



The Key to Time

Written by a
Sixth Grade Student

Research: 882 1/2 / Amazing Answers to your Questions about the Titanic by H. Brewster and L. Coulter

Story Picture Frame:

Time Travel Circle Story

Subplots: contest (man vs. man, man vs. nature) stuck (in time and kidnapped)

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Author Interview

Question: What are the most valuable writing tools you have learned?

Answer: Knowing what motive is and sticking to it throughout the story as well as using story patterns. Sentence starters and verbs are HUGE!

Chapter One

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Black clouds loomed, covering the sky like a blanket. Screaming, the wind tore at Belle, Dido, and Jock with icy fingers. The three kids sprinted through the park, over a bridge and onto Maple Street.

Towering ahead rose Old Lady Finsk's empty mansion. Thirteen shutters clattered. A screen door slammed while its hinges creaked and groaned.

Skidding to a halt, the trio gawked at the House.

"They say Old Lady Finsk lived there for sixty years, hardly ever showing herself," Dido whispered. "Then, one night, her whole house lit up, and she was never seen again."

"Where'd she go?" Belle quaked.

"No one knows, but not even the police dared investigate," Jock whispered.

"Is it haunted?" Belle felt a shiver tingle down her back.

"So they say," Dido replied. "Hey Belle, you're looking a bit pale. Feeling scared?"

"No, just cold."

"Fine," Dido smiled. "I dare you to climb Old Lady Finsk's staircase, find the attic, open the window and wave."

At that moment, the skies opened up and the down-pour began.

Jack's eye's glittered. "Well?"

Setting her chin, Belle tossed her soaked hair. "I accept, but when I return, you're next."

"Agreed—if you return."

Suddenly, lightning forked across the sky, followed by a clap of thunder.

Belle flew across the lawn and froze on the porch.

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There, from the smallest window of the tallest attic, came a flicker of light. Just a spark and it was gone. Sucking in her breath, she pushed open the door and melted into the darkness. She paused, waiting for her eyes to adjust. In the far corner rose a winding staircase, which stretched as far as her eyes could see.

Screeching, a bat darted across the room. Belle, still trembling started to choke her way through the dust and cobwebs. Seconds dragged by. Finally she reached the foot of the staircase, and began the long wearying ascent.

At last she reached the second landing, but the staircase travelled on. Belle followed it to the top of the third landing, where it finally ended. Still the sound of rain on the roof was far off. A narrow flight of stairs hugged the left wall. "That must be it," Belle breathed.

Bounding up the final set of stairs, she reached the closed door at the top and hesitated.

"It's now or never," though Belle. Clenching her teeth, she turned the knob and stepped into the attic. The small round window lay to her left. Suddenly as she hurried to it, she heard a faint, "Help! Help!"

Heart hammering, Belle paused, straining to hear where the sound was coming from. "Help! Help!" the voice called again. Turning, she spied an old grandfather clock on the right wall. "Help!" the voice cried, clearer and more urgent. Creeping towards the clock, Belle noticed that the small pendulum door was open a crack. She squeezed her hand through the opening and touched the weights.

At that moment, Belle began sliding. Everything was black. All at once images of the past flashed before her. More recent times came first, then further and further back.

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Soon she was in the middle of World War II, but the pictures rolled on. Then an image of an enormous ship loomed before her. It grew closer, closer and closer until it filled up her whole vision. Instantly, complete darkness enveloped her.

"Gotcha."

Jock and Dido shivered as they huddled under the shelter of a massive oak tree.

"What's taking her so long?" Dido growled, glancing at his watch. "It's been fifteen minutes already. It can't take that long to walk up a flight of stairs and wave."

Jock nodded. "Come on. She's probably hiding or something to get us back for double-daring her." He snickered.

Dido stared. "You want *me* to go in *there*?" he hissed.

"Yeah. We've gotta find her. Come on."

Taking a deep breath, the boys darted through the front door, across the living room and up three flights of stairs.

"Where is she? I don't see her," Dido whispered once they were up in the attic.

Jock, ignoring him, began to search the attic, hoarsely calling Belle's name.

Dido walked over to a small table that stood across from an old grandfather clock. A thick, heavy book lay there. It had a dark green leather cover and yellowed pages. Opening it up, Dido skimmed the flowing handwritten lines.

"Jock—I think I found something," he called, frowning at the smudged writing.

"What?" Jock asked, striding over to the table. Motionsing for Jock to sit down, Dido began to read.

