

.real world.

DELETED SCENES

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This scene was written when I originally intended for Luke Skywalker to get into the real world on his own. It took place after the Star Wars movies, somewhere around the time when Luke had just started up his Jedi Academy.

In the middle of the night, Luke Skywalker suddenly awoke in the darkness.

He sensed a disturbance in the Force. The signals seemed as though they were far away... but it was something big. Closing his eyes, Luke reached out with the Force towards the source of the disturbance. Something was opening up... some kind of portal... he could feel other people there, on the other side...

His students would be fine if he left them just for a while. Luke sensed no upcoming danger on Yavin IV, but the portal could mean danger; perhaps enemies were going to use it to gain access to the nearby planets...

It was only going to be a short trip. He'd go there, check it out, and if nothing was wrong he'd just go back. If something was wrong, quick action would then be needed.

He couldn't just go back to sleep like that.

About half an hour later, Luke's X-Wing arrived at the place the disturbance was coming from. It was a long ring of coloured light, space showing through on the other end pinpointed with stars.

There was something strangely familiar about what Luke could sense about this place: nothing. Just like that strange site he'd gone to a few standard days ago, starwars.com. Just a void in the Force and nothing else.

The portal seemed fairly stable. Luke flew a little closer for a better look... and suddenly he felt his ship violently sucked through.

His X-Wing bucked dangerously as he struggled to keep it on course. He was going through some strange wormhole that was pushing him onward and didn't allow for turning back, no matter how hard he tried.

When he finally emerged from the wormhole, there was a planet in his sights; a blue-green one devoid of all Force presence. Luke looked back. The portal was still there. The Jedi Master knew that he should by right go back to his students, but curiosity got the better of him and he headed instead towards the planet in front of him.

These two scenes were supposed to illustrate the widespread chaos going on throughout the multiverse, but I eventually scrapped it because it would mean adding on additional fandoms and making the novel even choppier than it already was.

Gutkaffee
Sometime in the 23rd century
During *Star Trek: The Original Series*
Stardate something-point-something.

The planet Gutkaffee was known to be completely uninhabited, with absolutely no fauna to speak of. It's main flora consisted of an unusually large number of coffee plants – an alien variation of them – that

covered almost the entire land surface of the planet, and the beans from these plants produced really great tasting coffee, which led to the name of the planet.

It therefore came as a sort of a shock for the landing crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise to suddenly see a huge brown alien appear out of nowhere and look at them in a hungry sort of way.

It was huge. It was brown. It had teeth. It was hungry. It was not a coffee plant.

"Spock, I thought you said that sensors indicated no life form readings on this planet," Kirk said, wondering if he had just seen some sort of light ripple above the animal.

The half-Vulcan stared down at his tricorder. "It wasn't here before," he said. "It seems it's not even from this planet." He paused. "Captain, I think I've discovered the source of the temporal opening we spotted earlier. It seems that this creature somehow... came through it. Fascinating."

Spock walked up a little closer to the rancor, his tricorder flashing pretty lights.

Kirk made a move to try and stop him. "Uh, maybe you shouldn't..."

In a space of roughly four seconds, the rancor bent down and bit off the tips of Spock's ears, decided they didn't taste too good, and spat them out. A moment later, the rancor felt itself hit by the set-to-kill phaser beams of several trigger-happy ensigns, roared, and dropped down dead onto a coffee plant. A bottle of shampoo suddenly fell out of the sky and hit the already unconscious animal on the head.

McCoy activated his communicator. "Scotty, some creature just attacked Spock's ears," he said. "We don't know where it came from, and I don't think we intend to find out. Get us out of here. A shampoo bottle just fell out of the sky."

There was the familiar yellowy shimmer of the transporter transporting something, and the rancor's body vanished.

Everybody blinked.

All of a sudden, there was a ripple in the air and a very large bar of fragrant Elven soap fell out of the sky and knocked McCoy unconscious.

Scotty's voice came through the communicators. "Sorry for that. I think I locked onto the wrong thing, because there's this huge brown animal with large teeth lying right smack in the middle of the transporter room now. Shall I beam it back?"

"No!" Kirk replied. "Just get us out of here. Bones just got knocked out by this huge bar of soap from the sky."

To cut a long story short, they all got away safely in the end and the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise feasted on rancor meat that day.

Not to mention a lot of coffee.

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Sometime in the Third Age during *The Two Towers*
Somewhere in Middle-Earth

A second search through his bag revealed no sign of the missing cleanser, and Legolas wondered if Aragorn might know anything about its whereabouts.

"Aragorn, have you seen my shampoo around by any chance?" the elf asked, walking up to his human friend. "I think someone may have taken it, because I can't seem to find it anywhere."

The look on Aragorn's face showed clearly that he had no idea what Legolas was talking about, let alone where it was. "Shampoo?" he asked, puzzled. "What's shampoo? The poo of a sham?" The man paused. "What's a sham?"

Legolas sighed. "Never mind. I guess that means you haven't seen my soap either."

"Soap? What's soap?"

"Aragorn, please don't tell me that you have no idea what soap or shampoo is. Even *you* should have some idea."

The heir of Isildur continued looking confused. "No, I don't know what soap or shampoo is," he said. "Should I? I thought they were just some words you made up."

Rendered speechless by Aragorn's last reply, the elf decided that the conversation was pointless and walked off.

Further away, Smeagol was talking to himself again.

"Elrond doesn't know about the Precious. Elrond is our friend! He will not take the Precious, no! No!

Gollum made a face. "Elrond our friend, precious? You is stupid! Elrond is not our friend! Elrond wants the precious, he does! And the fish! And sunglasses! Precious, you can't decide who is our friend! Only I can!"¹

Gollum whacked Smeagol over the head with a fish, then wondered why it hurt.

Over at Rivendell, Elrond had recently made a strange discovery. There had been a coloured ripple in the air, and all of a sudden a pair of really cool sunglasses had fallen out of nothing onto the table.

Of course, he didn't know what it was. Really cool sunglasses don't exist in Middle-Earth; in fact, even normal sunglasses don't exist in Middle-Earth. But it wasn't long before Elrond found out what they were for.

Putting them on, the half-elf looked in the mirror and smiled.

He thought he looked really cool.

This whole segment was cut out of the final draft when I removed the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy fandom from the fic on the advice of my beta-reader, who said that it would work better as a separate story. It was also underdeveloped when compared to the rest of the novel, and by cutting it out, the rest of the story flowed better.

Meanwhile, unnoticed by everyone else, two visitors had suddenly appeared in this white room where Ted and Keith had been just moments before. They were Arthur Philip Dent, the supposed sole human survivor of the destroyed planet Earth, and Ford Prefect, an alien researcher for the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. They had arrived in this dimension by virtue of the Improbability Drive – possibly the only way such a thing could have happened considering that the chances of the both of them spontaneously ending up in a dimension in which they were fictional were one zillion, two quadrillion, seven billion, three million, five hundred thousand and six to one against.

"Where are we?" Arthur asked, blinking blearily at his surroundings.

"Good question," Ford replied, walking towards the door and opening it as the ripple of coloured light over their heads faded away.

