

Arizona Fletch

PART I: THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST ALLOSAUR

PROLOGUE

“Arthur Rutherford Fletch the Fourth!” Mrs. Jane Fletch screamed out the back door of her house.

“Gees, I hate it when she uses my full name. It sounds so, so stupid!” Arthur Rutherford Fletch thought to himself. “Yah Mom?” he answered to his mom.

“Did you trudge all this dirt up the stairs?!” she yelled.

“It’s not dirt, mom! It’s artifacts!”

“Artifacts?! If you want any artifacts, try digging through your room, *not* the garden! You get your little behind in here and clean it and the “artifacts” up!”

“Ok, mom.” Arthur Rutherford Fletch answered reluctantly as he marched back inside the house. As he swept up the dirt, he noticed one especially large dirt clod that was bigger and squarer than all the rest. He picked it up and brushed all the dirt off it. He found a little box. “Mom?”

“What, honey? Did you finish that sweeping yet?”

“No, but I found this and, and...,” Arthur Rutherford Fletch paused. “What is it?” he asked.

“What is what?” his mom asked, as she walked into the front hall.

“This box thingy. What is it?”

“Oh that’s just a piece of junk, honey. Throw it away and get back to work.”

CHAPTER I

But Arthur Rutherford Fletch never threw the box away. He was a very inquisitive boy and the box, shall we say, 'intrigued' him. He studied it for fifteen years, but could never find out of what origin it was. As he was working for his employer, Mr. Worthright, his phone rang.

"Yah?" he said into the receiver.

"Yo, Fletch," his friend Joe said, "Yo. Ya know the team an' me was working on the drains back at your old house. Well, we were diggin' the backyard up an' we found this box kind o' thing an' so we wanted ya to come over an' check it out."

"How big is this, this box? Is there any, anything on it?" Arthur Rutherford Fletch said in his excitement.

"Well, it's about a foot-by-foot box an' it's got some strange pictures on it."

"What *kind* of pictures does it have on it?" Arthur Rutherford Fletch demanded.

"Let me see 'ere, Fletch. Just hold your horses. Ok, here, it's got a picture of a guy with four heads; a man's, a lion's, an eagle's, an' a goat's. It's also got a thrown that's really bright when you hold it in the sun an' a cross. Yah, that's all. Wait, no, it's got this black knob thing, kinda like a button."

"Ok, don't touch *anything*! I should be there in half an hour; if not, just wait for me."

"Ok, Fletch. Talk to ya later."

When Arthur Rutherford Fletch got to the house, he saw Joe waiting for him on the front porch with the box.

"Yo, Fletch." he said.

"Lemme see the box." Arthur Rutherford Fletch demanded.

"Ok?" Joe said inquisitively, handing him the box. "Ok, gotta go. Bye." Arthur Rutherford Fletch said.

“But, but aren’t you gonna let me see what’s in da box?” Joe asked, surprised that Arthur Rutherford Fletch was leaving so suddenly.

“No. Maybe later, but not now. Bye.” and Arthur Rutherford Fletch left without another word.

As he was driving back to his house, Arthur Rutherford Fletch looked at his to-do list. He saw immediately, *CHANGE NAME!!!* As he was passing by the courthouse, he decided to do so. An hour later, he walked out of the courtroom, bearing his new name, Arizona Fletch.

When he got home, Arizona immediately went to his office. As he sat down, he lifted a vase down from one of the many bookshelves that lined his wall, and then threw it to the ground. Arizona shifted the shattered pieces and removed a key from among them. Not bothering to clean up the mess, he went straight to his desk. After unhooking a cupboard, he pulled open a drawer inside the cupboard and unlocked a secret compartment that was concealed in the back of the drawer. He reached in and pulled out a small box, the same box that he had found fifteen years before. Reaching down to the floor, he lifted up the box that Joe had given him. “Yup.” He thought. The boxes were the exact same, besides the first one being smaller. He pushed the black knob that was on the bigger box and the top opened with a creak and a brilliant light came issuing out from it. Rising into the air out of the box amidst steam and the dazzling light, came an object that Arizona could not describe very well later. It was a strange shape appearing to have innumerable sides. From whatever angle he looked at it, there appeared to Fletch to be more and more sides. There was a strange opening, square shaped with tiny pictures next to it; a man with four heads and wings, a thrown, and a cross. Each picture had an arrow next to it pointing down onto side of the box, so that one side did not have a picture or an arrow next to it. Then an idea came to Arizona: he took his smaller box and, lining up the pictures, put it in the opening. It fit perfectly.