The Diary of Walter Finsk III—September 30, 1898

Today, dear Aunt Rachel died and the funeral is to be held on Saturday. She didn't leave me any money, as she knew I have no need of any, but she left me her old grandfather clock and the matching key that has been in the family for generations. I have always had a fascination for it, which she knew. When my family stayed at her house one Christmas, a gunshot rang through the house at 1:00 in the morning. There was a big investigation, but the police couldn't find a trace of anyone being there. We never heard anymore strange sounds. Yet one night, as I was reading by the fire, I heard faint yelling coming from the direction of the clock. I kept this discovery a secret, and decided to learn as much as I could about the Clock.

When I was a young boy, about four, my nanny told me nursery tales. She had this notion that somehow, you could travel to different time periods into the future or the past through the Clock. So I began to believe that there was a world of its own inside it. If only I could access the way.

Since then, I have heard many voices and sounds coming from the clock while I was secretly listening. Sometimes it sounded like war, and sometimes I heard strange music. But I still can't enter, it's impossible to enter..."

Dido trailed off. "It just goes on and on like this."

Jock silently took the diary from Dido and began to flip through it. "Here's a different script," he mumbled, starting to read.

The Diary of Walter Finsk V—March 4, 1960

My father was never interested in the affairs of my grandfather. He rolled his eyes at the mention of the grandfather clock. But I will carry on with the mystery.

With the Clock came a key, and I believe that this is the Key to Time.

I have family records that say that my Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandfather, John Finsk, came across the key and the Clock. On the back of the Clock was inscribed the words:

"Though Time might fly,
You will never die,
Yet without Me,
You shall see,
That nothing shalt ever be
The same."

On the key it was engraved:

"Through the ages while never aging,
But never returning without me."

Needless to say I kept the Key on me at all times.

Suddenly, a shriek exploded from the Clock.

The two boys locked eyes. "Belle!"

Striding across the room, Dido stuck his hand into the door and felt the weights. In a flash, he was gone.

"Dido, wait!" There's no way back!" Jock howled, diving for the Clock. The attic was once again empty.

Chapter Two

Rough hands seized Belle from behind, clamping her mouth shut and muffling her scream. Grimy fingers tied her hands behind her back and stuffed a handkerchief inside her mouth. At once she was shoved through dimly lit corridors and down a steep flight of stairs. The floor rocked. Her captors threw open a small door and Belle was pushed down another flight of stairs. At the bottom, they let go of her, sprinted back up the stairs and were gone. Everything was dark.

Creak! Craaaack! Creak! Craaaack! The continuous groaning and motion never ceased. Suddenly, a large crate started moving. It stopped about five feet away from its original position. Moments later, a black shadow rose up from the crate. Spitting out the handkerchief, Belle gave a glass-shattering screech.

"Don't be too loud now, dear," the shadow said. "Nobody can hear you, but Sneezer and Tweezer, and you'd be sorry if they heard you."

Belle gaped at the elderly woman. "Who are you?" she managed.

"Me? Why, I'm Margaret Louise Finsk. Well, my maiden name is Hunter and some of my old friends still call me Miss Hunter, as a sort of joke. But you needn't know that. You may call me Margie. But you haven't told me who you are yet, dearie."

"Belle," she croaked. "I'm Belle," she paused. "And you must be Old Lady Finsk."

"Is that what people call me? That's nice. And now I expect you'll be wanting to know where you are, why you're here, how you got here, who kidnapped you, what the year is, and how I got here."

"I know what year it is," Belle defended herself. "I know what day it is, too. It's Tuesday, August 8th, 2006."

Margie chuckled. "Has time flown by *that* quickly since I left?" she mused. "But no. Today is Saturday, April 13, 1912. You are on the *Titanic*, in the storage room alone with one thousand calf organs."

"Calf organs? The *Titanic*?" Belle repeated meekly.

"Yes, dearie. The British like that kind of stuff. But back to the *Titanic*. You got here by touching the weights of the Old Grandfather Clock. Your kidnappers are, as I said before, Tweezer and Sneezer. Well, not really. Their real names are Rick and Archibald Tut. I'm not quite sure what they're doing here, or why they want us, unfortunately. They have searched me quite a few times, though. Ah here they come now."

"Quit your jabbering!" snarled Tweezer.

"Yeah!" agreed Sneezer. "Ah-ah-ah-CHOO!"

"Silence!"

"Sorry."

"Where is it?" Tweezer thundered, turning towards Belle. "I want it! Give it to me, and we'll let you go!"

