

Up, Up and Away!  
By residents at Parkfield House



Once upon a time, there was a young girl called Kathleen.

One sunny afternoon, Kathleen's brown eyes gazed around the shed, at the end of her garden, where she sat. She felt safe in there, with the daylight shining through the windows framed by homely, handmade curtains. Her sanctuary. It was an ordinary day and Kathleen was doing ordinary things. She spent the afternoon keeping herself occupied with colouring, painting, and doing what she did best- reading.

All of a sudden, she heard a loud hissing sound coming from the garden. It was an unfamiliar sound that caused her to put down her book and head to the window to investigate. To her surprise, she saw an enormous hot air balloon threatening to land right there in her garden! Her heart began racing as she wondered "Is it going to land...?"

It did.

The man inside gave her an enthusiastic wave and a friendly smile that immediately reminded her of her grandfather. The man produced a large clock and simply asked her "forwards or backwards?" Nervous, but eager to experience an adventure like those she knew and loved in her books, Kathleen landed heavily inside the basket, quickly she dusted herself off and stood up straight. The man still stood holding the clock with its hands rapidly turning backwards.

As the hot air balloon increased its altitude, Kathleen's stomach was turning like a washing machine filled with butterflies. She barely had time to think about where they were going for the loud roaring of the flame and the fluffy clouds engulfing them.

The next thing she heard was the whistle of a train and the steady rhythm of a railway line. As the balloon started to lower, Kathleen found herself in the open air surrounded by green fields. The rhythm of the train track got louder, and the smell of steam got stronger as a terrific steam train with green and black carriages approached and slowed down right in front of her. An open invitation that Kathleen could not turn down.

With some hesitancy, she climbed aboard the mighty Flying Scotsman, the biggest train ever built with all British parts. The first person she came across upon was a tall man in a top hat and tails, followed by 2 ladies wearing long dresses and hand muffs seated at a table by the train window. "Why is everyone wearing funny clothes?" she thought, "where am I?" She tried to ask one of the porters who quickly hurried past her, carrying passengers' heavy bags. She spotted a newspaper on the table which the two ladies were seated at. It read:

"The Flying Scotman's first journey from London to Edinburgh. 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1923"

1923?!? The butterflies in her stomach were going wild as she realised that she had travelled 100 years into the past. There was nothing left to do but stare out of the window at the passing countryside, occasionally seeing groups of people waving and cheering as the first Flying Scotsman's 90mph journey was celebrated. Finally, they reached Edinburgh.

1923 Edinburgh was unlike anything she had ever seen. She saw Edinburgh castle, Arthur's Seat, Horse and Carts. The afternoon went by in a flash and before she knew it, the lamplighters were lighting the gas lamps as the sun set on the day. Kathleen felt emotionally and physically exhausted.

As if reading her mind, she heard the familiar hissing sound of the hot air balloon. She climbed back into the basket. "Forwards or backwards?" she was asked again. "Forwards?" Kathleen replied and with a puff of wind and the ticking of the clock speeding forwards, they were off...

As the sun shone brightly, it reflected off the buildings that surrounded Kathleen as the hot air balloon landed with a bump. She squinted as she realised that all the buildings were made of metal and had large glass windows almost on every wall. Despite clearly being in a city, there was lots of trees and greenery in sight. She could hear the gentle singsong of birds flying between the trees and bees humming around brightly coloured flowers.

Looking up to the sky, Kathleen saw what she recognised as a drone. It was carrying a large parcel and zooming through the sky like an aeroplane. Then she saw another, carrying a different sized parcel. Then another. Then another. She realised they were carrying deliveries.

In amazement, Kathleen stepped out of the basket to explore further. She couldn't see any people around. "Isn't a city supposed to be bustling with people?" she thought. Just then she saw something move out of the corner of her eye. She could sense that it was moving slowly and smoothly towards her. As she turned, Kathleen couldn't believe her eyes. It wasn't a human... it was a robot.

The robot got closer until it was standing right in front of her. There was a bright screen on its chest that said "POLICE". "You look lost" the Police robot said. "Can I help?"

"Erm... I don't exactly know where I am" Kathleen replied. "Could you tell me what year it is?"

"It's 2123" it replied. 100 years in the future...

"Where's your watch?" The robot said.

"My watch?" Kathleen replied.

"Yes. You don't have a hologram watch on your wrist. Everyone must have a watch. How else do you get around?" And with that, the police robot produced a watch, not unlike an iWatch but see through. He held it towards Kathleen until she put it on her wrist.

"I really ought to be getting home soon". She said. With that, the hologram watch transported her to a place she recognised as her garden but it looked different. The shed was gone and there was a large oak tree where she remembered planting a small sapling in her real time life 100 years ago. There was a glass tree house on top and with one tap of her watch she transported herself up to the top, alongside lots of plants and a metal table and chairs.

She took this opportunity to play around with this watch and discovered an app called "My Pet". It told her to choose her own hologram pet according to how you're feeling that day. The hologram pet looks after you and itself. She could choose from a hamster, cat, dog, monkey, horse, koala bear, snake!

She thought a monkey would be the best company as she was starting to feel home sick. She clicked and waited as a hologram monkey popped up next to her and awaited her instruction.

"How can I help you? The monkey asked.

"I don't know how you can help. I feel far away from home. I'm scared and tired and worried"

With that the monkey's ears and nose started glowing. It reached its arms out and gave her a big hug that made her feel warm and comforted. Then it led her over to the window and there was the hot air balloon, ready and waiting to collect her again. She closed her eyes and transported herself out of the treehouse and into the basket of the hot air balloon. Without waiting for the question, Kathleen said "backwards. I want to go back home". And with a wave goodbye to her hologram pet, she was off, the watch disappearing from her wrist as she travelled backwards through time.

The next thing she knew, she was opening the door to her beloved shed, her sanctuary. She felt tired, as if she'd just woken up from a dream. She walked over to the chair, where she had been sitting when she first heard the hissing sound of the time-travelling hot air balloon. Her open book was still there on the side. The familiar smell of wood and damp and the sound of her brother playing outside reassured her that she was finally home.

She took a deep breath in and allowed herself to relax back into her chair. Something on the window ledge caught her eye and she looked over to see 3 small toy figures that hadn't been there before, a small hot air balloon model, an old steam train and a shiny silver robot. She couldn't quite remember why, but a vague sense of recognition and memory of adventure lingered in her mind.

She suddenly had the feeling that she was living in a world of endless possibilities. A world where her imagination held the key to being able to do

whatever and go wherever she wanted. But for now, she was just happy to be home.