Suddenly, the boxes rattled and shook together and then simultaneously exploded, leaving no trace of their ever existing. Lying in their place, though, was a piece of parchment, folded and obviously very old.

Arizona picked up the paper, unfolded it, and looked to see what it said. He noticed that it was an written map, not one that used pictures, excepting that there was a picture in each of the four corners of the parchment: a Tree, wonderfully drawn, a great Serpent, a piece of Fruit which Arizona did not recognize as any fruit *he* had ever eaten, and a Man and a Woman without clothing.

“Okay, that last one is a really weird picture.” Arizona said to himself. He also noticed up in the right hand corner, next to the picture of the Fruit, there was cursive writing. It said “The Map to the Lost Allosaur.”

After gazing over it a few times, Arizona realized that this map must lead to the location of an Allosaur, which is a great dinosaur, which was lost somewhere in time. It appeared that the maker of the map knew that the Allosaur was already fossilized, too. Arizona whirled around in his chair, grabbing the map and the phone as he did so. He ran toward the doorway but, in his excitement, he had forgotten that the phone was not wireless. As a result, he was yanked back away from the door, into his chair, and smashed into his desk, sending reports and paperwork flying everywhere.

“Great, great, great.” he moaned as he began to pick up paperwork. “Why do these things always happen to me? Now I have to sort and stack this junk all over again!”

Half an hour later, he collapsed in his chair and *carefully* picked up the phone again, without spinning. After dialing a number, he listened into the receiver for a while and was finally forced to leave a message.

“Hi, Joe. It’s Fletch and it’s about two-ish on Monday and I need you to meet me at the airport in an hour. I’m advising you to pack clothes for about two weeks. See ya then. Oh, and I changed my name to *Arizona Fletch* today, so call me by it when I meet you. Bye.”

Before he left, Arizona faxed Joe this message:

Joe-

If you didnt receive my phone message, I just wanted to let you know that I need to meet you down at the airport in an hour. Its about two oclock right now and this is extremely important. I ll see you there.

-Zone

Little did Arizona know that these two messages were unneeded.

When he got the airport, Arizona couldn’t find Joe anywhere, which is not surprising, knowing how busy today’s airports are. As he sat down in a chair to wait, he glanced over at the magazine rack and noticed the following magazine cover immediately:

Arizona Fletch’s New Museum Closing Already!

“What!?” he exclaimed, picking up the magazine. “What is this?” You see, Arizona was planning to open a museum after he quit his job at Worthright’s Laundromat. This museum would fully explain the scientific evidence for the Evolution of Man and other animals. It would also give a list of all the theories for modern time Evolution. What surprised him most was not the fact that it was being shut down, but the fact that he hadn’t even started to release the information that he was going to build the museum yet and someone already knew that it was going to be built!

“The only people I’ve told about my museum are Joe and Mr. Worthright. Unless they told someone, there is no way the news could have gotten out to the public!” Arizona said.

As he flipped to the page with the article, he noticed a lot of things about an unnamed scientist.

“I wonder who he could be.” he thought. *“But I don’t have enough time to read those. What is this about my museum closing?”*

Arizona also noticed another article that interested him. It was an article on a scientist who had come up with a way to turn an old form of pirates’ rum into gasoline. This scientist, whose name was Jim Cholday, had done some deep sea diving and had found an ancient pirate ship with many bottles of the alcoholic drink in it. Dr. Cholday had then taken one of the jugs down to his lab to analyze its contents. What he found was very surprising: the rum inside of that

bottle could be used as a very good kind of gasoline. After analyzing the rest of the bottles, Cholday...

Arizona didn't read the rest; he was too focused on reading the article about the closing of his museum. He flipped to the beginning page and began to read.

As he read the article, Arizona noticed that the same mysterious scientist was planning to shut down his museum.

"I wonder what this could mean?" he thought. *"Who is this guy and why does he want to shut me down?"*

Just as he was finishing the article, a man in a brown raincoat walked to the waiting chairs and sat down. The man was wearing dark sunglasses and a hat the same color of his coat. He looked over to Arizona and said,

"I wouldn't be reading that junk if I were you. It's all lies and just made up stories that make them popular."

"Whatever." Arizona thought as he got up and walked away. *"How would a bum like him know anything about science anyway?"*

Flying through the air, Arizona began to wonder about the stranger at the airport.

"Why did that guy want me to stop reading *Science Published*? What would have made him say out of the blue that its articles are junk? Why would he even be concerned about what I was reading?"