"What?" Belle challenged, appearing to know what she was talking about. *Maybe, I'll figure out why they have us, Belle thought.*

"Empty your pockets, scoundrel!" ordered Tweezer. Belle turned her pockets inside out and glared at Sneezer as he looked over every object that had been growing moldy in her pockets. An apple core, an orange peel, a cherry stone, and her house key.

"I found it!" howled Sneezer in triumph. Tweezer snatched the key and tried to insert it into the door lock.

"It won't fit!" he stormed.

"It's the key to my house. Of course it won't fit," Belle replied, confused.

Chapter Three

"What is this place?" Dido asked shakily.

They were positioned in a long, narrow hallway similar to a hotel. Doors with room numbers loomed on either side of them. The floor rose and fell steadily.

"We're on a cruise ship," Jock replied. The previous summer his parents had taken him on a cruise, so he recognized the scenario well.

"So, we've time travelled?" Dido panicked.

"What are you—deaf? We've time travelled. We don't know if we're in 600 000 000 000 000 B.C. or 600 000 000 000 000 A.D! If we're going to freak, this is the time!"

Jock glared. "Just remember: this was *your* idea."

"Right." Dido took a deep breath. "So, what do we do now?"

Suddenly, a low melodic voice rose into the air.

"Ama-azing grace, how sweet the sound..."

"Somebody's coming!" squealed Dido.

"Hide!" gasped Jock.

"Where?" squeaked Dido, his face blanching.

"Those rooms are occupied.

"Run!"

Taking off like rockets from a cannon, the boys flew down the halls with the steward close behind. They zoomed through corridors, up staircases, and down passageways.

"Do something about your shoelace, Dido!" Jock warned.

"I can't!" hollered Dido, crashing to the floor.

The steward grabbed him by the arm. Struggling out of his jacket, Dido fled, leaving the steward with an empty coat.

Eyes flashing, the steward thundered. "Get back here, you little hooligans!"

The chase continued until the boys came to an abrupt halt—it was a dead end!

"We're doomed," panted Dido.

"Wait!" Jock grinned, turning around. "We've lost him."

"Yeah right!" Dido scoffed. "He went to get help."

At that moment, the doorknob of a cabin door turned.

"Oh no!" Dido whispered frantically. Panicking, he looked at Jock for an answer. Running would just draw attention.

"Stay where you are and act calm," Jock advised.

A twelve-year-old boy stepped out of his cabin.

Glancing at Dido and Jock curiously, he nodded his head, walked down the hall, and vanished out of sight.

Biting his lip, Jock barked, "Now!"

Ducking into the boy's cabin, they stopped, staring in awe. It looked like a bedroom ballroom! Recovering, Jock opened a majestic wardrobe and pulled out two of the boy's outfits.

Seconds later, they heard the tramping of feet in the corridor. Jock peered through the keyhole and his eyes widened. Marching behind the steward were four policemen.

"The two ruffians were right here, officer!" snarled the Steward, his eyebrows bristling.

"Calm down. What did they look like Bill?" asked the officer.

"One had light hair, the other dark," the steward growled.

Smacking his fist against the wall, one of the policemen cried, "I have it! These boys must be the same ones who were dwelling in that hideout we found. Stowaways!"

"Yes, and they were dressed in the same manner of the old man we arrested!" Bill exclaimed.

"They must be in league with each other," concluded the officer. He turned to one of the policemen. "Make sure to enter these events under April 14th in the log. Now let's go and question the prisoner. There's nothing more we can do here."

As the group retreated, Jock and Dido slipped out of the cabin and began following the steward and policemen.

"It's better to hunt than be hunted."

As the boys trailed the policemen, slipping noiselessly from shadow to shadow, Dido gasped. "Wait a minute!" he choked, eyes bugging in terror. "You know that sign we passed? It said *Titanic!*"

"We're on the Titanic?"

Dido nodded his head. "And you know how that officer said to enter that there's two stowaways on board under April 14th in the ship's log?" Dido continued.

"Yeah? So?"

"Guess what date the *Titanic* sunk?"

Jock felt his heart stop. "April 14?"

"Actually, 2:00 AM on Monday, April 15, 1912."

"Tonight," Jock croaked.

Finally, the policeman stopped and entered and small grey room. Dido and Jock located a cold air return and peeked in.

An old man was seated on a stiff chair. He was dressed in clothes that looked like they would have been worn in the 1980s.

