

Liquid time

I've always liked looking at my childhood photos. Old people are like that. They like old photos. It brings back so many childhood memories. Sometimes I just wish I could return to times when I was a careless little boy. Those times were less complicated. Children were playing outdoors in the sun, spent their days running in the mud and jumping in the puddles. They weren't hypnotised by the screens all day. Back then, computers and smartphones didn't even exist. Today's children probably don't even know what the real trees, the real forests should look like.

A long time ago I started making plans and drafts for a time traveling machine. I spent most of my days in my laboratory trying to find a substance that could make time traveling possible. I was measuring, weighing, pouring and mixing for many years with no success. I almost gave up, but I decided to give it one more try. I went to my laboratory and started mixing my last formula. I was mixing and mixing, and, suddenly, green smoke flew out of the test tube.

"Yes! I made it!" I shouted and started jumping around like a child. I finally succeeded. I have never been happier. It's the best feeling in the world to finally finish something after years of hard work.

I poured the mixture in the bottle with the label 'LIQUID TIME' and put it on the shelf. I immediately wanted to see how it worked. I didn't want to try it for myself yet, so I decided to test it on animals first. When I got out of the house to look for some animals, I saw the empty field of stumps that was once a big forest. It had been like that for some time now, but it always made me sad when I saw it.

"Keep it together," I said to myself quietly. "You need to carry on with your experiment."

I started walking around, hoping that I would be so lucky to find an animal, any animal. There weren't many left since the forest was destroyed. After a few hours, I spotted a fox lying next to one tree stump. Its leg was broken. I picked it up, and brought it back to my house. I put it into the time traveling machine, put some *liquid time* into the machine and typed the year into the computer.

"One – nine – five – five," said the robotic voice of the computer.

I pressed the button and the fox disappeared. I was thrilled! I knew this was going to work! I looked at the computer screen, and I saw the fox in the beautiful landscape. The forest was huge and full of different flowers, the birds were singing, the rabbits were hopping. Everything was so alive! Even though I didn't want to bring the fox back into the field of stumps, I had to find out if it is possible to come back. I pressed the button and returned the fox to today's time. I fed it, took care of its leg and returned it back into the wild. If it could be called that anymore.

Days passed and I kept thinking about what happened that day. I couldn't wait anymore. I wanted to try it for myself. I had to try it. So I poured some more *liquid time* into the time traveling machine, but I didn't change the year. I wanted to go to the same year.

"The fox seemed to enjoy it," I thought, "so maybe I will too."

I took a deep breath, and pressed the button.

POOF! I was in 1955.

The first thing that I saw were children playing. They were running around, jumping and laughing. Then I spotted my childhood home. It looked exactly as I remember it. It was a small two-storey house painted light yellow, with white wooden fence around it. Nobody was home, so I sneaked inside.

I walked into my old room. It looked so tiny now. I found old photo albums and a big chest full of toys. When I looked at what's inside, I started remembering all the fun I had with these toys.

"I'm sure my grandchildren would love these toys," I thought.

I heard someone opening the door, so I quickly grabbed the chest and photo albums and went out through the window. I ran back to my machine, but when I got there and tried to pull *liquid time* out of my pocket, I realised that I forgot it.

"You senile fool!" I said to myself. "How could you be so foolish?"

Then I felt someone tapping my shoulder. It was some old lady that I didn't recognize.

"I knew you would return," she said. "Here you go, honey."

She handed me a map and then left.

I looked at the map. There was an X marking the spot in this forest. I thought I had nothing to lose, so I walked around the forest searching for signs of something buried in the ground, but I couldn't find anything. When I was ready to give up, I realised that I know this area. I used to play here. A few minutes later, I saw a tree, a very, very familiar tree. It was very tall with a lot of green leaves and full of big yellow fruit. There was something green coming out of the fruit. It looked exactly like *liquid time*.

"Could this be possible?" I wondered.

I quickly squeezed one fruit and poured its juice into the time traveling machine, typed 2018 and pressed the button.

POOF! I was finally back in my laboratory.

I went home and gave the chest to my grandchildren. They immediately started taking the toys out. I was happy because my grandchildren played with the same toys I played with 63 years ago. I didn't need time travel machine any more. The best parts of my past were now with me in the present.