As he took one of the complimentary bags of peanuts, he noticed that the mystery man was on the same plane as himself.

"Weird." he thought. *"Why would a bum be going to Afghanistan?"*

Arizona picked up the map and began to study, taking careful notes as he did so. It didn't seem very long before "**We have now landed at the Afghanistan Airport. All passengers stopping here please exit through the door to your left.**" was heard throughout the plane.

"I guess that means me." Arizona thought. *"Hey wait. Why don't I watch where my mysterious friend goes, since he's exiting also."*

As Arizona had guessed, the stranger followed him to the Temple of Har-rananah. Arizona walked up to the carved figure of Har-rananah and began his search. The map claimed that he needed to find the secret button and press it. Arizona decided it would be best to do that after dark when no one would be around, but that he should find the button first. He found it just below one of its toes, secretly concealed by a toe ring carved into the statue. Since night would not fall for a long while, Arizona decided to go and buy some Afghanistanian clothes.

Several hours later he returned to the temple, not knowing that he was being followed. He walked up to the figure, pressed the button, and watched in amazement as floor beside him slid open until a three-foot by three-foot opening was produced. Arizona tied his rope to the one of statue's supporting pillars and lowered himself down into the hole. The instant his head was in, the doors closed back shut. The last thing Arizona saw was the figure of a man in a raincoat, laughing wickedly.

Arizona dangled at the end of his rope, wondering how long he would be able to hang there. He had no idea where he was or how high above the ground. So, using adventurers' instinct, he reached into his backpack and pulled out his flashlight. He turned it on and found out that he was looking right into the face of a skeleton! "Gaaah!" he yelled with a force so powerful his body swung back and forth making him smashed into the skeleton many times, causing it to break into 206 pieces. Pretty soon he was covered in cobwebs and bones. "Gross." he mumbled while brushing himself off. After getting as many of the bones off his clothes as he could, Arizona began to shine his flashlight around. He was in a pit sort of room, with skeletons hanging on the walls. "*This must have been a prison.*" he thought. He then looked down to see how far away the ground was. To his surprise, he saw that he was only a mere 12 inches from the floor! He let go of his rope, landing safely on the extremely dusty ground. He dusted himself off, and then pulled out the map to find out what to do next. The map told him that he needed to look around the room and find the stone beetles on the little stone shelf carved into the wall. He found and walked over to them. They looked somewhat like this:



He then looked to the map for further instructions. It said that he needed to sort the beetles so that the same signs were next to each other. He had to do this without waking the stone beetles, otherwise he would die. Arizona carefully picked up the beetles and placed them in the right order. Suddenly he heard a hissing sound. The beetles began to shake. Then ZAP! the beetles vanished and five lasers shot out of the holes where they had been. Arizona ducked down and the lasers disappeared as quickly as they had come. "Still got the old dodge-ball duck from 3rd grade recess." he said as he scooted through the door that had opened during the whole laser episode. He found himself in a small room with a large, silver box in one corner. The map said to open the door in the side of the box and go in. Inside there was a machine that looked like a computer. The map then said to enter these numbers into the keyboard:

3 18 5 1 20 9 15 14 - 0000

After doing that the map told him to close the door, which he did. Then the map told Arizona to press the button entitled "GO". Arizona pushed it. He heard a whir, a few dings, and a hissing sound. Suddenly the silver box disappeared, with Arizona Fletch still in it.

CHAPTER II

The silver box whisked along with Arizona Fletch still inside it. As he stood there, Arizona noticed a ghostly green glow coming from the walls of the box. Soon he noticed it beginning to slow down, and then stop. The door reopened and Arizona looked out. To his surprise he saw... nothing. The green glow coming from inside the box made a little break in the darkness, but the break was only about three feet in diameter, giving Arizona little space to move around without getting caught in complete darkness.

“Okay,” he thought, “this is weird. Where am I? And why is everything so black?”

He turned around to re-enter the box, when he heard a loud, bellowing voice say, **“Light!”** Suddenly the place where Arizona was standing filled with light. He looked down and noticed that he was enclosed by swirling water, but that he was breathing! He turned around to get back in the silver box, but it wasn't there!

“Oh great,” Arizona said out loud in an exaggeratedly irritated tone, “First the boxes with the map, then the secret passage, and now this. How on earth am I supposed to get home? I have a meeting to get to at 8:30! What time is it anyway? Oh great! My watch is broken! Okay, whoever did this, it's not funny anymore! Hello! Do you hear me? The joke is **over!** Stop this right...”