The officer held up Dido's jacket. "Do you recognize this jacket?"

The old man shrugged helplessly.

"Answer me!" the officer demanded.

"No, sir," the man wheezed. "Please let me go. I'm an old man who didn't do anything wrong. We'll all be in mortal danger if you don't."

The officer rolled his eyes. "Look, mister, I'll let you go if you tell me who your buddies are."

"I don't have any!" cried the man.

"Is this your jacket, then?" questioned the officer.

"No!"

"Prove it."

"It will never fit!"

"Don't tell me that there aren't any other stowaways on board!" roared the officer.

"I didn't say that," sniffed the man. "I said I don't know of any!"

Dido got up and pulled Jock away from the cold air return.

"I'm hungry," he stated.

Jock nodded in agreement.

Trotting down twisting passageways, they found a sign reading "FIRST CLASS DINING SALOON THIS WAY ➡".

When they entered the dining hall, it was quiet. In the far corner was a group of men smoking and playing poker.

Dido and Jock slipped into some chairs and opened up the menu. Licking his lips, Dido's eyes glittered. "French vanilla ice cream. That sounds good."

Jock groaned, "But it's \$8.50, Dido and we don't have any money. We can't afford any of this stuff."

Dido winced. "Nothing? But I'm hungry!" he whined.

Jock glanced around. "Come on," he whispered.

Sneaking over to the kitchen door, they peeked through the keyhole. A man was bustling about, muttering.

"I can't get nothin' done 'round here without some help. Agghh! Where's the soap? I need some more towels. Why on *earth* did I sign up as a dishwasher? An easy passage to America? Humph! I've got to go get those towels."

The coast was clear. Stealing silently into the kitchen, Jock lunged at some bread. Dido followed, wolfing down an orange.

Suddenly, they heard the footsteps of the dishwasher outside the kitchen door.

"Quick!" squealed Dido.

"In here!" Jock flung open a pantry door.

"Did you hear that noise?" Belle frowned at the ceiling. It sounded like heavy breathing.

"Hello? Is somebody there?" Margie called.

Nobody answered.

Chapter 4

Jock slammed the door of the pantry shut. The two boys crouched, panting as the Dishwasher began to dry dishes.

"We could be here forever!" Dido hissed.

"Shush!" Jock silenced him. "I hear talking."

Dido raised his eyebrows. "It's probably just those poker guys," he snickered.

Jock glared, and Dido closed his mouth to listen.

From somewhere below them came the sound of muffled voices.

"Hello? Is somebody there?" one asked.

Jock and Dido exchanged glances.

A younger girl's voice spoke up. "It's probably just our

imaginations. We are edgy; after all, it's 11:37 PM."

Dido's heart went in his mouth. They only had three more hours to get off the ship.

"Wait a minute!" Jock crowed. "That sounds like Belle!"

Dido grinned. "We must be sitting on a cellar!" His smile quickly faded. "But how do we get down there?"

Jock smiled mischievously as he got up and pointed at a hinge in the floor. "Use the trap door!"

Dido stood up and together they heaved it open. At that moment, the ship jolted and the boys tumbled into the storage room. A large grinding noise followed, sending a chill down their spines.

"We've hit the iceberg!" Belle shrieked.

Jock stood up. "Calm down, Belle! We'll get home someday or another."

A sigh of relief escaped her. "Dido, Jock! How did you guys get here?"

Dido shook his head impatiently. "No time for chitchat. We've got to get out of here!"

In the ship's prison, the old man paced up and down in his small quarters. Outside the jail door, the *Titanic* was in chaos. Stewards were running around, hollering at sleepy millionaires to get lifebelts on. Children sat on the floor, crying, until their frantic mothers scooped them up and carried them off to the lifeboats. Logical businessmen rolled their eyes and slammed their cabin door in officials' faces.

The old man breathed deeply and considered his situation. *And I, Walter Jeffrey Finsk, am supposed to break free, find The Key, and get back home to where my wife is probably worried sick before I drown!*

He tried the door again. Locked. Throwing his hat down on the table in frustration, Walter slumped into a chair. It was impossible to escape. He was going to die.

Squinting, Jock grunted as he attempted to push a crate under the new hole in the ceiling. With a final shove, Jock sat down, panting. "Those crates are heavy," he gasped.

Dido rolled his eyes and stepped onto the wooden box. Effortlessly, he pulled himself through the hole. Margie was next, then Belle. At last Jock squeezed through the trapdoor and sealed it shut.