"How did we get here?" Arthur asked.

"The Improbability Drive, I suppose." Ford looked out at the corridor. No one there.

¹ The conversation between Gollum and Smeagol was converted from a series of e-mails sent in by Jamie McFly and Miss Piratess of fanfiction.net

"You don't sound very worried."

"We'll get back, don't worry. It's just a matter of time." Ford glanced back at his friend. "Come on. We might just as well find out where we are."

Uncertainly, Arthur followed Ford out the door.

They took the lift down to the ground floor of the hotel and went outside. From what Arthur could see of his surroundings, the place looked a lot like Earth. Perhaps slightly different than what he remembered, but still almost definitely Earth.

Arthur was now feeling very confused, and the feeling was growing with each passing second. Hadn't Earth been blown up by the Vogons to make way for an interstellar bypass? If so, then where were they?

"I think we're somewhere on Earth," Ford commented casually. "It looks like Los Angeles to me."

"*What?*" Arthur shouted in his British accent. Shouting made him feel more in control and less confused. "I thought Earth was destroyed! You said so yourself!"

Several passers-by gave Arthur strange looks. It wasn't every day that they got to see a British guy wearing a mud-caked night robe and standing in the middle of the street exclaiming that he thought Earth had been destroyed.

"Stop panicking, Arthur," Ford said calmly. "There's nothing wrong." He paused. "I think."

"You *think?*" Arthur muttered. "Sorry, but that's just not very comforting at the moment." Arthur spotted a McDonald's across the street. He remembered feeling a great sense of despair some time ago upon realising that he'd never get to eat another McDonald's burger again, but the fast food restaurant was plainly in his sights now. "Look, and there's a McDonald's there too," he added lamely.

"Right then, we can go there first if you want. Are you hungry? "

Arthur mumbled something about wanting a cup of nice, hot tea because it might make everything make more sense.

The two inter-dimensional hitchhikers set off across the road, where Arthur then realised that he had no money to pay for his tea after standing in line for two minutes. Apologising, he told the person behind the counter that she would have to take it back.

"Oh, and by the way," he asked, "what planet is this?"

The McDonald's girl, Jessica, arched an eyebrow. "Earth," she said, wondering who this weirdo was who had just ordered tea he didn't have money to pay for and was now asking a question no person in their right mind would ask.

"Ah. Thanks."

"Are you one of those *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* nuts or something?" Jessica asked as she took back the cup of tea.

Arthur blinked. She knew about the Guide? He was getting more and more confused by the second. "What?"

"Going around in a night robe like that and asking for tea... who d'you think you are, Arthur Dent? I suppose you carry a towel everywhere too, huh?"

"Um..."

"Well, whatever it is, if you're not ordering anything, can you please move aside? You're holding up the line."

Arthur opened his mouth to tell her that she was the one who had started talking to him, not the other way around, but decided it was pointless and shut his mouth. Completely befuddled, he left the counter and returned to the table where Ford was sitting and fiddling with his electronic thumb as he tried to flag down a passing spaceship. For some reason, it didn't seem to be working.

"You think the Improbability Drive brought us here?" Arthur asked.

"Most likely."

"But... what are the chances that it would dump us on an exact replica of the Earth – which, *by the way*, happens to have been destroyed – where a McDonald's worker knows my name and the Guide and asks me about towels? It's impossible!"

"Not impossible. Improbable." Ford wondered why there didn't seem to be any spaceships around the area, then decided that it didn't matter because even if there was one, there was no need to board it. If the Improbability Drive had brought them here, it could very well bring them back. "Maybe all this is just an illusion that the Improbability Drive created. Or maybe," he added as an afterthought, "it just sent us back in time again."

Arthur thought that was a possibility, though if it were up to him to say so, what little of this place he had seen so far seemed to be more like the future than the past to him. Then again, if Ford was right, this was America and things were strange in America.

Arthur went to stand in line again. When Jessica saw him again, she sighed. "How may I help you?"

"Excuse me... what year is this?"

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"2004?" Arthur Dent mumbled dazedly as he put the newspaper back down. Jessica hadn't been too helpful when he'd asked about the year, so he and Ford had had to find it out for themselves. "How can we be in the future?"

"Why not?" Ford replied. "It's as good a time as any."

"And how do you propose we get back?"

Ford thought for a moment. "The same way we got here, I suppose. The Improbability Drive."

"Nothing's happening," Arthur remarked dryly.

"Maybe that's because it's too probable that we might just get whisked back home while we're standing here." Ford paused. "Do something improbable," he suggested.

"What?"

"Climb up that lamppost and sing nursery rhymes backwards out of tune. In your underwear," he added as an afterthought.

"*What?*"

"Think about it. What are the chances that doing that would get us back home?"

"Not much."

"Precisely."

Arthur just couldn't argue with that kind of logic.

**

Arthur Dent had no idea as to why he was actually doing what Ford had suggested. He had no idea if Ford was even being serious. All he knew was that he had stripped down to his underwear, and was now climbing up a lamppost singing 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' backwards and out of tune.

Frankly speaking, the out of tune part was not a problem at all, considering that Arthur had never been a very musical person and did not know the tune of the song in reverse. As a matter of fact, not many people do.

"Snow... as... white... was... fleece," Arthur sang pathetically, as his alien friend stood at the bottom of the lamppost guarding his clothes.

"Lamb... little... lamb little, lamb little..."

People were starting to stare. Ford waved at them and smiled.

Halfway up the lamppost, Arthur was starting to feel cold.

"Lamb little... a... had... Mary," he sang, finishing the song. He waited for several seconds, then turned to look down at Ford. "I don't think it's working!" Arthur yelled, before noticing the crowd surrounding them. He gave a sheepish smile.

A man pulled out his phone and called the police.

"Try another song!" Ford shouted up.

Arthur had begun to shiver from the cold and was contemplating getting back down and asking Ford to do it instead. What difference did it make, anyway? However, Arthur had by then reached the stage where he didn't really care any more. There was a wild sense of release to it – here he was, up a lamppost in nothing but his underwear, singing nursery rhymes back-to-front...

"After... tumbling... came... Jill," he started, with a little more enthusiasm than before.

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Arthur Philip Dent was, to put it simply, having a rather bad day. That was not much of a surprise, considering the circumstances. He had climbed up a lamppost in nothing but his underwear to sing nursery rhymes backwards, all for nothing save the rotten tomato that some well-meaning person had thrown at him. Then the sound of a police siren had been heard, and Ford had made him climb back down, get back into his clothes, and squeeze through their audience to safety.

And he still had no idea as to what was going on.

"Ford," he asked, "are you sure we're ever going to get back?"

His Betelgeusian friend pondered the question. "I think so. The Improbability Drive would have to return to normalcy sooner or later.

"What if it doesn't?"

"It will," Ford replied, although he sounded less certain than before.

"Is there any possibility that it won't?" Arthur pressed on.

"Well... I suppose so, but that would be too..." Ford hesitated.

"Improbable?" Arthur finished for him.

Ford looked vaguely uncomfortable. "If you put it that way..."

They arrived at a bench and sat down.

"We're not getting back, are we?" Arthur asked quietly.

