

The Future Sucks

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EXT. FIELD - DAY

Two adults and two children cluster uncomfortably close together in an overgrown field at the edge of a forest. This is nature at its rawest, with no trace of human civilisation.

JAX - identified by the badge on her black TIME TOURS uniform - is bored. Her overdone makeup and fiery hair are more suited to a nightclub than the open air. Her gloves sport reflective green wires, like veins.

She drones through a rote speech to the group in front of her. No one pays her any attention, too busy staring into the woods, searching for movement.

JAX

Welcome Timers to the first stop
in the Time Tours Fear Sphere.
Keep an eye out, we're in
Eotyrannus territory-

MELVIN, 30s, adjusts his glasses nervously and fiddles with a breathing mask dangling from his neck.

MELVIN

Are you sure we don't need our
ventilators?

JAX

Melvin - this is the cleanest
air you've ever breathed.

SIMON, 13 and hyper as a caged puppy, pokes at his gloves.

SIMON

There's no Zifi. How can I play
Dinos and Dragons?

JAX

This is the Cretaceous Period.
130 million years before zifi.
There are LITERALLY dinosaurs
here.

ARISTO (likewise 13 but Simon's mature opposite) studies the woods, her expression troubled.

ARISTO

Eotyrannus. Dawn tyrant. They
still had dawn, didn't they?

JAX

Yes Aristo, the sun hadn't
exploded yet. Eotyrannus was a
theropod - SIMON!

SIMON is on his knees in the grass with his hands and face mushed against an invisible shield.

Simon licks it. Melvin looks like he might be sick.

The air around the group ripples, as if they're trapped inside a giant bubble. Which indeed they are.

JAX (cont'd)
Don't LICK the time sphere!

Simon grins and licks it again. Jax grabs the back of his shirt, but Aristo turns and holds up her hand.

ARISTO
Sister Freya says "Knowledge is a more lasting teacher than anger."

SIMON
Yeah. And then she hits me with a ruler.

Jax leans down and says quietly:

JAX
The time sphere is shielded. If you lick the shield... POP!

She CLAPS. Melvin SQUEAKS as the boys jump.

JAX (cont'd)
The moisture will short it out, and we'll be dino food.

The fifth figure breaks his statuesque silence and SNORTS.

BOOT
Bullshit.

Meet BOOT, the Scottish, foul-mouthed ship AI.

JAX
Timers, meet Boot. The brain of the time sphere.

BOOT
Brain? I'm the asshole too.

The kids giggle.

JAX
Boot! Children.

BOOT

Gee, I hadn't noticed the wee
wank -

JAX

Engage family mode!

Boot shakes his fist. Every time he tries to cuss, a
spark shoots across him.

BOOT

Family mode? For fu - ow! f-
Fungus sake Jax! This job sucks
ba - butternuts!

Aristo ignores them, her attention on the forest once
again. She spots something.

ARISTO

It's coming!

A shadow falls over the group. Crocodilian GROWLING is
heard. The kids recoil and Melvin SHRIEKS - but it's
short-lived.

Everyone straightens and stares, their eyeline on
something only child-sized, if that.

ARISTO (cont'd)

I thought it would be bigger.

BOOT

That's what she said.

A SCUFFLE. GRUNTING. The dino's dying prey SCREAMS. BLOOD
SPLATTERS all down the sphere right in front of Simon.
They all cover their faces - except him. He's thrilled.

SIMON

That was barbaric!

Melvin covers his mouth and struggles not to vomit.

Opening title rolls: The Future Sucks!

INT. TIME TOURS LANDING ROOM - LATER

The Time Tours landing room tries (and fails) to hide its
lack of budget with "mood lighting", aka darkness.

The Fear Sphere sits in the middle of a circular landing
pad illuminated by rope lights.

There's a T-shirt on display with the Time Sphere, the
Eotyrannus, Jack the Ripper, and the slogan: Time Tours
Fear Sphere - You'll never want to come back.

The two boys watch Jax from inside the sphere. She's on the outside, aiming her glove at the blood. She flicks A finger but nothing happens. She flicks again.

JAX

Boot! Where are my nanocleaners?

BOOT

Have you checked up your - ahhh

She spots a dirty mop bucket and a squeegee.

JAX

Fine. I'll do it myself.

BOOT

You wouldn't!

She would. She slops the dirty water on the shield.

BOOT (cont'd)

You cun - cun - c - aahhhhh
cunning person.

Simon watches from inside the Sphere.

SIMON

Can we go to the Titanic?

JAX

No.

SIMON

Why?

JAX

Budget cuts.

SIMON

Do you have a soulmatch yet?

JAX

No.

SIMON

Can I be your soulmatch?

JAX

If the SoulMeter goes off.

SIMON

Spicy!

He winks at her in what he hopes is a sexy way.

BOOT

There's a sight to make you burn
out your eyes.

Her BOSS approaches - mid 50s, sleazy car salesman type.
He gestures her over. She leaves the squeegee.

BOSS

Jaxy, baby, little change in
plans for the orphans. The
Ripper's offline.

JAX

Offline? I thought Jarvis fixed
it?

The Boss looks uncomfortable. Whatever happened to
Jarvis, it's not good.

BOSS

Jarvis. Shame. Ripper Shmipper.
I've got something so much
better. The Edinburgh Basher.

JAX

The who?

BOSS

Edinburgh Basher.
(off her look)
Big guy. 21st century. Wields a
club. It's gonna be great.

JAX

What about the Golden State
Killer? Or Vlad the Impaler?

BOSS

When you got the ingots to
outbid Intergalactica for the
Impaler, you let me know. Until
then? Bash on.

He laughs at his own pun. She doesn't.