“Wait a minute, buddy; slow down there.” interrupted the voice Arizona had heard before. “I ordained this to happen to you, to get you to see straight, instead of just focusing on dinosaurs and meetings at eight-thirty (Arizona frowned at this) and things like broken watches. I did this so you would focus on me.”

“Whatever. Who are you anyway and why can't I see you?” Arizona responded, looking around.

“You can't see me because I'm...hmm...let's just say 'unseeable'. Although you can't see me, I can see you and I could see you six thousand years forward in time.”

“Oh, I see. You're the guy who came up with recording history and you've brought me back here so I can get some good evidence to wallop those Creationists in our next debate.”

“No, that is most definitely not why I brought you here. And I'm not human.”

“Well then who are you, Mr. Nobody?”

“I AM NOT MR. NOBODY! I AM GOD!”



Arizona woke up into darkness from what he thought was sleep. He was just about to stand up when instantly the “earth” filled with light. Arizona stood up and looked around. He still couldn’t see the person, or thing, from which the voice was coming. The Voice then spoke again, saying, **“Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”** And, suddenly, there it was, the firmament, or the space between the clouds and the ground.

“Oh, I see. It’s a prank those Creation scientists are playin’ on me. They’re trying to get me to believe their whole “God created the world” idea. Huh! Like that’s ever going to happen! And when in eternity are they going to let me back into the *real* world?” Arizona said.

“Oh, I did create the world,” the Voice responded. “and I’m doing it now (besides, even if it is a prank, look on the bright side, they’ve got the coolest “digital effects” ever, if I do say so myself. Ehem!). I also am going to let you go back into your time and world in... hmm... a week at least...”

“A WEEK!” interrupted Arizona. “I can’t wait a whole week. I’ve got meetings to go to, a museum to open, TV shows to do, interviews for staff at the museum. I’m too busy to wait a week!”

“I know all that, but no need to worry. You’ll be having too much fun to worry. Also, I know that you will be wondering what time and day it is; it is what you call three o’clock in the afternoon on what you call Tuesday the twenty-first of what you call January. I say *what you call*, because I have a different name for them.”

“Oh really?” said Arizona sarcastically. “And what do you call January and Tuesday? Also, who is the you I’m talking to? Where do you live? And what is the meaning of your taking me here for a week, smarty?”

“January and Tuesday are called different names in *Heaven* for my reasons, not yours. And as I said before, my purpose of taking you here is so that you will learn a lesson in trusting me before you perish in eternal fire! Furthermore, as I said yesterday *I AM GOD!*” The Voice said these last three words with such force that it knocked Arizona flat on his face, shaking.

“Y...y...yes,...s...sir, aye-aye, c...c...Cap’n, whatever you say, M...Mr. ...G...Go...God.” Arizona responded five minutes later, still shaking.



Arizona woke again, but not into darkness. This time the “earth” was completely filled with light. Arizona stood up and stretched. At that moment, The Voice spoke again, “ You slept in, Arthur Rutherford Fletch.”

“Yah, well who cares whether I sle... wait, how in eternity do you know my name?”

“I created you, that’s how; and right now I’m going to be making the land on this aqueous ball, so don’t be startled like you were yesterday. **“Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.”** And suddenly, there it was, land and Arizona was standing on it.

“Where in eternity did you get those digital effects?” asked Arizona, using the Voice’s idea from the day before.

“I was joking you know,” the Voice said. “This is the *real* deal, its *really* happening, and it’s *really* going to change your life. Anyway, let me get on with what I was saying. **“I call the dry land Earth and the waters I call Seas.”**”

“Wait, wait, wait before you go on, how in eternity is this experience going to change my life?” Arizona asked.

“I am going to make you a Christian.” the Voice said.

“You’re going to do what?!” Arizona exclaimed. **“Make me a Christian? Are you nuts? The whole “drag me to this place and keep me here for over a week just to teach me some dumb lesson” was a shocker, but this! you...you...wait a minute,** ha ha, hee hee hee, ha ha hee hee hee, you’re kiddin’ right? Ho ho yo hee ha hee hee he he hm m m m, sorry, but that was just to funny-hee-hee ha haa ha, whoops, here I go again; **HA HA HA HEE HEE HOO HOO HO HO HO, HMM M M hrrrmph,** oh, I am so sorry, I just can do that sometimes when someone cracks me up.”

“You through? Good, because now I can answer the questions you asked me in that whole laughing episode. ONE, as I said, I am going to make you a Christian. TWO, I am not nuts, because if I was, I’d be running around trying to get away from people from with nut crackers! THREE, I am not kidding, GOT IT?!”