"You can't know that for sure."

Silence passed between them for a while as they watched passersby pass by.

"I wonder if anything happened to Zaphod and Trillian. And Marvin," Arthur added, somewhat wistfully, staring into space. "Has anything like this happened before?"

"What?"

"People getting... transported fully out of the ship, into another world..."

"There's always a first time."

Several minutes went by without conversation.

"Are we just going to sit here until something happens?" Arthur asked.

"Do you have any better ideas?"

Arthur thought about this for a while. "No," he admitted, and went back to silently watching the world go by. Ford dug into his satchel and produced *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the words 'Don't Panic!' clearly visible in large friendly letters on the cover. He stared at it for a while, as though to let the words sink in, then he opened the *Guide* and looked up the entry on 'boredom'.

The *Guide* has this to say about boredom:

"Boredom," it says, "is boring. Like quicksand, movie remakes of *The Brady Bunch* and Christmas work parties, it is something that should be generally avoided whenever possible. Unless, of course, you are a member of the Derehan species on Wrodir Kemima IV, who consider boredom a highly enlightened state of mind.

"Most other beings define boredom as the state of being bored and doing nothing, with possible dangerous results. Take, for example, the tale of the well-respected sandwich maker, Zadurfod the Cheesweich. Bored with the unending routine of making the same old sandwiches everyday, his mind soon snapped and he resorted to staring at his pet Barnepin² for the rest of his natural life.

"If you are reading this entry now, you're probably bored too. Don't panic! Instead, go read the entry about the demise of a fan fiction writer on Ancholus II. Having devoted her life to writing stories based on the award-winning time travel holo-book trilogy *Sideways to the Present*, she perished at the tender age of two hundred and nineteen³. The story of her unfitting death by mousetrap will cheer you up."⁴

Having nothing better to do, Ford Prefect checked out that story and random other entries in the *Guide*. It was while he was reading the entry on slacking (The *Guide* has this to say on the subject of slacking: This is it.) that he heard Arthur shout something unintelligible, and he looked up to see what – or who – had caused that outburst of sound.

Luke Skywalker wasn't too comfortable with Arthur's open-mouthed stare, and so chose to address Ford instead. "Excuse me, but could you tell me what planet this is?" he asked. "I think I'm lost."

Arthur's gaze settled on the lightsaber hanging by Luke's side, and his mouth dropped even further open.

"Actually, we're kind of lost too," Ford replied, ignoring Arthur. "I *think* this is the Earth, although I seem to remember it being blown up. So we're planning to just sit here until something happens."

Luke blinked. "Blown up? Like Alderaan? Did the Empire do it, too?"

² Like terrapins, only purple and with a tendency to sing.

³ A very young age, considering that people on Ancholus II have an average lifespan of one thousand and forty-two years.

⁴ This *Guide* entry was jointly written by my brother and me.

"No, it was the Vogons."

"Vogons?"

"They're these big green fellows who write really bad poetry. They blew up the Earth to make was for an interstellar bypass, but I'm not too sure about at the moment because this place here looks a zarking lot like Earth to me." Ford glanced around.

"You've been here before?" Luke asked.

"I was stranded here fifteen years before I finally managed to hitch a ride off. If this really is Earth, that is."

"Any idea where the nearest spaceport is?"

"Um, there aren't any spaceports on this pl... Arthur, why are you staring at him like that?"

"He's *Luke Skywalker!*" Arthur gasped.

Luke stared at him suspiciously. "How'd you know my name?"

"I..." Arthur started to say something, then stopped. He started to say something else, and stopped that too. Then he stopped starting to say things and just shut up.

"Is he always like that?" Luke asked Ford, gesturing at Arthur.

Ford pondered the question. "Pretty much so, yeah."

Luke sat down on the bench. "So if you didn't arrive on a ship, how did you get here?"

"Well," Ford started, "there's this thing called the Infinite Improbability Drive..."

The following is the original version of a chapter from They've Got Mail, which got eventually rewritten differently when the computer holding it crashed. In this version, Frank dies before Doc arrives to save the travellers.

Frank was desperately trying to think up an escape plan that didn't involve lightsabers, nuclear warfare or Keith spontaneously combusting. He couldn't think of anything. His brain didn't seem to be working too well, possibly due to having a pistol pointed at it.

Uncertainly, Ted approached Keith and paused before the latter's outstretched hand. The teen glanced back at Marty and Neo, looked at the gun at Frank's head... and he made a decision.

The next few seconds seemed a blur as several things happened at the same time.

Ted lunged at Keith and got him on the floor.

The gun went off.

Frank fell.

Marty screamed.

Keith kicked out and sent Ted sprawling onto the ground.

Neo rushed over and jumped Keith, and the two of them started fighting as Ted struggled to get out of the way. Ignoring them, Marty scrambled frantically over to his friend's still form, where a pool of blood had already begun to form.

"Frank?"

No response.

Marty got down on the ground and reached over to feel for a pulse. Nothing.

"No," he whispered in a choked voice, as if denying the truth would make things different. "No... no..."

Gathering his arms around his knees, Marty buried his head in them, squeezing his eyes shut to block off the scene before him...

Imagine hard enough, and maybe this was all a dream that never happened. Imagine hard enough, and he was back there at the parking lot in Lone Pine Mall after the Libyans had shot Doc, only this time there was no bullet-proof vest and time continued on its normal path, never changing, death was death and you couldn't change the past...

This was never supposed to have happened. They didn't belong here, none of the four of them, why did Keith have to bring them here, but they weren't real, so they couldn't die, because they were fictional, mere figments of someone's imagination... they couldn't exist, they couldn't think, they couldn't feel...

Marty cried.

**

Behind him, Keith pinned Neo against the wall and smirked. "Welcome to the real world, Neo. You aren't so fast any more, are you? You can't defy gravity or do any other kinds of weird stuff... Over here, Mr. Anderson, you're only human."

Neo glared back at him, fierce determination in his dark eyes. "So are you."

He pushed off from the wall, and the two continued their battle in the centre of the room. Keith got Neo against the wall again and held him there, taking out his second pistol with his other hand. Keith grinned. This was fun.

"Goodbye, Mr. Anderson," he said, cocking the trigger... when the door flung open, and the unmistakable barrel of a 2035 model Neutrino Quartz 3000 Laser Blaster was pointed at his head.

"Put down the gun," the newcomer said.

From his corner of the room, Marty slowly lifted up his head and stared, not daring to believe his eyes.

"DOC!" he yelled, leaping off the ground and dashing over to Emmett, the most welcome sight he had seen in days. Emmett briefly turned his head to look at his young friend and smiled, gun still levelled at Keith.

The latter was in shock. Pistol slipping from his grasp to clatter on the floor, Keith stumbled back, shaking his head in disbelief. "No... this can't be happening," he muttered. "You can't be here... no way..."

Ted stared at him. "Yes way," he said, bashed Keith in the face, and watched with great satisfaction as the man fell unconscious to the ground.

Emmett glanced at the three in the room. "I thought there were four of you."

"Yeah," Marty replied quietly, motioning in Frank's direction. "He didn't make it."

