

**DEJA VU**

Written by

Richard F. Russell

Wordmstr007@gmail.com  
910-285-3321  
Copyright 2017

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

DARRIN, 30, strong, handsome, daring, the man you want to guard your back, slaps down Velcro straps on high-tech hiking boots.

He's on a bench in a small room, the walls lined with lockers. He wears a slick, form-fitting, silver uniform, something from a superhero convention.

DARRIN

What to you think, AR 15s?

At the end of the bench, MEREDITH, 30, pretty, athletic, confident as hell, fixes her own boots.

MEREDITH

No one is sending you with a rifle.

DARRIN

We need a way to defend ourselves.

MEREDITH

No footprint, remember? In and out, we alter nothing.

He stands and pulls a jacket and silver gloves from his locker.

DARRIN

And a jacket? It's July for chrissakes.

She grabs her own jacket and gloves.

MEREDITH

Can't you think of something else to talk about?

DARRIN

If I don't talk, I'll think about this mission, and if I think about this mission, I'll crap my pants.

MEREDITH

Don't be a baby.

They head for the door.

KARN (V.O.)

Mission parameters are absolute.

INT. TIME LAUNCH CHAMBER - DAY

No windows, one wall nothing but a huge quivering screen. On the other side of the room is a capsule, just big enough for two people. Stainless steel with no windows, it looks like a bullet.

Standing next to the capsule are Meredith and Darren, in jackets and gloves. Alongside stands KARN, 50, in lab coat and glasses, armed with a tablet computer.

KARN

You have exactly one hour. The vehicle will return automatically, so don't get caught outside.

DARRIN

Don't we have some kind of failsafe code?

KARN

The delay protocol extends mission return by five minutes. It can be repeated twice. After that, the vehicle returns whether you're on board or not.

DARRIN

See, was that so hard?

INT. CAPSULE - DAY

Darrin and Meredith sit one behind the other, crammed inside the small, windowless vehicle. Strapped into seats.

MEREDITH

You do know this is a scientific expedition, right?

DARRIN

I know it's some kind of wild goose chase. Why the hell would they send us back a hundred thousand years?

MEREDITH

A hundred and ten thousand, and we're going to gather data you can't get from ice cores.

WARREN

What if we run into a woolly mammoth?

Sudden acceleration flattens them against the seats.

WARREN (V.O.)  
What the hell.

EXT. LONG ISLAND NY - DAY

Dark clouds scud across the sky. Snow whips past Darrin and Meredith as they stand beside the capsule. Ahead of them is an asphalt road. No cars pass. In the distance are a number of houses.

WARREN  
Somebody screwed up.

MEREDITH  
The computer doesn't make mistakes.

WARREN  
If you look close, you can see  
Manhattan. I'm kinda certain the  
city didn't exist a hundred  
thousand years ago.

MEREDITH  
It's cold. It shouldn't be cold in  
July.

WARREN  
Because they screwed up.

MEREDITH  
Wait, where is the empire state  
building?

WARRIN  
It's right...

He frowns.

WARRIN (CONT'D)  
Not there.

MEREDITH  
And there's something wrong with  
the Chrysler building too. But I'm  
not sure what.

WARRIN  
Shit. We slipped through a hole.  
We're in some hyper-parallel  
universe.

MEREDITH

The computer controls for that.  
This is earth one hundred and ten  
thousand years ago.

WARRIN

Bullshit.

She walks toward the houses.

MEREDITH

Come on. We have an hour.

He follows.

WARRIN

And ten minutes.

EXT. ASPHALT ROAD - DAY

Meredith and Warrin stand in the middle of the road. Nothing  
moves. Not even a bird crosses the sky.

MEREDITH

This is weird.

WARRIN

And colder than...Jesus, where is  
everyone?

MEREDITH

I don't understand.

WARRIN

Even in a parallel universe there  
should be people.

MEREDITH

And animals.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM -- DAY

Warren flips switches on the wall. Nothing works. Meredith  
enters from another room.

WARREN

No power.

MEREDITH

No food or water or clothes or  
anything.

WARREN  
I bet they're all like this.  
Abandoned.

MEREDITH  
But why?

WARREN  
Parallel universe.

MEREDITH  
It's time to go.

