

ESCAPE INTO TIME

Written with Melvin Jabamani



Jack and Charlotte Mitchell loved to work in their family’s garden. Most of all they loved the fresh vegetables they would eat in the fall when the food was ready for harvest.

One day, while they were planting a row of potatoes, they found something very strange.

“I hit something very hard with my shovel,” Jack spoke in surprise. “I can’t go any deeper.”

He pushed his shovel deep into the soil, but every time he did, the shovel would stop. He tried to dig around it, but it was bigger than any rock he had ever seen.

“Charlotte, come here and help me!” Jack yelled out.

“What is it?” Charlotte responded.

“I’ve found something very hard. I need your help to dig it up,” Jack said as he tried to find the edges of the thing in the ground.

Charlotte went to the hole and started to dig as well. Whatever was down there was very hard.

It took about an hour to find the edges of the object in the ground. It was a lot bigger than they could imagine. When they began to clear the dirt away, they realized the thing was made of a very shiny metal. It was a very big silver box.

“What do you think this could be?” Jack said, as he stopped digging for a minute to look at the large silver box in the ground.

“I don’t know?” Charlotte answered. “But it will be fun to find out!”

The hole they were digging ended up being almost three rows of the garden.

It was almost dark when they finally exposed the box.

Their mother called from the house, “Children, dinner is ready!”

When Jack and Charlotte walked into the house, they were covered in dirt.

“What have you been doing? Digging a tunnel to China?” their mother asked, as she looked at the dirt on the floor.

“You children need to get cleaned up for dinner. Put your dirty clothes in that box over there before you go upstairs!” their mother instructed them.

They put their dirty shoes and socks in the box first, then their gloves and jackets. After that, they ran upstairs to the bathroom to wash their hands and faces. Because their pants were dirty, they had to change them as well or their mother would get upset.

During dinner, the children told their parents about the silver box in the garden.

“Mom, dad, we found a big metal box in the garden,” Charlotte exclaimed. “Jack and I have almost dug it up. It’s really big and it’s shiny. We have never seen anything like it.”

“Where did you find it?” their father asked.

“In the garden. We were getting ready to plant the potatoes when my shovel hit something really hard,” Jack explained. “Charlotte and I spent most of the afternoon digging it up. It’s still in the ground because it’s too heavy for us to lift.”

“We’ll look at it in the morning when the sun is up. That way we can check it out more carefully,” their dad suggested.

It was hard for Jack and Charlotte to sleep. They were excited to find out what the box in the ground might be.

The next morning, after breakfast, the whole family went to the garden to see what the children had found.

It was shiny silver, just as Jack had said.

Larry, the father, suggested that they get more tools from the garage to help pry the

box out of the dirt.

The box finally came out of the ground after several hours of digging and pushing. They all wondered how long it might have been there, buried in the garden. Larry's family had lived on this land for a long time and no one had ever told a story about how the box may have gotten there.

They had to use the children's wagon to get the box to the garage. It was not easy moving the box since it was so heavy.

Nancy, the children's mother took a cloth and wiped the box as clean as she could. While she cleaned it, the others looked for a way to open the box. Larry had many tools in his garage and tried many of them to force open the cover, but nothing worked.

Jack gently felt the surface of the smooth metal covering the strange object they had found. He looked for something that might open the box, like a button or switch.

He spread his fingers and dragged them slowly across the surface, from one side to the other, and then back again.

Suddenly the box turned red, and then blue, and then green. The box was changing colors quickly. The family jumped back and watched as the lights went on and off and from color to color.

Then the lights stopped. The box went back to normal.

The family looked at each other not knowing what to say or do. Something Jack had done made the box change. They hoped it was not a bomb and that Jack had not set off a timer inside.

Just then, the box opened, very slowly and when it did, a white smoke drifted out of it down to the floor and spread across the garage.

When the lid of the box was completely opened, the family looked inside. There were many lights of many colors flashing on and off. In the middle, there were two red numbers. The top one read 2256 and the lower one read 1532.

The family just looked at each other not knowing what to think.

Jack walked closer to take a closer look. His father pulled him back.

“Jack, be careful, we don’t know what this thing is,” his father said to him.

Not listening to his father, Jack moved in front of the box and waved his hand back and forth to clear the smoke away.

The inside of the case was also silver, like the outside. There were many lights blinking, and there were some buttons that ran down each side of the numbers. Attached to the inside of the lid was something that looked like a key.

Jack took the key and looked at it carefully. The others moved closer and looked at the key as well.

“What do you think this does?” Jack asked his dad.

“Maybe there is a place to insert the key inside of the box,” he replied while searching for a hole that might fit the key.

When the smoke was completely gone, they saw a small metal cover under the lowest number. When Larry lifted the cover, a small hole appeared.

“Maybe the key will fit in here,” Larry said, as he took the key, inserted it into the hole and waited to see if anything would happen.

Nancy screamed at him, “Don’t turn the key! You don’t know what it will do!”