Doc nodded grimly, deactivating his laser blaster. "I'm sorry I didn't get to you earlier, but I just received the e-mail and I couldn't arrive before you had the chance to send it to me or there might have been a paradox..." He sighed. "Let's go home."

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"I can manage three," Verne offered helpfully like the good kid he was as his father shook his head and flew the train into the air. They hovered about unseen in the night sky of L.A. for several minutes as the five of

them polished off most of the ice cream, before Doc set the coordinates and they departed this universe at eighty-eight miles per hour.

They dropped off Neo first, and he spent a long time trying to find his way back to his ship on his own.

So they were making a movie out of his life? he thought grimly, just as the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar spotted him wandering around looking lost. Well, if that was the case, and if there were going to be any sequels... he was going to make sure that they FLOPPED.

Another continuation from the original Star Wars plotline:

A Long Time Ago in a Galaxy Far, Far, Away

The students were getting restless. Luke had told the young Jedi trainees to assemble at the Great Temple for a talk concerning a possible threat to the New Republic, but he wasn't here.

"Where do you think Master Skywalker is?" Jaden Korr asked a friend. "It's not like him to be late. What if something happened to him?"

"Maybe he just forgot."

"I don't think so," Jaden replied. "I have a bad feeling about this. I think we'd better go check it out."

His friend shrugged and followed Jaden out the room towards the part of the Jedi Academy where Luke's quarters were. They arrived at his door and knocked. "Master Skywalker?"

There was no response. Jaden closed his eyes, reaching out with the Force to 'see' whatever was behind the door. There was no one in the room.

"He's not here. Can you sense anything?"

His friend shook his head. "Nothing. It's as though he just... vanished... I can't even feel his presence anywhere on Yavin IV."

Jaden looked worried. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"It can't be anything good."

Here, George relates his strange encounters to a psychiatrist, wondering if he may be in need of medical help. This was later integrated into the scene with Rob Galkis of Lightning Studios.

"Well, it's like this," George McFly started, feeling slightly uncomfortable with the psychiatrist staring so intently at him. "Thirty years ago in 1955, I woke up to some horrible alien noise to see this creature standing by my bed." George took a deep breath and closed his eyes, recalling the intensity of the fear he had felt back then.

Mr. Hotchoclat of the Hill Valley Mental Hospital scribbled something down into the notebook he held in his hand. "What kind of creature?"

George opened his eyes and hesitated before continuing. "That's the strange thing, see... he claimed to be Darth Vader."

Hotchoclat raised an eyebrow. "Darth Vader? As in the guy from *Star Wars*?"

"Yes. And I seem to remember him holding a hairdryer in one hand, only that hairdryers weren't around in 1955."

Mr. Hotchoclat did more scribbling. "Neither was *Star Wars*."

"I *know*. That's why I think there might be something wrong with my mental health. My wife thinks I'm going crazy, but I swear it's all true! Really! Do you think I might be going senile?"

The psychiatrist shrugged, putting the finishing touches to the drawing in his notebook. "Maybe." He paused briefly, and then looked up from his work with a suddenly much more attentive look on his face. "Wait... what did you say your name was again?"

"George. George McFly."

The reaction was instantaneous. Mr. Hotchoclat's mouth fell open, and his notebook and pencil clattered to the floor. "George *McFly*? The author?"

"Uh, yeah..."

Mr. Hotchoclat's face broke out into a huge grin, the bored expression of before washed away into oblivion. "Dude, I'm your greatest fan! I've read *all* your books! Hey, come on! There is NO WAY a great author like you can possibly be crazy."

"But..."

The psychiatrist's tone became a little thoughtful. "But now, as for *me*, my colleagues think I'm going nuts. They think I'm overworking myself or something." He stared at George. "Am I?"

"Ah..."

Mr. Hotchoclat grinned again. "Yeah, I'm not, dude! You go tell those people the truth. They'll believe you. The hospital is full of your fans!"

George didn't exactly like the way this conversation was going. "Uh..."

"You won't even have to pay me for this session. Oh... and can I have your autograph? Please?" Mr. Hotchoclat fell to his knees and begged.

"Uh, sure..."

George felt somewhat in a daze as he signed his psychiatrist's notebook, then watched as he ran out joyfully to show everyone else the autograph. George had thought that *he* was the one who needed help, not Mr. Hotchoclat. Then again, he supposed certain jobs could take a toll on your mental health, and what more likely than one that required you to see mental cases practically everyday?

And that little session hadn't helped at all; it was a good thing it had been free, or he might have considered suing the hospital. He'd been the one doing all the talking. Mr. Hotchoclat had barely said anything.

I originally intended Jules and Verne's trip into the Nexus have them visit the Nexus General Hospital to tend to Jules' injuries, such that later on in the novel they could go back to it when Ted got injured. My idea of the Nexus has since changed from the descriptions of it in the following scene, especially regarding what the other universes look like.

"We need to get him to a hospital. There's one just in the next D. Shouldn't be anything too serious, but Gaminorans usually have poison in their claws and it's best to get it out of him."

Seconds later, they were flying over the stormy sky. Then without warning, they hit what seemed to be a bubble of sorts, and the car slipped through to the other side.

The dark world was gone. They were flying over a large bright golden orb that lay beneath them, and through the surface of the orb could be seen the faint outlines of the city they had just left.

And around the orb were trees... trees as far as they could see, an endless wood that stretched out to infinity, punctuated here and there with similar golden orbs of light – other worlds, other universes...

Akner headed for the orb right before them, and they plunged down into another world, flying over a white building with words painted on it that proclaimed:

NEXUS GENERAL HOSPITAL

They landed just outside the building. Akner fiddled with the door for a while, until Verne showed him how to open it and they got out.

"Come on."

Akner carried the unconscious Jules past the glass doors and into the hospital. The receptionist sitting at the desk looked up as they arrived, and her eyes lit up with recognition as she saw Akner.

"What..."

"Gaminoran attack," Akner called out in reply to the unasked question, then turned to go back out the door. "I know where to bring him, don't worry. I'll fill up the form later. Stay here," he told Verne. "I'll be back."

Not knowing what else to do, Verne sat down on a bench as Akner left. The receptionist smiled at him, then went back to her work.

Akner soon returned without Jules, having deposited the boy at some other part of the hospital. He went over to the desk and pulled out a form. "Hi, Trilin," he said with a smile at the receptionist, who smiled back at him, then he sat down, picked up a pen, and got to work filling up the form. Verne climbed up onto the seat next to him and looked at what he was writing, providing the man with details whenever needed.

PATIENT'S PARTICULARS

Name: *Jules E. Brown*

Reason for admittance: *Gaminoran attack*

Brought in by: *Akner Jansilan*

Relation to patient (please tick one):

- Immediate family relative
- Non-immediate family relative
- Past family relative
- Future family relative
- Dimensional family relative
- Past self
- Future self
- Dimensional counterpart
- Clone
- We're just twins, really
- Friend
- Other acquaintance
- I just found him/her/it lying there injured
- Other

We have to remember this place, Verne found himself thinking. So many times had his family had to settle for third-class medical help on their time travel adventures, just because they found it easier to do so instead of trying to explain to a hospital just why the injured person looked just like one of them but older or younger.

