THE TIME MACHINE

By

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INT. SCIENCE LAB - DAY

Raymond Elliot, science reporter, is holding a microphone. Standing next to him is Fielding Sturdley, inventor wearing a white lab coat.

RAYMOND
Welcome to the “World of Science Report. I’m Raymond Elliott reporting on the world of science. Tonight’s report introduces you to a man who has invented a time machine. His name is Fielding Sturdley. Is that true, sir?

STURDLEY
Yes. It’s true. My name is Fielding Sturdley.

RAYMOND
And you, sir, have invented a time machine?

STURDLEY
Yes, that’s also true. I have invented a time machine.

RAYMOND
How long have you been working on this amazing new invention? It is safe to call it amazing?

STURDLEY
Well, yes, it’s fairly amazing.

RAYMOND
And how long have you been working on this amazing new invention?

STURDLEY
I have been working on this amazing new invention for a long time.

RAYMOND
Precisely how long, sir?

STURDLEY
Well I don’t know. I don’t have any clocks in my house so I really don’t worry about time that much.
RAYMOND
Still it’s a very amazing machine. Think of all of the great events in history we could witness. The great historical figures we could meet and interview.

STURDLEY
Well I’m sorry. That’s not possible with this particular time machine because my time machine only goes forward. It cannot go back.

RAYMOND
Oh, well that does raise some issues. If a passenger were to volunteer to be a traveler in your machine and went into the future, how would he be able to return?

STURDLEY
We haven’t quite figured that out yet. That might be why we haven’t gotten many volunteers.

RAYMOND
I see. Still future cures in medicine, future civilizations, the evolution of our planet -- it is still amazing.

STURDLEY
Yes, we can see future cures in medicine, future civilizations, the evolution of our planet. Amazing is the precise word for it, yes.

RAYMOND
Approximately how far into the future can you send someone, Dr. Sturdley?

STURDLEY
It’s not approximately. We can pinpoint exactly the time we go into the future.

RAYMOND
Exactly how far into the future do you go, Doctor?
STURDLEY
Two seconds.

RAYMOND
Two seconds?

STURDLEY
Yes, that is correct. My time machine, which I have invented, can send a passenger two seconds into the future.

RAYMOND
Two seconds. Well, Doctor that is amazing. Even if somewhat less amazing than I previously thought. But it is a breakthrough of historic proportions.

STURDLEY
No, we only go into the future.

RAYMOND
Of course. What practical functions do you see for this invention, Doctor?

STURDLEY
At the present time, none.

RAYMOND
Do you see any other use you could put it to?

STURDLEY
Well think of the breakthroughs in medicine, you can see in the future, future civilizations ---

RAYMOND
Yes, of course. This is a great breakthrough. Well you don’t have to be a rocket scientist to figure that out.

STURDLEY
Actually being a rocket scientist would help. I have to admit.

RAYMOND
Certainly. Are there any risks involved with time travel, Doctor?
STURDLEY
Although it is a great temptation when going into the future, a traveler should remember not to interfere with the civilization that he finds. This is known as the first rule of time travel. So far it’s the only rule of time travel but I’m sure we’ll come up with others.

RAYMOND
Can you now show us the amazing time machine invention?

STURDLEY
Yes, I’ll show this amazing invention. You’re sitting on it.

RAYMOND
This is it? Why it looks like an ordinary chair?

STURDLEY
Thank you.

RAYMOND
I can’t tell it from any other chair.

STURDLEY
We did that so that it wouldn’t give a fright to our friends in the future.

RAYMOND
I see. Doctor, have you received a patent yet on this invention?

STURDLEY
A patent? What’s that?

RAYMOND
A patent. A legal designation that you are the time machine’s inventor? It entitles you to future royalties and payments for the invention?

STURDLEY
Really? What a good idea. I’ll have to have the research department look into that.
RAYMOND
Research it you mean?

STURDLEY
Yes, I guess you could say that.

RAYMOND
How have you tested the time machine, Doctor?

STURDLEY
By using it.

RAYMOND
So you have yourself traveled into the future?

STURDLEY
No, we still use inanimate objects for that. Don’t want to put any lives at stake foolishly.

RAYMOND
Can we, along with our viewers in the public audience, witness firsthand, or secondhand for the viewers in the public audience, a demonstration of this slightly amazing time machine?

STURDLEY
Yes, of course. I thought that was the whole point.

RAYMOND
Yes.

STURDLEY
Well it wouldn’t do for you to just interview without seeing the machine in action. In fact, it’d be rather silly.

RAYMOND
Yes, Doctor. Let’s see the machine in action.

Doctor puts a funny object on it (one that doesn’t move -- chia pet, bowling ball, etc.)

RAYMOND (cont’d)
What is your background in physics? Your scientific credentials?
STURDLEY
None. I was in the used aluminum game.

RAYMOND
Oh.

STURDLEY
Not new aluminum. We didn’t touch that. Strictly used aluminum. Navy surplus

RAYMOND
And now we are ready to see the machine in action.

STURDLEY
We will perform it on this authentic 1978 Reggie Jackson action figure.

RAYMOND
Yes. I know you and our audience are eagerly anticipating this historic, or dare if say, futuristic, event.

STURDLEY
Wait for it. Okay, that’s it.

RAYMOND
Well, Doctor, I don’t see any difference.

STURDLEY
Remember, it’s just two seconds. Remember this action figure is experiencing everything two seconds before we are.

RAYMOND
But Doctor we still see the doll --

STURDLEY
Action figure.

RAYMOND
Action figure -- in front of us and it never disappears.
STURDLEY
That’s a common misconception among those not familiar with the time travel game. That’s the residue-effect whereby the object projected into the future leaves a residual image.

RAYMOND
And how long does the image last, Doctor?

STURDLEY
Usually about two seconds.

RAYMOND
Oh, I see. That explains it then. Doctor, is there any scientific way we can verify that you’ve, in fact, broken the time barrier?

STURDLEY
Well if you’d wait a couple of seconds.

RAYMOND
Is there any other way, Doctor?

STURDLEY
I don’t know. I don’t suppose you’d take my word for it?

RAYMOND
I’m sorry, Doctor. We’re out of time

STURDLEY
Do you need two seconds? I could give them to you. Theoretically the show could go on forever.

RAYMOND
It feels like it already has. That’s all tonight for the World of Science Report. Be sure to join us next week on the World of Science Report, when we’ll meet a good Samaritan who helps the underprivileged by secretly rotating their tires. This is Raymond Elliot.

FADE OUT.