"What do we do now?" Belle asked, voicing everyone's concern.

Jock grinned. "Dido, do you remember that guy in the ship's prison?"

Dido frowned. "Yeah?"

"Well, he looked pretty modern, right?" Jock didn't wait for an answer. "So I've figured that he must be Old Professor Finsk."

"I knew my dear old husband was around here somewhere!" declared Margie excitedly.

"And if he is the professor, he must have the Key!" Dido interrupted.

"What key?" Belle and Margie asked in unison.

"We'll explain later," Jock brushed aside their question. To Dido, he said, "The only thing I can't figure out is, why hasn't he used it before now if he does have the Key?"

"We'll find that out when we get there," Belle grinned. "I'm for anything that'll get us out of here!" Flinging open the door, she ushered them out. The Dishwasher had evidently abandoned his wet, soapy dishes when he felt the jolt.

Outside the whole ship was in pandemonium. Everyone from stewards to toddlers were running around in pyjamas.

"This way!" Jock barked, leading the odd group through twisted hallways.

"Finally!" sighed Dido in relief as they came to the jail entrance. "And in the guard's hurry, they even forgot to take the keys out of the lock!"

Unlocking the door, Belle turned the handle and barged in.

"Professor!" she announced. "You're free! Now where's the Key? Whatever that is," she added in a mutter.

Walter stared at the girl standing before him in disbelief. His disbelief turned to amazement as he saw his wife behind her. "What are you...?" he began.

"No time!" growled Jock, yanking Walter through the jail door. "Where's the Key?"

Chapter Five

Sneezer opened the door to the storage room where their prisoners were kept. Sticking his head in and squinting into the darkness, he gave a cry of alarm.

"They're not here!" he hollered in dismay.

"Of course they're in there!" growled Tweezer. "Either they're hiding, or yer just not looking hard enough!"

Shrugging helplessly, Sneezer made way for his fellow conspirator.

Tweezer motioned for Sneezer to follow him. "I may need reinforcements if they try to make a breakaway."

Marching down the stairs, Tweezer began growling. "If you little ladies don't show yerselves this minute, we'll—uh—we'll—throw you overboard!"

"Yeah!" Sneezer sneered. "We know you're down here!"

No answer.

"Tweezer?" Sneezer asked timidly. "I don't think they're here."

"Arrhh!" Tweezer spat angrily. "Up the stairs! They couldn't have gone far. Quick! Before they use the Key and leave us stranded here on this leaking tub!"

Walter trotted down crowded hallways. His troop did their best to follow. "This way!" he urged, ushering them down a quieter passage off the main deck. "We haven't much time! Quickly!"

At that moment, a couple emerged from a nearby cabin, their little son crying in his father's arms.

The family passed what seemed to be grandchildren with their grandparents without a second glance. Walter grinned. "Perfect timing!" he chuckled, diving into the young family's cabin.

"And here it is!" he crowed, holding up an ancient gold key.

"Not so fast!" snarled a voice from behind.

"Ah-ah-ah-CHOO!" sneezed another. "Yeah! We got you covered, Mr. Finsk."

Walter whirled. Sneezer had backed everyone else into a corner and was holding them at gunpoint. Margie glanced at her husband nervously. Tweezer was also gripping a pistol, aiming it straight at Walter's nose!

"Ugh!" sputtered Walter, hiding the Key in his back pocket. These guys always seemed to show up at inconvenient times! "What will you be wanting now, you good-for-nothing scum?"

"What else stupid?" Tweezer's eyes glimmered. "We want your Key, not only so we can get off this sinking casket, but so we can travel the ages spiriting away priceless gems and ancient riches!" A dreamy smile covered his face for a moment, but quickly changed back into a scowl. "Now, hand it over!"

"I don't know what you're talking about!" Walter denied, folding his arms and sticking his nose up away from the weapon.

"Oh, I think you do!" Tweezer laughed wickedly, shoving the gun into his prisoner's ribs. "Will you wilfully give it, or should I just search you myself?"

"Never will I condemn myself to death just to satisfy your lust for gold!" Walter declared. He had been a hair width away from escape and nothing could stop him now. His old spunk had returned.

"Hold it right there!" commanded the familiar voice of Bill the steward, "Hands up!"

Tweezer and Sneezer reluctantly dropped their pistols and raised their hands. They were escorted by armed guards to the ship's jail. "Really smart guys!" one guard muttered. "You just lost a passage on a lifeboat for sure!"

