



THE MAGIC CLOCK

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James Garcia was born in the year 1922 to Julia Williams and Jose Garcia. She, a young bright housewife who found various ways of keeping her family fascinated with the simple world around them. He, a Mexican farmer turned small business owner who made a modest living delivering fresh meats to the neighboring communities. James lived with his family in an old decrepit farmhouse in Ramona, California that his father had bought at

auction. With the help of his extended family from Los Angeles, they helped refurbish the small two bedroom dwelling into a nice three bedroom home for young James. Two years later, James had a little sister named Maria Isabella - they called her Belle for short.

One spring, his mother was walking through an antique shop during an Easter break vacation on California's Central coast. She was looking for something to calm her son as he was upset that his father could not make it out with them as he was shorthanded at work. As she pushed Belle in her stroller she bumped a small table with several knick-knacks. A small metallic clock tipped and almost crashed to the ground had she not caught it. It had 4 brass rings that circled around its dial meeting at the top and the bottom sitting on an aqua colored stone. On the stone base was a metal plate that had the word *TEMPO SCADUTO* inscribed on it.

At that moment, the clock began to chime indicating the 11 o'clock hour. Seeing that the instrument had caught James's attention, she inquired about the item and purchased it along with a dirty rag doll that Belle would not let go. \$9 later and some ice cream from the store's freezer sealed the deal.

The clock found a resting place among James's other favorite possessions like his baseball glove, favorite toy police car and jacks. Its chime had soothed James and he grew to love it. But something peculiar happened during James's childhood that would change his life forever. By the age of 6, James found that he had a special ability though he didn't know how to describe it at the time nor did he know that the clock had anything to do with it. While at a small carnival near his home town, he began to cry violently because his father had said it was time to go. He did not want to leave this magical place. He wanted to stay in the moment of joy and fun and sweet smelling

goodness. All he knew was that this place, this moment in time was made of pure joy. He threw himself on the ground and didn't mind that the other carnival goers were watching him, he had to stay just a little bit longer.

In a moment between screams and cries, James realized that the only sound he could hear was his own sobs and heavy breathing. He opened his watery eyes and sat up. Everything around him was frozen. His father, just a few feet away, looked at him as though he was a statue. His mother was in the middle of running her hands through Belle's long brown hair. The carnival sounds were all but gone. Though the smells of popcorn and cotton candy lingered, the people were completely still. The rides frozen in time.

After a few minutes of complete confusion, James began to cry as he hugged his family. Still they remained in the same position no matter

how tight he squeezed or how loudly he cried. It was only after he had cried himself to sleep that things returned to normal. He had fallen asleep holding his father's hand. His father had picked him up and placed him in his company carriage. When he awoke, he was in his bed surrounded by his baseball cards and toys. As he had breakfast with his family, he looked around to see if anyone had a clue. Nobody acted any different so he decided that he had simply dreamt the experience - all was right. But the experience would only be the first of many.

It took James a few years to understand what was going on. He realized that at the height of his emotions, James could do something that he couldn't explain. He decided not to tell anyone for who would believe him. *James could stop time.* At first he didn't know how he did it. Eventually, he figured out that if he closed his eyes and focused all thought on that moment, the world around him

acme to a halt. Stopping time was one thing. Restarting time, that was another story.

Once, at age 14 he stopped time to look at a classmate who happened to catch his eye. After what seemed to be an hour, he realized he had stopped time and needed to rejoin the present time. It was only after a dozen episodes of stopping time that James found out the rules of this power. It was true that if he stopped time, the world would sit still in the same state with one exception. Time would stop and everything in motion would freeze. He himself, would continue to experience time regardless of stopping the clock of the world. He would grow hungry or even sleepy if he stopped time for too long and after a while he started to wonder if what he was able to do would bring him misfortune in the future.