

Back in time

By Matilda Barron



Waverly watched as the gates closed, shuddering at the clanging of the metal lock behind her. “Waverly Hills?” A voice boomed, angrily. “Your number is 4736251.” She turned around and shuffled forward in the long line of prisoners, all looking miserably down at their feet. She was in prison for something so stupid she still couldn’t believe it. She was in prison for something she didn’t even do! Somehow she was accused of murder, she could only explain it as a case of mistaken identity. But now she was marching towards her death.

That is until a surprising announcement came over the loudspeaker: “Hello everyone, this is your Warden speaking. I have some very important news. Instead of dying, everyone will be sent back in time to a horrible moment in history. You will have to stop it, otherwise you will still die. Thank you.” Mumbling spread along the line. “Do you think they invented time travel?” Waverly asked the person in front of her. “I don’t know. Sounds like a load of bull crap to me.” Waverly shrugged. “I guess... but what if they have?” “Well then we have to go back in time, I guess.” The line moved forward. She was only a few feet from the door now. She bit her lip and thought ‘oh I don’t want to die, but I don’t want to see innocent people die either.’ The line moved again, and she shuffled along with it. Finally the guard called out “4736251.” She stepped across the threshold and saw a weird pulsating ball of fire. “Waverly?”

“Yes...” “Sit here,” the angry man ordered.

“Ok,” she sat down quickly and stared in awe at the portal. “I bet you’re wondering what that is over there?” “Um, yes,” Waverly stammered. “Well, that is the portal that we will use to send you back in time.” “So it IS real!” Waverly gasped. “Of course it’s real,” the man growled. “Now you will be sent back in time to...” he adjusted his glasses and peered down his long list of prisoners, “Tuesday, September 11th, 2001. You will have until the disaster is over to try to change the course of history. Otherwise, your death sentence will be carried out. Now step towards the portal,” he barked. Waverly did so quickly, and stared nervously into the endless void. “Three... two... one!”

Waverly fell into the void and heard a robotic voice saying “what day do you want to go back to?” “Umm... September 11, 2001.” “Where do you want to go.” “The Logan airport, United Airlines Flight 175.” “Now taking you to the Logan airport.” She felt the whooshing and her insides churned. She zoomed away, landing in the Logan airport. She rushed to the gate for Flight 175 and ran up to the lady working at the ticket checker. “Evacuate the flight! Don't let anybody on!” she screamed. The flight attendant seemed unconcerned, but shrugged. “Anything to get me out of doing this” she mumbled under her breath, and got to work ordering people to get off the plane. “Let me just ask... why do you think something’s going to happen?” “You need to just trust me, there is going to be a disaster. But wait... do you know where to get cardboard people? Put them on the plane instead!” The flight attendant looked at Waverly suspiciously. “Ok,” she smiled and waited. Soon enough, the plane departed with the hijackers and the cardboard people.

“Now to save the people in the Twin Towers” Waverly thought frantically. The robotic voice once again asked, “Where do you want to go?” “The Twin Towers, New York City. Immediately” she hollered. “Now taking you to the twin towers,” the voice said with little emotion. There was a whooshing noise and once again she felt her stomach flipping over uncomfortably. She landed right outside the Twin Towers. She turned around and saw, in the distance, four planes heading straight towards the towers! Waverly gasped and ran inside screaming “everybody get out! Evacuate the building at once!” People were coming out of their offices looking puzzled and curious, but nobody was evacuating. Murmurs were spreading as she ran through the halls. No one was evacuating. She stopped running and started grumbling. “Come on people, you need to get out of here!” She looked out the window at the plane coming closer and closer. Even though she knew no one was on the plane, she was panicked for the people in the towers. Suddenly an idea struck her- “I know! I'll pull the fire alarm!” Waverly ran through the halls looking for an alarm. She finally found one and pulled it. The alarm sounded and total panic ensued. Security rushed everyone out of the building just in time. They watched as the planes crashed into the two towers. “Thank God no one was on the flight” Waverly breathed a huge sigh of relief.

