

Latest and greatest:

Numerous test don't notice error

After repetition, layers build up like glass

Transparent and unnoticeable at first, but after layers build up. Shifting action happens to sent back in time and shifted to a different frequency of existence.

After trials, find out that we are ghosts. That is the early in story revelation. The reveal is that the time travelers are ghosts.

Instead of trying to hide Time Shifting or make it a turning point three quarters of the way into the story, lets open with it instead.

Bam!

Time shifting exists. No one sees fault in it.

Glass is transparent. The faint color of glass is often imperceptible when looking at just one pane. But as glass is layered, that color appears stronger and darker. The visibility through the glass is obscured. I believe my glass is stacking up and I fear for what is next

Weathered face scientist man trying to figure this out at the same time.

The weather face guy is oddly tan. He is a literal world explorer. Develops shifting so that you must physically be present somewhere in the world. There are a ton of people commending this man for his work that has brought us back to embrace and appreciate our existence and physical aspects of the world.

The weathered face guy is not as pale as everyone else. From the beginning make this guy seem like the oddball who will probably be the villain.

Riff on Indiana Jones. It belongs in a museum.

Time shifting exists and no realizes the faults in it at first. It's like a beta version of a product being released to the public like Google Glass. The moment all the early-adopters have been waiting for. A new product release of a time shifter. It is not a government project. It's in private industry. What are the ramifications of it? It's not seen as physical travel. It's marketed as a high tech VR vacation. Time Shifter! It needs a cooler product name. It needs a name like something someone working months on a product would come up with. Maybe the creators can market it in a certain way. The corporation creating the device is a character in the story as it is written. This is the core of the story.

People of the future are unaware of the possible issues. People in the future are not very familiar with ghosts. Ghosts to them are like Bigfoot and Unicorns are to us now: mildly entertaining and fanciful but clearly mythical and not based in any kind of fact. Ghosts

are almost more obscure, like the mythical Leshi of Slavic Mythology or the Padfoot of English lore. Ghosts are fanciful and silly to most people over the age of 10. In the future, obviously as this time shifter becomes popular, people frequent the same times and places in history. They go to days of independence for various nations. Unveiling of famous wonders of the world and all the most historical moments you learn about as a child, including future ones which have not yet happened that I will make up and include here.

At some point a couple realizes that the people of the past are seeing ghosts in many of these more popular locations in history and in time. Make them seem like maybe they could be the protagonists of the story. They put it together that the layering up of time shifting creates a blurry image of the shifter in the past, therefore making people think that something ghost-like being there. So while plenty of people for years have thought that ghosts are from the past, they are in fact from the future.

The couple that realizes this decides to keep this a secret and believes to almost a level of religious fanaticism than then can transcend time and end up in the past. They adore a specific moment in time and continue to return to it in hope of ending up there. (Maybe it's some place like Mt. Vesuvius (but be vague about the exact location if I go that direction.) I could describe the place to be similar to Pompeii but don't outright say it yet. Or somewhere just before another disaster of epic proportions happened.

Meanwhile, the tan old scientist also realizes this fault through his own shifting use to an ancient piece of time in his ancestor's happy life before the creation of computers and technology, etc. But as much as he loves that moment and his ancient family he realizes he must stop the device.

The couple still trying to get into the past as older man realizes what is going on. He is trying to work in a failsafe in the system at the end as the couple continues to rapidly revisiting the same exact moment in time. The layers are building and the pressure is getting greater and greater. Finally the world of metaphorical glass layers seems to crumble around them. And they seem to be in this gray haze, stuck between our time and the moment in the past. The old man scientist seems like he has won and he is happy. Then the glass box around them crashes and there is a quiet moment when they are staring at locals and the locals catch their attention. They have traveled into the past. It seems they have made it into the past. Then the disaster happens, mt. Vesuvius explodes and turns everyone to ash in Pompeii in order to correct the error in time and space.

The scientist is dumbfounded. He knew of Pompeii but he thought that they had dates wrong. They were there well before the volcanic eruption. Time seems to have adjusted the events to cover its tracks. This was a sign to him that time shifting would have to end until a way of preventing the travel can be set up.

The final part of the story is the old man scientist time shifting back one last time to see his ancestor's peaceful life in a quieter and slower world. He slowly kneels down and then slouches onto his on legs and cries.

The end

Side notes- this could work as a short story (<5000) words but I am not going to limit it if it takes on a life greater than that as I write.