

The family secret

Everyone was dancing and having a good time – except for me. Why? Because I didn't have a girlfriend. I always seemed to be the only boy in the world without a girlfriend on New Year's Eve. Life was horrible.

I stood in the door and watched everyone. Kit Kat was smiling at a good-looking boy. My parents were dancing. My best friend, Jay, was telling jokes.

Then I saw the girl of my dreams. She was standing across the room. She had dark hair, dark eyes and a big smile. Her eyes met mine. She waved and my heart jumped. Was this my lucky day? I smiled ... and then the boy behind me walked over to her. It was the story of my life.

So I danced with Polly. She was a bit crazy and she was a terrible dancer. I left to get some food as soon as I could.

'It's almost midnight!' Jay shouted over the music and he pulled me back into the room. Jay never looks where he's going and he walked into a table. 'Sorry!' he shouted. Glasses fell on the floor and food went over everyone.

People were shouting, 'Ten ... nine ... eight ...' It was almost time for the midnight kiss. I looked round and there was Polly next to me. Her eyes were big and she was smiling and waiting. Did I want to kiss her? I wasn't sure.

'Seven ... six ... five ... four ...' Polly lifted her face.

'Three ... two ... one ...' She closed her eyes. I moved towards her. And I shook her hand.

'Happy New Year!' I said loudly. She opened her eyes. She looked sad but not surprised. All around us people were kissing. I felt stupid.

'Dad wants to see you!' Kit Kat shouted as she jumped on my bed the next morning. I was feeling terrible.

Dad was standing by his desk. He looked very serious. Dad was always laughing and joking but that morning he just said, 'Tim, please shut the door and sit down. I've got something important to tell you.'

I sat down. 'It's probably another joke,' I thought.

'This is a strange moment for me,' he said and looked out of the window. He seemed a bit uncomfortable. 'I had the same moment with my dad. After that, my life was never the same again.'

'OK,' I smiled and waited for the joke.

Dad finally looked at me. 'Tim, my son, our family has a secret,' he stopped. Then he said, 'All the men in this family can travel in time.'

I looked at him. 'What?'

Dad started speaking more quickly now. 'We can go back to a time in the past. And we can do things again differently. Only in our own lives, of course.'

My dad, as I said before, is a bit strange. He's a cool dad, but he has some unusual ideas. This was one of the craziest.

'If it's true ...' I said

'It *is* true!' Dad said.

'If it's true ...' I said again. 'Then how do we do it?'

Dad laughed. 'Oh, that's easy!' he said. 'You go into a small dark place, like a cupboard or a toilet. Then you clench your fists and close your eyes. You think about where you want to go and open your eyes again. And there you are!'

'OK,' I said. 'I'm going to go and stand in a dark cupboard and clench my fists. But when I come back, you'll be in big trouble!'