EXT. ASPHALT ROAD - DAY

Darker, snowier, Warren and Meredith stand in the road.

MEREDITH  
Street signs.

WARREN  
What?

MEREDITH  
The street signs are in English.

WARREN  
So?

MEREDITH  
We're over a hundred thousand years  
in the past, and the signs are in  
English. There were no written  
languages that far back.

WARREN  
Obviously, the experts are wrong.  
Unless we're in a-

MEREDITH  
With English, right.

WARREN  
What's that?

In the distance, there appears to be a vehicle running  
through the heavier snow.

MEREDITH  
Some kind of car. But we don't  
have time. Our hour is almost up.

WARREN

We have the extra ten minutes.

MEREDITH

We're not supposed to use the protocol.

WARREN

Don't you want to know what this is all about?

MEREDITH

The squints back home will figure it out. Besides, interaction is strictly forbidden.

WARREN

Go start the protocol. I'll wait.

MEREDITH

I can't stop it once it starts.

WARREN

Go.

Meredith starts for the capsule. Warren raises a hand at the vehicle.

What approaches Warren is a pickup of sorts. It resembles an ordinary truck, but the lights are configured differently, and the top is all glass.

The driver is on the wrong side. It stops in front of Warren. Through the glass, Warren can see two MEN. One MAN climbs out. He's dressed in furs.

WARREN (CONT'D)

Hello.

MAN

Halo.

WARREN

My name is Warren. What happened to all the people?

The Man cocks his head as if he doesn't quite understand.

WARREN (CONT'D)

Others, where are the others?

MAN

Gon. All gon.

WARREN  
Why?

MAN  
Ise.

WARREN  
Ice?

MAN  
Ise commmin.

MEREDITH (O.S.)  
Warren!

Warren waves at Meredith.

WARREN  
What year is it?

MAN  
Wot?

WARREN  
Year, year, time.

MAN  
Ah, ano. Is tre one for sevin.

WARREN  
Three one four seven?

The Man nods.

MEREDITH (O.S.)  
IT'S TIME!

Warren turns from the Man and runs for the time vehicle. He watches Meredith climb in and strap down.

WARREN  
I'm coming!

As he nears, the top of the cylinder slides closed.

WARREN (CONT'D)  
NOOOOOOO!

He launches himself at the cylinder even as it disappears. He lands on the ground and rolls over. He's been left behind.

He SCREAMS!

IINT. TIME LAUNCH CHAMBER - DAY

Meredith scrambles out of the cylinder.

MEREDITH

I have to go back.

Karn plugs a cable into the cylinder.

KARN

You can't.

MEREDITH

Of course, I can. Same mission parameters. I'll grab Warren and come right back.

KARN

I won't bore you with the physics, but the hole you used was a one-time opportunity. We can't use the same parameters.

MEREDITH

Then, find another hole. We can't leave him back there.

As the cylinder downloads its data, a camera picture of the road and skyline appears on a large screen.

KARN

My god, are you seeing this?

Meredith grabs Karn and turns him to face her.

MEREDITH

Warren is back there. We have to save him!

KARN

We can't. It's that simple. We can't!

They stare at each other before she releases him. He turns back to the screen as the camera zooms in on the skyline.

KARN (CONT'D)

Manhattan?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Big table, filled with scientists in white coats, including Meredith. At the end, Karn points at a big screen showing the camera footage from the cylinder.

KARN

As near as we can reason, this civilization had reached a high level of sophistication and built a city much like what we know today. There are significant differences, but in many respects it's a clone.

SCIENTIST

I don't get it.

KARN

It appears they built buildings and homes like ours, homes that were erased by a hundred thousand year ice age.

SCIENTIST

That's crazy.

KARN

Not when you think about it. Why wouldn't intelligent beings reach the same level of sophistication? Build the same things? Think of it as some sort of retained common memory.

SCIENTIST

You're making this up so you'll get more funding.

MEREDITH

I was there. It's not made up.

KARN

And then, there's this.

Karn produces a clay pot and places it on the table.

KARN (CONT'D)

This was recovered from a mine in Africa. Dating makes it over a hundred thousand years old.

Karn pulls off the lid and reaches inside.

KARN (CONT'D)

But this dates from now.

He brings out a soiled silver glove and lays it on the table.

MEREDITH

Oh my god.

FADE OUT