BOSS (cont'd)

Wormhole opens in ten minutes.

JAX

Ten?!

BOSS

Love that enthusiasm!

Jax races back to the Sphere.

JAX
Boot. We shimmer in 10.

BOOT
You want a rainbow-farting
unicorn with that? Hey! Fart.
Farty fart fart.

JAX
Boys! Last chance for a bathroom
break 'til the 21st century.

INT. CONNOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

The sphere materializes in the middle of a messy livingroom in a typical Scottish house. It pulses. Jax has her gloves raised, trying to stabilise it.

The occupants sway against each other.

JAX
Sorry for the rough landing. New
wormhole. Has a few kinks.

ARISTO
Where are we?

JAX
Boot, the brief?

She holds Boot's hand, reading the brief in her mind.

JAX (cont'd)
Welcome Timers to Edinburgh,
Scotland before the destruction
of the United Kingdom. The year
is 2020. Any minute now, a man
named Connor will make a meal in
a "microwave". Little does he
know, it will be his last. He's
about to become the 10th victim
of the infamous... Edinburgh
Basher.

SIMON
Never heard of him.

The front door opens slowly. In walks the BASHER - a terrifying guy dressed in a mask, wielding a wooden bat with nails in it. It clicks on the floor as he walks.

He walks slowly past the sphere. They all lean away.

JAX
Boot! What's this tour rated?

BOOT

Unknown. We're the first to see it.

JAX

I'm gonna kill that cheap bastard!

A toilet flushes and a door SQUEAKS open. The BASHER disappears behind a curtain.

CONNOR enters, 20s, fit, shirtless. He walks right by the curtain. Everyone's dead silent. Even Simon is still. He nears the sphere.

A chirpy little noise goes off from Jax's glove. They JUMP. A classic love song starts to play.

SIMON

Is that your Soulmatch Meter?! I knew it! I knew it was...

Simon follows Jax's gaze. She stares at Connor, horrified.

Connor locks eyes with Jax and approaches, stopping an inch away. The music increases as he nears.

ARISTO

I thought we were invisible!

Jax raises her hand to the shield.

He raises his hand to meet hers, eyes still locked... and he adjusts his hair.

Jax looks behind her. Oh. A mirror.

JAX

Boot. My matchmeter is malfunctioning. Please turn it off.

Boot takes her wrist - and stops.

BOOT

Match confirmed. Name: Connor Barton. Status: Alive. Deceased. Alive. Dec-

JAX

Boot!

BOOT

I'm working on it!

The sphere shimmers and the boys and Jax nearly lose their balance. The music dies down but doesn't disappear.

BOOT (cont'd)

Jax, the wormhole is unstable!

Connor puts a pizza in the microwave and starts it. Basher approaches from behind.

SIMON

No! Behind you!

ARISTO

Look out!

The love song plays merrily away.

Basher SWINGS - and Connor sees the reflection of the club and ducks out of the way.

CONNOR

Who the fuck are you?!

Basher raises the club again. The sphere rolls wildly.

BOOT

Jax! It's trying to close - permanently! We need to leave!

Basher swings again, nearly getting Connor. Their fight continues in the background as:

Jax turns her back to the fight, defeated.

JAX

Take us back to the future.

SIMON

No! The future sucks!

Simon puts his hands on the shield and licks it.

ARISTO

He's right! It's nothing but purchased perfection and manufactured meaning in a sea of endless darkness!

Aristo sees what he's doing and dives next to him, licking it too.

MELVIN

They're right. The future is overrated!

Melvin joins them, licking away.

JAX
What are you doing?

SIMON
(muffled)
Thaving your thoul math.

Jax is touched, but hopeless.

JAX
Boys, not even Boot can disable
the shield. That thing about
saliva shorting it out? I made
it up.

BOOT
Well, actually...

JAX
What? You said that was
bullshit!

BOOT
I hate admitting weakness!

Connor's bleeding and wheezing. It won't be long now.

Jax jumps down next to the boys and licks furiously. The shield flashes. Darkness flashes too. Like a slow strobe light. They're there, and then not.

Jax bursts into tears, leaning her head on the shield. Connor's on his back, Basher's bat poised above him for the final swing.

JAX
It's not working! Boot, get us
out of here!

The world goes black. And comes into focus again to reveal the kids, Jax, and Boot still there.

SIMON
Did it work? Are we really here?

Aristo pinches him.

SIMON (cont'd)
Ow!

ARISTO
Can't tell.

Basher spins around and advances on them.

MELVIN
I'm going with yes! RUN!

The boys scatter. Basher goes after Jax.

JAX
Boot! A little help!

BOOT
I'm a spacetime ship, no
weapons! What do you want me to
do, lecture him to death?

Jax has an idea.

JAX
Something like that!

She grabs Boot's hand and puts it on Basher's arm.

JAX (cont'd)
Swear like our lives depend on
it!

BOOT
Fuck.

The spark from his swearing hits Basher in the face.

BOOT (cont'd)
Come on ye lavvy-heided
wankstain! Bite ma bawsack ye
jobby-flavoured fart lozenge!
Yer bum's oot the windae ye
fuckbumper! Fannyfumbler.
Fucking ugly fuckity fucker!

Basher collapses, head smoking. Boot collapses on top.

JAX
Boot! You did it!

Boot is silent. She shakes him.

JAX (cont'd)
Boot? Boot?!

Basher starts to sit up. Connor STOMPS on his head,
killing him. He spots Jax and approaches uncertainly.

JAX (cont'd)
I'm Jax.

CONNOR
Connor.

He puts out his hand. She takes it and sparkles erupt.

BOOT
Sparkles? For fu - ow!