandering, clearly lost.

CHUCK

Got any snacks?

SOPHIA

If I'd grabbed Darren instead, he'd probably have documented the way back...

They enter a moonlit clearing with gravestones scattered throughout.

CHUCK

Cool! This graveyard looks right out of a D&D adventure!

SOPHIA

Maybe if there's a graveyard here, a town is nearby?

CHUCK

The years are kind of hard to read. It looks like this guy was born in the future.

Sophia inspects the gravestones.

SOPHIA

The birth years are all in the future...

An ominous dark figure steps into the clearing, his breath wheezing.

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 a phone?

JAMES

"Sir". I was not so old when I first time traveled, but after 40 years, I've fallen ill and soon I will join my fellow seekers in our failure.

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...

SOPHIA

Did you say you time-traveled?

James completely ignores the question and focuses fully on Chuck.

CHUCK

That explains the years at least.

JAMES

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

CHUCK

Yes, I did! We're out here
celebrating me getting that
working!

JAMES

Could it be? (coughs) The
creator... I... I actually found
him?

SOPHIA

Why are you looking for Chuck?

JAMES

We're using your accursed
scheduling software. We can't
return to the future!

James breaks into a catchy song about ChucksFunkyFunc.

JAMES

(singing)

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

It's got lots of bugs and gunk,
Every test will flunk,
Variable names are junk,
No useful logs in Splunk.

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

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. We'll
try to help however we can.

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.

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,
Informative logging, and code will
be cleeeean.

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.

FADE OUT