

The Test of Time

Metal hit metal as the heavy machines crashed into each other. The air sparkled with glass shards. Time stood still as her head and the steering wheel collided. Thick lines of blood had spread across the car like roots of a vine; never ending. His body slammed around, and the air bags went off. The crack of his rib cage echoed through all of the void.

The couple awoke in a room. A very plain room. There were candles on the wall so they could see, and a giant table, bigger than they had ever seen. The table was full of all the foods they could ever imagine. They both smiled at each other from opposite sides of the table. She went to take a bite of the food on her plate, and his smile disappeared. He then leaned across the table and whispered something small and meaningful in her ear. His smile returned as she nodded and they got up from the table. He grabbed her hand tightly and they started running. One would think that they would not be able to run in a room, but what they found was that the room was not a room at all but rather just an illusion of a room. They could easily run through the walls. They ran and laughed until they couldn't breathe, not that it mattered anymore. As they ran, the colors of the void swirled around them. Every color and more created a whirlwind of magic. And while they had never seen it before, it felt oddly comfortable, like an old childhood blanket. They stopped running for a moment and he leaned in to give her a kiss. Moments before their lips could touch, time stopped, and everything was still.

Nervously, the first and most cautious of the four deities spoke up, "What do we do if they pass?"

"Nothing. We do nothing. The system is designed for them to fail." The fourth and wisest figure hissed back. "Prepare for the second test." Its voice echoed through the chambers.

When time started again, the couple found themselves back in the room. This time the table was full of treasures of every kind, giant stacks of gold coins and gems in a million different shapes and colors. Cash from every part of the world was thrown around. The boy looked at the money longingly, knowing what it could do for him and the girl. She looked at the boy with her diamond blue eyes and he decided that she was all the treasure he needed. She looked at him once more and said, "Let's go." So they ran and ran and ran some more, the wind hugging their cheeks, and their hands folded together. As they ran they could feel their hands growing further and further apart. They screamed for each other as they were torn apart.

The third and most charismatic of the gods had come up with this plan. "This will work, I promise. They have to fall for this," it said while taking a drag of its long pipe, blowing out colorful rainbow smoke, "No one has ever not taken the chance to live."

"If this fails, I'm holding you personally accountable." The fourth replied harshly.

The boy and the girl awoke in the same room as before. They screamed but each could not find or hear the other. The girl's room had a single bottle with a note sitting in the middle of the table. She walked up to it slowly. The note on the bottle read, "Drink this, and make a wish. Whatever you say will become true." She pondered what to do for several minutes. She thought about how much she missed the boy, and how he wanted to be something great, and she knew he could be. She also knew what to do. She took a big gulp of the drink and said, "I wish for Nathaniel to live."

The boy's room had one small piece of paper and a pencil sitting on the table. Carved into the table were the words "Write whatever you desire on this piece of paper and it will become real." The boy did not know what to do at first. He thought of the girl and hoped that she

was still out there somewhere. He thought of how she wanted to save other people's lives, and he knew that she could. He also knew exactly what to do. He wrote down "Alexa lives."

Three of the four deities saw all this and were baffled that their plan did not work. A snap was heard and the gods knew that the couple had been transported back to earth. The fourth god began to yell at the others, "I should have done this on my own, I never could have seen that you were going to make this big of a mistake, and I have psychic powers. You're just that dumb!" Its words went on for what seemed like months. The third and first deities tried to defend themselves, but the second and most cunning of them all stayed silent, as always. It walked away from the fourth god, and walked towards the void, smiling as it saw the couple in their rightful places.

The boy and the girl awoke in separate hospital beds. They looked into one another's eyes, their smiles as big as elephants. And they both became everything that they were destined to be. When the void called their names once more, they walked into the warm colorful light and accepted it fully.

