

Time Travelers' Graveyard

written by

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FADE IN

INT. TECH COWORKING SPACE - DAY

Beneath a neon TUNATECH sign in a coworking space, SOPHIA, early 30s in business casual, confronts CHUCK, mid 20s, pudgy, wearing a video gamer shirt.

SOPHIA  
(exasperated)  
Chuck, the whole pitch is that our  
software handles anything, anytime.

CHUCK  
No one's gonna care if it's a  
little off in a thousand years,  
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,*  
(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)  
*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!*

DARREN  
*Wait, all the code is in one big  
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  
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.

CHUCK  
My code pasta your tests, four-  
eyes.

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 - 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 (O.S.)

Soph, got my phone? Need to check Discord.

SOPHIA

(rolling her eyes)

You didn't take yours either? 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

Why aren't we back yet?

SOPHIA

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

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.

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

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

(ignoring Sophia)

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 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 useless gunk,  
Half the tests will flunk,  
The names you chose 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. 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,*  
(MORE)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

*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