

GRAND PRIZE, Grades 3-4

“Time Will Tell”
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“Do we have to go to the auction?” ten-year-old Katie Doran asked in the whiniest voice she could manage.

“Yes,” said her mom through gritted teeth, “We are going to the auction whether you like it or not.” Katie knew she could argue for a solid hour and still not win. Her mom was like a rock when she wanted to be. Katie sighed and tugged at her long brown hair, which was badly in need of trimming.

“Well, if you are going to make me go, do we have to stay through the whole thing? I mean, couldn’t we just stay for half of it?” Katie was so exasperated with her mother. They had been arguing for days on the subject. Katie knew from experience that auctions were full of old people, boring, and her mother usually did not buy anything. It seemed like she would just have to go along.

“Katie,” her mother said, “Go put on another shirt and some clean pants. I don’t want you to look like a bum going to this auction. Many people from my work will be there and I want you to make a good impression.” Katie trudged up the stairs. “Why does my mom have to be such a mean mom?” she asked herself. “A lot of people have nice moms, but I had to get stuck with someone like her.”

Twenty minutes later, Katie and her mother were pulling in front of a very run down, old-fashioned house. Just as Katie had thought, there were old people swarming around the items to be auctioned like bees after honey. Katie shot her best I-am-so-mad-at-you glare at her mom. The old people were sure to fuss over her and call her cute. That would make her look like a baby, and she was definitely *not* a baby.

Just then, a fat man in a pinstriped suit waddled over to them. “Ah, Mrs. Doran, I am so glad you could make it,” he squeaked. “We still have the rocking chair you were so interested in last time.” Katie tore her eyes away from the man’s protruding stomach and stared at her mother. Katie was about to make a comment when the man led Katie and her mother to a rocking chair that must have been a hundred years old. He beamed then looked over at Katie for the first time and said, “Oh, you must be Katie, whom I’ve heard so much about!” Katie scowled. Her mother glared at her and then turned back to the fat man. “The bidding has started!”

Just as Katie turned to look, she heard a voice calling “A nice big TV stand, going once, going twice, sold to the man in the blue shirt!” in a surprisingly loud and very fast voice. Then everything was a blur. Katie remembered getting the rocking chair in the car and going straight to bed. They left around ten, and the auction was still going!

The next morning, Katie helped her mother set up the rocking chair in their living room. Katie tested it out. It was surprisingly sturdy for its looks. It wasn't very comfortable, but she still liked it.

That day, Katie was sitting in it reading *Lassie*, a school assignment. All at once, the chair began to shake. Suddenly Katie was whisked through time to the day of the auction. It had to be the auction. Everything was the same. Katie saw herself meeting the fat man and she thought she saw him wink at her. Katie shuddered. But before she could think, she was back at home. At first she thought she had dreamt it, but it had looked so real. Had it been?

Over the next few days, Katie managed to convince herself that it wasn't a dream. After this Katie had many adventures while sitting in the rocker and went into the future or past. But the most exciting thing by far was when the fat man almost took the rocker back. Katie firmly refused over the phone and that discouraged him. She realized that he had known there was a secret associated with the chair.

Then something happened that changed the way Katie admired the rocking chair. One day she was sitting in it and it began to shake. That wasn't unusual in itself because it had happened many times before. When it stopped, she saw she had traveled into the future. She was on a sidewalk made of brick. Her wristwatch said 9-24-2015. It was about dusk and some people lingered to watch the sunset. She saw a person walking along the street. She couldn't see the person's face clearly. Then she saw a green minivan that looked like her mother's in the street going way too fast. She thought, "That's me driving the car!" The person who was walking saw it the same instant and tried to jump back, but he or she was not quick enough. Katie braced herself for the crash. It was terrific! The person screamed and Katie thought with horror, "I killed a person!" Then she was carried back to her own time. When she got home, she went straight to bed. She was exhausted.

The next morning Katie told her mom about the trip in time. She hadn't told her mom about her trips before because she was scared that her mom would laugh at her. Just as she had feared, her mom said, "What an imagination!" and laughed. Her mom was so unfeeling. Katie resolved to NEVER drive a car, as long as it would prevent her from killing someone.

Over the next few years Katie kept her promise. When she was told she was old enough to drive, she declined politely. It was awkward and she was glad that she was never asked why.

On her eighteenth birthday, as she was walking home from school, she realized that everything around her seemed familiar. Katie had been so caught up in her celebrations she had not even realized that today was the day that she had gone to in the future. But once dusk had settled, she was able to place the scene in her mind. She was walking along the street thinking how lucky she was that she never drove a car. Then she realized that someone was shouting at her. She looked up and saw a car, a green minivan, coming

toward her. She tried to dodge it, but she wasn't quick enough. Then everything went black...

Four days later, Katie woke up and discovered she was alive but severely injured: she had cracked two ribs and had severe internal bleeding. It was a very close call; for a while, the doctors weren't sure if she was going to survive. She was glad to still be living. She resolved to destroy the rocking chair that had caused all the trouble and she did, once she was released from the hospital. She didn't want any one to have any more trouble with it. Katie was almost sure she had made that right decision, but she had a lingering doubt if it really had been destroyed. Only time would be able to tell...