This chapter was based on the storyline of They've Got Mail, which among other things had most of the characters knowing each other through e-mails before getting zapped into the real world. This segment relates how Neo and Bill & Ted got to know each other:

A loud thud suddenly shook the garage.

The cause of it was a computer CPU falling through a ripple in the sky to land heavily on the ground. It was soon followed by its LCD flat screen monitor, connected to the CPU by several wires.

Startled by the sound, the teens looked at each other, then rushed out the garage door to see what had created the noise.

"Whoa," Ted commented when the dust clouds had cleared. "What do we do now, dude?"

"Good question," his friend replied.

Both of them stared blankly at the computer, which was, unknown to them, from the year 2198 in the same dimension that one Thomas A. Anderson resided in. Of course, Bill and Ted had no idea and decided to simply lug it into the garage and plug it in to see what would happen.

The computer had the ability to access the Internet from wherever it was, and when it started up, it detected the faint signals coming from the space-time rip Marty's computer had created and tapped into them. As it had been the personal computer of a particularly forgetful person, it also happened to contain all that person's online passwords in a Notepad file, which Bill and Ted perused with considerable interest. After messing around on the computer and the Internet until they discovered the basics of how things went on, the teens decided to try one of the passwords – that to the computer owner's e-mail account – to see if it would work.

Bill typed in the host site's address in a search bar and pressed the Enter key. Seconds later, the links to several pages appeared onscreen, heading which were two links to two sites both known as zion.com. One was in blue, and the other in a really cool shade of black.

"Click on the black one, dude," Ted suggested. "It looks cooler."

Bill clicked on it. The page loaded, filled mostly with a lot of boring-looking announcements and stuff, none of which either of them understood. Bill clicked on the e-mail icon, and typed in the user ID of the computer's owner – ziontouristcommission@zion.com – followed by his password, which was, for some inexplicable reason, 'ilikepinkheehee'.

It worked, and the teens grinned inanely at each other.

They clicked around the e-mail pages to figure out just how to do it, then Bill changed the password to 'partyondudes' and left it at that before the both of them composed and sent out their first e-mail message ever:

From - ziontouristcommission@zion.com
To - everyone@zion.com
Subject: nil

Hiya dudes!

- Bill & Ted⁵

From - neo@zion.com
To - ziontouristcommission@zion.com

⁵ Heavily edited and condensed into two words from a contribution by Rhys Davies of fanfiction.net. In *They've Got Mail*, Bill and Ted's e-mail address was 'wlydstallynsrule@hotmail.com' in addition to the ziontouristcommission one. The two addresses were often mixed up; later on in TGM, they had combined to create 'wlydstallynsrule@ziontouristcommission.com'. I don't know if anyone noticed the typos.

Subject: Hi

Uh... who's this? I didn't know you worked at the Zion tourist commission... Who are you?

- Neo

No one can be told what the Matrix is. You have to see it for yourself.

From - ziontouristcommission@zion.com

To - neo@zion.com

Subject: Re: Hi

Hi Neo dude!

I'm Bill S. Preston Esquire, and this dude next to me on the computer is my most excellent friend, Ted Theodore Logan! Later today we're going for this competition where our band will be playing a most triumphant piece of music!

Party on, dude!

- Bill and Ted

The two of them went around surfing random websites and thought it was most excellent that apparently someone had made a movie about them. They did more clicking around and found out more stuff about more random things, such as why marshmallows would one day rule the world⁶. When the fun of the computer finally wore off, the teens switched it off and headed over to Lewis' house for transport to Hill Valley for the Hill Valley Band Competition 1985.

As usual, they were late.

Another continuation of the Star Wars storyline based on several e-mails from They've Got Mail, where Han Solo's children find Luke's lightsaber after it mysteriously appears one day

He couldn't find it anywhere, and five hours of non-stop searching has the ability to make even a Jedi Master just a slight bit frustrated. Luke Skywalker sighed, once more going through his room in the Jedi Academy on the forest moon of the gas planet Yavin. Outside, the faint sound of a rancor crunching up some unfortunate animal reached his ears.

Where in the galaxy could his lightsaber be? Luke carried it with him practically all the time, but now it was nowhere to be found. He couldn't even sense the Jedi weapon through the Force; which either meant that the lightsaber was out of sensing reach, or there was something wrong with... something.

Luke sat down on his bed and went through that day's events. He had woken up, done his usual morning exercises, and the lightsaber had been with him all that while. He had gone onto the HoloNet, and found a rather strange site – starwars.com. But his lightsaber had still been with him then. After that, Han Solo had come to visit with his three kids and...

Han.

Luke got off the bed and sent a message of to his friend on the HoloNet.

Hi Han.

⁶ Refer to Annex ii.

I was just wondering... have you seen my lightsaber by any chance? I think one of your kids might have taken it.

Something strange happened this morning... I was surfing the HoloNet for Jedi stuff that day and I found this site: www.starwars.com. I think it's new, because I haven't seen it before... it's kind of weird. You'll know what I mean when you go there.

- Luke

The Jedi hesitated, then typed:

P.S.: Have you heard of this person named Mark Hamill?

Meanwhile over at one of the rooms in the Senate Chambers of Coruscant, six-year-old Jaina Solo was wandering around the place in search of something to do. Having finally escaped the care of her nanny droid by expertly short-circuiting one of its circuits when it wasn't looking, she was bored. Her mother was at some meeting somewhere, and her father was out somewhere else. Jacen was playing with his pet animals and Anakin was sleeping.

Jaina stopped in front of one of the artificial windows and looked out at the projected landscape. She sighed, wishing she could go out and play in a real place outside like some of the other children she knew, instead of being confined inside. With her mother being the Head of the New Republic, people weren't taking chances with her or her siblings' safety.

Jaina suddenly heard a crackling sound, and she whipped around, looking for its source. She didn't have far to look, as all of a sudden a ripple of bright light appeared in the air and a lightsaber dropped through it.

Eyes open wide in amazement, the girl reached out to pick up the lightsaber. It looked familiar... in fact, it looked just like her Uncle Luke's one. Jaina turned the sleek Jedi weapon around in her hands, marvelling at its design and wondering if anyone would mind if she tried to take it apart to see how it worked.

Jacen would kill to just hold a real lightsaber, and Jaina grinned at the fact that she had the chance, not him. She looked for the activation button and pressed it, smiling in childlike joy as the glowing green blade sparkled to life. Jaina waved it around a few times, enjoying the sound it made as it cut through the air.

Jaina closed her eyes, imagining herself as a great Jedi warrior in battle with a fearsome opponent. She held the lightsaber high, swinging it energetically in all directions at her imaginary enemy and grinning in delight... when her fantasy was suddenly broken by the sound of a something crashing to the floor.

The girl opened her eyes, and the shock slowly registered on her face as she saw the remains of her mother's favourite durasteel table on the ground, sliced neatly in two by the lightsaber. Next to it, a chair sat lopsided, one of its legs lying slightly away from it.

Guiltily, the girl switched off the lightsaber, then ran off to her room before anyone could question her on the cause of the table's demise.