However, it was too late, Larry had turned the key and suddenly everything went dark.

The garage began to spin faster and faster. The family began yelling and screaming as they held onto each other. They had no idea what was happening to them.

When the spinning stopped, they were no longer in their garage. It was gone. There were many large trees around them. The sounds around them were very different from what they were used to hearing.

The box was still on the wagon in front of them. The lights were still flashing the way they had been in the garage. They looked inside of the box. The top number now said 2014 and the lower number said 1532.

They looked at each other. What did this mean?

Suddenly Larry had a thought.

“This might be a time machine! We might be in the year 1532!” he said. “We might have traveled back in time to the date where this came from.”

“You mean you think we are still in the same place only four hundred years earlier?” Nancy asked, very surprised.

“It’s quite possible,” Larry answered.

They looked around. Nothing they saw looked familiar.

A strange noise came from behind a tree. Then a man in a silver suit jumped out.

“You found my machine!” he exclaimed. “I thought I would never see it again!”

The man in the silver suit ran toward the family and began to hug them.

“Who are you?” Larry asked.

“I’m Dr. Roger Griffin and this is my invention. You’ve figured out how to use it and you returned to the time I arrived here; give or take a few months,” he replied.

“How did you get here?” Larry asked.

“I’m from the year 2256. This box is my time machine. What year are you from?” Dr. Griffin replied with a question of his own.

Pausing for a moment he continued, “Oh, you don’t have to tell me. I can see right here that you are from the year 2014. Wow, that box lasted longer than I thought it would.

“How did you find it?” Dr. Griffin asked.

“Charlotte and I were planting potatoes when I found something hard in the dirt. We dug it up, took it to our garage, and we found out to open it. I found the key, put it into the hole, and then we ended up here,” Jack described how they had arrived in the year 1532.

“I think we had better get out of here before the native people find us. I have been running from them for months. They think I am some kind of evil spirit and I think they want to kill me!” Dr. Griffin explained.

“How have you survived so long here?” Jack asked.

“It hasn’t been easy. I have learned how to eat many different kinds of food. I am

so glad you are here!” Dr. Griffin gave his answer.

“How did you make this?” Larry asked.

“I came up with a theory many years ago. With the help of my staff we found a way to make it work, but I ended up here and my machine was taken by the natives and buried in a hole. Since then I have been running for my life.

“Now I have the opportunity to return to my time. Do you want to return to your time?” Dr. Griffin asked. “Or do you want to visit another time?”

The family began to discuss what time they might want to visit, but then they heard the noise of someone coming.

“It’s the natives! They are coming to get us!” Dr. Griffin yelled.

Then Dr. Griffin pushed some buttons and turned the key.

Everything began to spin again and the family held each other tightly.

When the spinning stopped again, they were back in the garage. The box was gone, but the wagon was still there.

The family wondered if they had had a dream or if they had really traveled through time.

Inside of the wagon was a note. It said, ‘Thank you for finding me and allowing me to return to my time. I’ll be forever grateful to you all.’

Signed, Dr. Griffin.

VOCABULARY: (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. row (n) _____ | a. put into something |
| 2. soil (n) _____ | b. original inhabitant |
| 3. garage _____ | c. thankful, appreciative |
| 4. drift _____ | d. used to open a lock |
| 5. insert _____ | e. place to keep a car |
| 6. spinning _____ | f. float, glide |
| 7. flash _____ | g. in a line |
| 8. native _____ | h. turning quickly |
| 9. grateful _____ | i. dirt, ground |
| 10. key (n) _____ | j. goes on and off |

TRUE / FALSE:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Christopher found a box in the ground. | T / F |
| 2. The father's name was Larry. | T / F |
| 3. They found the box in the garage. | T / F |
| 4. The year they went to was 1532. | T / F |
| 5. A man in a yellow suit came out from behind a tree. | T / F |
| 6. The man's name was Dr. Griffin. | T / F |
| 7. The family stayed in 1532. | T / F |
| 8. The family dug up the box after dinner. | T / F |
| 9. They were going to plant tomatoes. | T / F |
| 10. The box was a time machine. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. What color was the box? _____
 - a) green
 - b) gold
 - c) brown
 - d) silver

2. What was the Doctor's name? _____
 - a) Roger Griffith
 - b) Norman Griffin
 - c) Roger Griffin
 - d) Larry Mitchell

3. What year did the Doctor come from? _____
 - a) 2014
 - b) 1532
 - c) 2298
 - d) 2256

4. What year did the family return to? _____
 - a) 2004
 - b) 1532
 - c) 2298
 - d) 2014

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Who found the box in the garden?

2. What did the children have to do before they ate dinner?

3. Who went to get tools from the garage?

4. What were the children doing when they found the box?

5. What year did they go to?

6. Who did they meet in the forest?

7. What color was the box?

8. What did Larry turn inside of the box?

9. Who was coming before they returned to the own time?

10. Who left a note in the wagon?