Bill glared at Jock, Dido and Walter. "May I ask you what you're doing out of prison, sir?" he addressed Mr. Finsk. Turning to the two boys, he demanded, "And I can only guess that you two had something to do with it! And what are you doing with these innocent ladies?" he motioned to Belle and Margie.

"They're my friends," Belle offered.

"And that's my husband!" defended Margie.

Bill raised his eyebrows and hollered, "Guards! We have three stowaways and two accomplices here!"

"Now!" Jock hissed.

The group quickly formed a chain and Walter inserted the Key into a nearby lock.

"What are you doing?" screamed Bill, grabbing onto Dido's ankle.

Suddenly, everything went black.

Images of the future after the *Titanic* swirled around them. World War II...the Beatles...a plane crashing into the Twin Towers...they were getting close. Finally, a huge picture of a quiet suburban neighborhood loomed before them. It grew closer and closer and closer. Then it was dark.

"Belle, we're home!" Dido squealed, shaking a drowsy Belle.

Belle opened her eyes. They were back in the attic during a thunderstorm, this time accompanied by two notorious residents: Old Lady Finsk and Old Professor Finsk, and

one confused steward.

She lay her head back down on the wooden floor. "Ahhh..." she sighed. "It's good to be back."

Epilogue

Margie led the way down the stairs and into the kitchen. "I'll prepare some hot chocolate," she offered, pulling out chairs for everyone.

"There are still a few things that need explaining," Belle reminded the professor.

"Like, where in heaven's name am I?" blurted Bill.

Walter chuckled and cleared his throat. "I'll start at the beginning, and hopefully answer all questions at once.

"I am a professor who has always been interested in science and time travel, so when I inherited that old grandfather clock upstairs with the Key, I was simply delighted. My earlier experiences with the Clock led me to believe that it could assist me with discovering the door to time travel.

Somehow, two brothers, Rick and Archibald Tut, got hold of this secret information. They have been following me tirelessly, thinking that with this Key they could become the richest men in the world by stealing objects from different time periods.

Finally, I got up the courage to experiment whether the Clock and the Key actually worked or not. Through my studies, I had found out that: a: the Clock is the one that takes you to places while the Key brings you back, b: no matter how long you stay at your destination, you'll never get any older, c: you can't pick where you want to go; the Clock picks for you, d: the way to activate the Key is to insert it into any lock—it will always fit, e: the way to activate the

Clock from home is to touch the weights, and f: by touching the person who activated the Key, you will also be dragged to wherever they're going. Archibald and Rick were hiding in my attic on the fateful day I finally touched the Clock's weights. They saw me disappear and must have touched the Clock's weights afterwards. Unluckily, the Clock also transported them to the Titanic.

Once on the *Titanic*, disaster immediately struck. Accidentally, the Key fell out of my pocket and a small boy, the very one you saw crying in his father's arms, picked it up. I asked him to give it back, but when he refused, I chased him back to his cabin. Ship guards saw me, and assuming I was attempting to harm the boy, arrested me. At the jail, I was asked for ID and proof that I had paid for my passage. Unable to produce either, I was promptly kept in the prison until you arrived with your rescue party. Thankfully, I saw which cabin the boy had disappeared into, and was therefore able to guess where he had the Key.

There. Does that answer everyone's questions?" Walter folded his hands and waited for an answer.

"I'm still not sure exactly why I was kidnapped when I arrived on the *Titanic*," Belle confessed.

"That's easy," grinned Dido. "Sneezer and Tweezer had obviously stolen whatever they wanted to steal from passengers and were ready to leave. Of course, they didn't have the Key, and they knew they were going to die unless they got it. I'm assuming they knew about the Key from reading your notes, Mr. Walter," Dido glanced at Walter to check if he was correct in his inference.

Walter nodded.

"So," Dido continued, "They schemed to kidnap anyone who arrived on the ship from 2006, assuming that they would be carrying the Key."

"Oh, now I understand."

"I have one question as well," Bill volunteered. "What happened to the *Titanic*? Since, from what I have heard, this is the future, I'm sure you know."

Margie passed out cups of hot chocolate.

Walter grimaced. "Two thousand, two hundred and twenty-three people, crew and passengers included, set out on the *Titanic*. Only seven hundred and six survived the ordeal. One thousand, five hundred and seventeen died. The *Carpathia* didn't reach the *Titanic* on time."

Bill winced. "I guess I'm lucky then."

"I guess you are," Walter agreed.