When Han got back, he blinked at the damaged furniture in incomprehension and stared at it a good while before going onto the HoloNet and seeing Luke's message. He accessed [starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com), surfed around a bit, raised an eyebrow at several things, then got down to replying to Luke.

Hi.

Your lightsaber? O...kay, I guess that explains the chopped up furniture around the house lately. Don't worry, I'll get it back.

What's with this [starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com) thing anyway? Some kind of joke or what? If it is, someone sure spent a lot of time on it. The number of bored people in this galaxy is simply amazing.

I've got to go now. Jaina just threatened to slice Anakin up into tiny bits. I think I've found your lightsaber.

- Han

**

Hi Han.

Thanks for returning my lightsaber. You could have polished it first, though. There're fingerprints all over the case. I think they're your kids'.

I went back to that starwars.com site yesterday. It's really weird... all over it I could sense some kind of emptiness of the Force, like it didn't exist there. I can't explain but it was sort of like a huge void in the Force at that site. Do you know that there's even a message board there? How could they know all that about us? I suspect it might be the work of some Dark Force wielder... perhaps another rising Emperor? The Empire might be planning something. Go warn Leia to be careful of this person named George Lucas. I think he's in charge or something, because his name appears all over the site.

- Luke

Hi Luke.

You mean you're still going to that site? I bet it's just some big joke or something; any kid can design a website. I doubt there's anything of much importance there.

- Han

Luke didn't see how Han could dismiss that website so easily. Couldn't he see the potential danger of it? Those people there *knew* about them... knew everything about their lives, and not just about their past but what seemed to be their future as well.

Their future.

That was another thing that worried him, and Jedi Masters were not easily worried. According to the website, Anakin Solo had died while on a mission against the Yuuzhan Vong. Luke hadn't even heard of the species yet, so he figured that it had to be quite a bit in the future... if it was real in the first place and not all a huge joke as Han seemed so convinced it was.

But what if it was real, and Anakin was going to die? Perhaps him finding the site and everything had been meant to be, so that he could prevent the future death of his best friend's youngest son?

"Always in motion is the future," Yoda had told him once. Things could be changed, what he had found out need not come to pass...

Luke didn't know whether he should tell Han. The website was not normal, that much he knew. The whole place just felt... *wrong*, as if he was not supposed to be looking at it in the first place. The people on the site knew too much about them, inclusive of the things that were supposed to be private. He hadn't visited the place more than twice, but he had found out enough. The website had huge databases of almost everyone he knew including him, planets, all kinds of spacecraft, alien species...

It scared him. Jedi Masters weren't easily scared.

This is from a Minesweeper-related Matrix subplot I was thinking of including but eventually scrapped for lack of realism, wherein Neo and Trinity are on a perpetual competition to beat each other's Minesweeper high score. This scene was also how Neo initially found Marty in the original storyline.

Click.

A mine blew up in Neo's face, and he resisted the urge to bash the stupid Minesweeper smiley face on the computer screen. Restarting the game, he clicked away until he lost yet again.

After several more unsuccessful attempts to break Trinity's Minesweeper expert level high score of 67 seconds, Neo decided instead to just play around on the computer and stare mindlessly at the green Matrix code that scrolled down the screen.

He zoomed in on one part of the code and watched as someone dumped a packet of potato chips on someone else's head. This made him hungry, so he zoomed out instead all the way. He missed potato chips. He wondered if he would ever eat another one again in his life.

And that was when he saw it: weird things happening to the code. Something else was coming through instead, something that was affecting the Internet in the Matrix...

(The reason why Neo had access to the Internet in the first place while sometime in the late 22nd century was this: in his world it had been discovered that recently unplugged people tended to miss their old computers a lot, and it was therefore decided to create a system that would link a bunch of specially created early twenty-first century model computers to the Internet in the Matrix, where it was currently the year 1999. The people from the 'real world' also had their own homepage – zion.com – as well as several other websites. All these could be differentiated from the rest by how the links to them were displayed in a really cool shade of black on the results pages of search engines, these links inaccessible to people inside the Matrix.)

Neo ran a scan on the Internet to see if anything had changed. There were tons of new websites, most of them created after 1999. It was too much to look through, so Neo redid the scan, this time only for different websites created during and before 1999.

This search gave way fewer results. As in the initial search, the links on the page looked slightly different, differently indented, different shades of blue...

Out of curiosity, he clicked on the first one – www.hillvalley-online.com. There was something strangely familiar about the site's address... 'Hill Valley'... Neo looked it up on a search engine, and several results appeared, most of them to do with the science fiction trilogy *Back to the Future*.

He remembered now. Hill Valley had been the hometown of the main character, Marty, and was where most of the story had taken place. It had been a long time since he'd seen that movie. And he'd probably never get to see it again, or any other movie for that matter – Morpheus had declined requests from some of the crew to enter the Matrix just so they could go to the cinema. (The first *Star Wars* prequel had just been released. Neo and several others were dying to see it.)

So what was with this website? It didn't seem like a movie website, more like that of the kind a small town would set up. Neo supposed that there probably was a real town somewhere named Hill Valley, but doubted that this was its website, due mostly to the fact that it had a large advertisement in the corner begging surfers to 'Save the Clocktower'.

That phrase had come straight out of *Back to the Future*. Maybe it was just a joke?

The website had e-mail, too, and there was a listing of all the e-mail addresses on one of the pages with their owner's names next to each. Going over to it, Neo did a search for 'Marty McFly'.

No results, so he simply typed in 'McFly'.

There were several results, but the one that looked most promising was the user listed as 'M.S. McFly'. Neo had no idea whether that would be Marty, seeing that he didn't know the guy's middle name, but the e-mail address confirmed his thoughts: futureboy85@hillvalley-online.com. If that wasn't him, no one else was.

It was strange. Neo's first thought was that perhaps some diehard fan with too much time on their hands had created the entire website, but he doubted it. And the site hadn't been there before... what if it had somehow leaked through from some other dimension? A dimension where the *Back to the Future* universe was real...

There was only one way to find out.

Neo hacked into Marty's e-mail account, and read through all the messages there, both sent and received. Marty seemed to have saved everything. The more Neo read, the more he became convinced that something really weird was going on here.

Marty had just logged on. Neo watched to see what he did, watched as he read through his new e-mail messages. The teen was taking a while, so Neo placed a tracer to see what other websites Marty accessed from then on, and then went back meanwhile to trying to break Trinity's seemingly impossible high score.

He grit his teeth in frustration as the tile he clicked on revealed itself to be yet another mine. He was The One, but he couldn't even win a simple stupid Minesweeper expert level game... Neo was beginning to suspect that Trinity had cheated.

**

The sound of approaching footsteps caught Neo's attention several minutes after he had closed his e-mail inbox. In the middle of an almost finished expert level Minesweeper game, he didn't turn until he clicked on a mine and the game ended.

Trinity was standing behind him, watching the screen with what could only be described as an 'I-finished-the-expert-level-in-under-70-seconds-hah' look.

"Yeah?" Neo asked, before she had a chance to criticise his Minesweeper skills, or lack of it.