The robotic voice came back again saying in detached emotion, “Congratulations, 4736251! You have saved everyone.” Waverly smiled with pride. “Now only 2 more. You are going to... the Chernobyl disaster.” Waverly felt her stomach sink. The Chernobyl disaster was the worst nuclear accident to ever occur. If she wasn't able to stop the accident, she was sure to die a gruesome death. But it was beyond her control- suddenly there was a rushing sensation

and the world disappeared before her eyes. “Where do you want to go?” the robotic voice said. “The Chernobyl nuclear plant.” “What day?” Again, the robot asked casually, not able to sense the gravity of the moment. “April 25, 1986” Waverly yelled. She landed at the plant and ran inside but realized she didn't have a plan. She saw the chief deputy engineer sleeping in his chair. “Wake up! Or I'm going to report you for sleeping on the job.” he blinked wearily. “Wait what? Oh! I'm so sorry! I had a late night last night.” “you guys are doing a safety inspection tomorrow, right?” The Engineer looked at her suspiciously and said, “how did you know?” “Make sure to turn on the part that makes sure it doesn't explode!” He smacked his head lightly and said “Oh wow, thanks! I completely forgot.” Time skipped to the next morning and Waverly stood back and watched with great relief as the safety exam was fully completed and passed with no explosion.

“Congratulations, 4736251! You have successfully prevented two horrible moments in history. Now it's time to go to your last test. You are going to Pearl Harbor.” Once again, Waverly felt the rushing sensation, though it was hard to differentiate between the anxiety in her stomach and the lurching, odd sensation of travelling through time. She was scared. After all, how would you feel if you were going back to some of the worst moments in history? “What day do you want to go to?” The casual questioning of the robot was getting on Waverly's nerves. “December 7, 1941”. She suddenly found herself standing on the beach of the Pacific Ocean. She caught her bearings and started to run towards the small, sleepy town. “Everyone evacuate! Evacuate right now! There is going to be a bombing!” Heads poked out of homes and stared curiously at her. “EVACUATE!” she screamed in desperation. Finally, people understood and started running. She ran through all the buildings screaming “Evacuate! Evacuate!” People ran out of each building in confusion, but followed the crowds now heading away from the harbor. “Ok robot, take me to the command center of the Hawaiian US navy” Waverly yelled, her heart pounding in her throat. This was her last chance, her last task before her own death, and that of so many others. “Now taking you to the command center in Washington DC,” the robotic voice said evenly. “ No, no, no! The US Navy in Hawaii!” Waverly said angrily. There wasn't a moment to lose. “Now taking you to the Command Center in Hawaii.” It was as if the robot was reading a recipe or announcing the weather, entirely lacking in emotion. Waverly landed with a thud in the center of the Command Center and grabbed the microphone. “Everyone! Evacuate the ships!! Get to land immediately! There is going to be a bombing!” She put down the microphone and said, “Robot, take me to Japan's Air Force command center!” “Taking you to Japan's Air Force Command Center.” She stumbled to the ground and scrambled quickly to the microphone and

put on a deep voice. "This is your Commander. Please turn around immediately. Plans have been changed, and we will not be bombing Pearl Harbor." She held her breath, for what seemed like an eternity, until finally she saw the planes slowly veering off, away from their targets.

Waverly fell to the ground with relief, her head in her hands, as she felt tears streaming down her face. The robotic voice said, with only the slightest enthusiasm, "great job, 4736251! You have saved 5434 people from death. You have changed the lives of many others. You have changed the course of history. And as a reward, you have been released from prison. You will lead a normal life except for the fact you saved thousands of innocent lives. The compassion and courage you've shown today has demonstrated that you could not have committed the murder you've been accused of." Waverly couldn't believe her ears. Slowly, a smile spread across her face until she felt she would burst. Then she started laughing. Laughing with happiness, pride and utter relief. Finally she was free from the horrible life in prison! Waverly felt a final rushing feeling and landed outside the prison, her hair was wind-blown and shiny and her clothes were suddenly clean leaving no trace of the many miles she'd just travelled, and the catastrophes she'd averted. As she caught her breath and looked around, she gasped. There, across the courtyard were her family waiting for her, along with a young girl she didn't recognize.

She ran toward her family and hugged them with all her might. "I missed you guys so much!" "We missed you to baby girl," her mom said, her voice trembling and tears running down her face. Waverly bent down and asked the little girl "who are you?" The little girl said "You saved my mom from dying on September 11th. I'm her daughter. I would never have had the chance to live if it weren't for you." I'm also the one narrating this story. That's right, I'm narrating. Waverly saved so many people and I'm so thankful, which is why I chose to write this story. I wish that many other terrible moments in our history could be averted.