**

Neo stared at the computer screen in intense concentration. Every single move now could be a matter of life and death... There were only two more squares remaining. One of them held the mine. The other didn't.

Neo stole a quick glance at the timer. 42 seconds. If he won now, he would break Trinity's high score.

The One randomly chose a tile and positioned the cursor over it. Closing his eyes, he clicked.

He didn't dare to open his eyes. What if it had been a mine? After coming so close, too... what if he had chosen wrongly and lost the chance to be the Minesweeper champion of the *Nebuchadnezzar*?

Neo hardly had time to ponder that question, however, when he suddenly fell through his chair and out of his world into darkness.

When I first started writing this fic, I had no idea just how far apart Hill Valley and San Dimas are, and had Marty and Bill & Ted get together on their own. There was thus no need for Bill & Ted to join Lewis and the rest of Disaster Area, and at the time of the disappearances, they were separated.

There weren't many places the teen could have gone. Probably not home – no one was in at the moment, and there wasn't really anywhere near enough that... hang on.

Lewis lived just one block down.

Bill picked up the phone and dialed; Lewis picked up on the fourth ring. "Hello?"

"Hey, Lewis... Bill Preston here. Uh, Ted just sort of vanished, and I wondered if you..."

"Does my phone number have something next to it that says 'Missing People Hotline' or something like that?" Lewis cut in with a hint of irritation.

"What d'you mean?"

"You're the second person today who's called to tell me that someone's gone missing. First Marty McFly 'disappears', then Ted..."

"Marty McFly?" Bill asked.

"Yeah, you know... from The Pinheads? Lead guitar? Yeah... his girlfriend just called not too long ago to tell me that he's gone missing. Apparently his parents don't know where he is either, and she was trying every number in his phonebook..."

"Maybe they're connected."

"What are?"

"The disappearances."

Lewis sighed over the phone. "Look, I bet Marty and Ted just went out for a while, okay? There's no 'connection' between the 'disappearances' as far as I know."

"Ted couldn't have gone out, dude. The hallway he was in led to a dead end. If he'd left, he would've needed to go past me, and I would've seen him."

"So what? Are you saying aliens got him?"

Bill gave a half-hearted shrug, then realised that Lewis couldn't see it over the phone. "Maybe," he said instead.

On the other end, Lewis mentally whacked his forehead. "I'm sorry I can't help you, but there's really nothing I can d..."

Bill heard another voice, younger and more distant, come faintly over the telephone and interrupt the older teenager. "Lewis, have you seen Azy? I think he escaped..."

Lewis' voice came back. "Sorry, I have to go. My kid brother's cricket just went missing... You'll find Ted eventually, don't worry. Bye."⁷

There was a click as Lewis hung up.

So much for that, Bill thought dejectedly, putting down the phone. His hand had barely left it, when it started to ring. Startled, he picked it up. "Hello?"

"Hi, is this Prosser's Pizzeria?"

Bill hung up.

This scene relates Luke's deux-ex-machina-ish mode of transport to Aquintos, mainly because I couldn't think up an alternative way to get him there; later I scrapped the whole thing and didn't send him to Aquintos at all.

A sudden rustle in the trees jolted him out of his thoughts.

A second rustle jolted him back into his thoughts. It was, after all, generally a bad idea to be not-thinking if you're walking through a strange wood and something rustles in the trees. Especially when the rustle in question is not a small rustle, but rather a big rustle of the kind you hear in *Jurassic Park* seconds before the Tyrannosaurus Rex appears and tries to bite your head off.

⁷ In memory of my brother's pet cricket, Aziraphale. She escaped one day and was found the next night crawling around the shower area in my bathroom. The other cricket was named Crowley, and when he died we freed Aziraphale into the grass.

Luke put himself on alert and kept his right hand on his lightsaber hilt.

Perhaps it was nothing, after all, but then again, maybe not. Akner had mentioned danger in these woods. Luke glanced furtively around and steeled himself for a fight.

Then the first Gaminoran emerged from the trees and stared down straight at Luke. It bared its teeth in a hungry, absolutely non-Barney-the-Dinosaur-like grin, and beckoned with its clawed hand.

Luke turned and fled.

They chased him through the trees at a leisurely pace for them. Playing with food was always fun, and besides, the Gaminorans were not into instant gratification. That sort of thing was for primal beasts with brains the size of Keanu's ruptured spleen.

Luke mentally chided himself for his cowardice, then looked back to see at least ten Gaminorans on his figurative tail and forgave himself.

With every step, his feet crushed dried leaves on the ground as he dodged the trees, trying unsuccessfully to lose his pursuers. Then suddenly his foot caught on a fallen branch, and he tripped, flying through the air straight towards a tree...

Luke instinctively closed his eyes and braced himself for impact, when suddenly all sound of the pursuing Gaminorans was suddenly cut out.

When Luke cautiously opened his eyes, he found himself no longer in the woods, but staring down at a polished parquet floor, the steady sound of typing in the air.

Luke raised his head. Sunlight was streaming through grey window blinds and someone was seated on a blue swivel chair by one of the two computers in the room, typing away.

It took him about a second later to realise that his entrance had accidentally ignited his lightsaber, which had just sliced right through my school file, hence rendering all my carefully done homework burnt and useless and un-submit-able, which means that any detention I received for not handing in said homework was totally not my fault.

"Uh, hi Luke," I said, looking at the pitiful remains of my homework and wondering what the teachers would say about that.

Luke looked around in stupefaction. "How'd you know my name? Who *are* you?"

"Um, I'm the author... yeah."

Luke didn't seem to have heard, his attention having been drawn instead to the dead body lying not too far from him. "And who's that?" he asked, indicating the corpse.

"Mary T.," I answered. "It's a long story, but, uh, I'm trying to keep this short, because it's a self-insert and such things are so Mary Sue and will lower the entire reputation of this fic and so that's generally not good, so let's get this over and done with and pretend it never happened, okay?"

Luke just looked stunned. "What?"

"You're trying to get to Aquintos, right?" I asked. "But it's... kinda far away from Reskun where you just left... about four days walk at least, I think, but that's... too long for the novel, because there's not enough time. I could make it longer, but I've got to finish this by the end of August and send it to Rachel for beta-reading, hopefully earlier so I have time to study for my promotional exams..."

"..." said Luke.

I took a moment to stare longingly at his lightsaber. "Okay, uh, so I'll just teleport you straight to Aquintos, okay? I just thought I should let you know first so you wouldn't be too shocked..."

I turned back round in my chair to face the computer and went on typing.

There was a flash of light and Luke found himself standing right smack in the middle of Aquintos' most busy intersection, hopelessly confused, really disoriented, and very much in the way of traffic.

Luke jumped out of the way of a passing hovercraft and into the path of another. He dodged that one and landed, out of breath, on a very annoyed squeaky robot.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Nexus describes squeaky robots as follows: "Robots that squeak."

The *Guide* has nothing more to say about them, partly because there isn't any more to be said about squeaky droids, and partly because the writer of that entry was just a lazy sod. (He did, however, provide a very helpful drawing of a squeaky droid next to the entry, depicting its small-box-on-wheels-like appearance.) So, basically, squeaky droids serve no discernible purpose; their sole aim in life is to simply squeak whenever someone steps on them or trips over them or attempts to sell them for extra cash. They were invented by a guy who thought it would be a good idea. He has since been sacked.

The original introductory chapter for Frank, which was ditched in favour of starting out with him moving into his new house.

It was just another usual afternoon with nothing to do. Frank Bannister sat at his desk with sheets of blank paper spread out before him, a pencil in his hand and an eraser and ruler on standby. The pencil lines on the paper started to take shape, forming a design of the dream house he'd never managed to build. It was a different design this time: smaller, for one, because he figured that it would be cheaper and take up less construction time. And this time, he would be the only one living in it. He didn't want to be left with a half-built house again due to insufficient funds.

There wasn't actually any need to build it. Just for fun one day, maybe, but Frank doubted he'd be able to spare the resources he would invariably need for its construction. Nonetheless, it was nice to dream all the same. The ex-architect added more lines to the paper.

Three rooms downstairs – living room with adjoining kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom too perhaps... he'd developed a slight fear of climbing up dark, carpeted staircases at night after the previous year's events. Unless he didn't carpet the staircase... nah. The bedroom could be downstairs. It reduced the possibilities of him falling down and seriously injuring himself if he were to sleepwalk at night. Not that he'd ever done so before, but there was no point in taking unnecessary risks.

A small attic upstairs to dump any stuff he didn't need... it could serve as a residence to any ghosts who might want to live with him, too. He enjoyed their company more than that of most living people.

Thoughts of the recently deceased Dr. Lucy Lynskey came to his mind, and Frank pushed them away. It was no use dwelling on the past.

Frank wondered how much longer he could survive living as he currently did, though he figured that finances-wise, he should be fine for quite some time.

He spent most of his time in only a small part of the mansion, so electric bills were low; he had free pizza for food every alternate day contributed by the generous deceased pizza place worker; yeah, he could survive like this for quite a while longer. When what little he had left of the inheritance he'd gained from his cousin's-uncle-thrice-removed was used up, well, he'd cross that bridge when he came to it. Perhaps he could go back to his old ghostbusting business.

For now, he'd just take things easy.

Um, well.

He wondered what Neo and Ted had been doing all this time – a good four hours at least. (Frank wondered about that too, and so do I, and I thusly conclude that the meantime happenings of Room 437 should be left to the discretion of its occupants as well as the imagination of the reader, although it would be nice and socially-acceptable to draw the line at slash. And in the event that you discover any loose end in this story, then it was during those four hours or so that the loose ends in question were resolved and tied up, through liberal use of time travel if necessary. After all, with the Infinite Improbability Drive, anything and everything is possible.)

This was originally in the prologue, and contains my solution to the tombstone paradox in Back to the Future III; I took it out because it wasn't at all relevant to the story.

Suffice to say, the letter did reach its intended recipient, and despite instructions not to, Marty made his way to September 1885 in the repaired DeLorean with a very disturbing photograph in his pocket. Unknown to him, however, the photograph was not the one he had taken... but rather a fake replica.

The latter was actually a holophoto from the future that had been made to resemble a normal photograph in every aspect. Unlike a normal photograph, however, its picture could be changed by means of something similar to a remote control. Several specific pictures had already been pre-programmed into the holophoto, and would change from one to another accordingly when their respective buttons were pressed.

The photograph in question was one of a tombstone – Emmett's – and Marty had gone back to warn his friend of his imminent murder at the hands of Buford Tannen.

In order to fully understand the need for the photograph being replaced with a holophoto, one has to be aware of the fact that by successfully rescuing Emmett from death, Marty McFly set off a chain of events that first led to the name on the tombstone being changed, then the tombstone being broken and thus not being present in 1955 for a photo of it to be taken. This would have led to a paradox, which could have had disastrous effects on the space-time continuum and the universe.

In one instance, the photograph had changed to show a tombstone with Marty's then alias – Clint Eastwood – on it. This had served to warn Marty of the fact that if he had carried out doing what he was, it would have ended in his death, and this prompted him to choose an alternate course of action that allowed for his survival.

To keep past events happening as they had, it was thus vital that a photograph be present which had the ability to change its picture when necessary.

To solve this before the time ripple caught up in 1955 and the paradox came into play, Emmett's future self of 1893 went back to the 12th of November 1955. After planting a replica of his tombstone where the original had meant to be, he entered his counterpart's mansion – armed with a sleep-inducing alpha rhythm generator in case someone woke up – and exchanged the photograph with the holophoto on what was most probably his riskiest trip ever to preserve the space-time continuum. After that, he followed Marty back to 1885 in his own time machine, changing the picture on the holophoto whenever required and returning home when his mission was complete.

In the original storyline, there was a recurring joke involving Neo and Verne fighting over pizza, which eventually got scrapped. However, this meant that I needed a new way to get Neo to wake up on the last day – originally, Verne had announced the presence of pizza and this got Neo jumping out of bed. So I was trying to come up with an alternative way to wake Neo up; and my brother wrote this after I kept pestering him for ideas. I used some of it, but ditched the rest – for good reasons.

“Are you going to get up dude?”

"Bleagh." Neo replied.

"Here," Verne said, having returned from breakfast with baked beans dripping down his shirt. "Try this." He offered Ted a large sticky mouldy looking piece of toast.

"No thanks dude, I'm not hungry." Ted said. Verne shook his head.

"Not you, him." He indicated the half-asleep Neo. "Just put this near his nose and stand back. You can put a bit into his mouth if you want," Verne added helpfully, in his helpful manner.

Ted reached out and took the mouldy bread with two fingers.

"You found this on our breakfast table?" he asked.

"Nah, I found it in the dumpster behind the hotel. I used to forage in dumpsters since I was four. Dad told me to stop that disgusting habit but I always thought it was fun. You never know what you'll find in a dumpster." Verne said, smiling.

"Ah, okay dude." Ted stuck the toast in front of Neo's nose, who appeared to have fallen asleep again. Neo, not the nose. Well, actually, the nose being part of Neo would make it asleep but...you get the idea.

Neo sniffed it and mumbled something about Aunt Beatrice.

Ted stifled a giggle as he slowly dipped a mouldy corner into Neo's mouth.

Neo mumbled something that sounded like 'q'ornf' but could have been 'q'onf'.

Neo began slowly chewing on the bread and Verne gave an explosive snort that sent the seven-year-old hurtling through the air and crashing against the wall. In the other room, Doc spilt orange juice and baked beans down his shirt.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, pulling out his hair in great white tufts as he ran into the other room.

Neo was in the process of screaming, Ted in the process of laughing and Verne in the process of falling off the wall.

"Blimey!" said Winston Churchill, having just appeared in the room dressed in lederhosen and nothing else.

"Great Scott!" Doc cried, covering Verne's innocent young eyes. Ted started barfing up Neo's throat, a ability only possible if one is acted by the same actor. Or in their case, stumblingly caricatured by a Canadian with a ruptured spleen.

"Dear me," said Winston, before spontaneously combusting leaving a pair of fire trails behind as he jumped into the year 1022 and was burnt at the stake for being a witch

.end.