Arizona got it so much he was knocked unconscious.



The next day, Arizona woke up out of his unconsciousness and looked around him. He noticed that on the ground there was grass and all around him plants were growing. *“Weird.”* he thought. He still could not see who, or what, the Voice was coming from. It was starting to get a little on his nerves.

“Who in eternity have I been talking to for the past three days?” he asked aloud. “Well, let me gather up my evidence: 1. I can’t see this guy who claims to be God. 2. He’s pretty loud. 3. He also claims to have brought me here to teach me a lesson. 4. This dude sounds like his voice is coming from the sky. 5. He keeps “creating the earth”, as he says. Well, with all my evidence, I must believe one of three things: either (1) the Creation scientists are playing a joke on me (and are using really cool digital effects), or (2) that this is just a dream, or (3) this is really happening. The only problem is deciding which one to go with...”

“Well, if I were you, I’d go with number three, because this *is* really happening.” the Voice said. “ By the way, I am now moving on to my work for today so hold on. **“Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth.”** And then, right then, as the Voice it, the sun popped up into the sky!

Arizona looked around; plants and grass surrounded him. About twenty yards away there was a stream. Since he hadn't taken a shower in days, he decided to go bathe in it. Throwing off his clothes, he did a jackknife, triple-flip, super-plexus cannonball into a dive. Landing with a huge splash, he leaped back out of the water, sucking in a huge gulp of the deliciously scented air before he shot off down the stream. As he swam, Arizona noticed that he was in a tropical paradise; trees that were just loaded with fruit, the grass, open sky, streams gushing along their paths. As he sat and admired, Arizona noticed that something was missing. Some familiar sound, a something that made the world feel right, something...

*"What's missing?" he thought. "I know it's familiar, it's a sound, a feeling...hmmm, what is it, what what what what **what?**"*

"How do you like my garden?" the Voice asked.

"Oh, I don't know. It's perfect but then again it's not. It's missing something, something I can't remember, something, something, something, what is it?"

"I know what it is," said the Voice. ", but I am not going to tell you. It's so evident, I'm going to let you think on it."

For the rest of the day Arizona did think on it; he thought about everything he could remember: cars, buildings, roads, towers. But as hard as he thought he could not think of what the Garden was missing. Later that night as he lay on the grass thinking, he looked up and right above he saw a something he'd never seen before: four or five stars (he couldn't tell which) bunched together in a group, closer than all the others but not completely next to each other. He didn't think much of it at first, but about ten minutes later he looked up and saw that the stars looked a little closer then they had before.

"That's strange." He thought. Then he sat up straight, thinking, "If those stars get too close they could have a collision and if that happens, then, then, the entire Milky Way might be thrown off and if that happens, earth would be thrown off balance, sending us careening into space, away from the sun!"

This thought made Arizona think so hard that almost suddenly, before he knew it, he was fast asleep.



When Arizona woke up, he noticed that he was lying next to the stream. Staring right in his face, were three fish, a crow, and a shark.

"Good morning." the animals said simultaneously. "What sort of creature are you?"

Arizona leaped up and back, yelling as he did so. The animals looked at each other and then back at Arizona.

"What'd you yell for?" they asked, giggling.

"Oh, well, I've never encountered talking animals before." he said.

“Oh, okay. We have never encountered your kind of creature either, that’s why we were wondering.”

After this, Arizona got up and walked away. The animals dived or flew back to their homes. As he walked, Arizona started to get hungry. He walked up to a tree, picked a piece of fruit and was just about to eat it when the Voice said,

“You really need that alarm-clock of yours, don’t you? You almost missed my entire work day.”

“ Um, well...I, uh, I figured out what was missing at least.” Arizona said.

“ And what was that?” the Voice asked.

“Animals! Duh! I don’t know why I didn’t think of them before.”

“Well, I made them today just to help you out.”

“You *what* them? Made them? Oh no, not this again! The animals *evolved*. OK? They evolved, were not created, but *evolv...*”

“Hold on;” the Voice interrupted. **“if they evolved, you’re saying that you slept for billions of years. Now we both know that not to be true, so they can’t have evolved. If they didn’t evolve, then they must have been... right, created!”**

Arizona was once again knocked out.



This time Arizona woke up, he was looking into the face of a lion.

“WAAAH!” he cried in fright. **“Don’t eat me! Please, I’m only a human who has a museum in who knows where now and I don’t want to die! Don’t eat me!”**

“Eat you?” the lion said. “I was just created five minutes ago and you’re saying that I’m going to *eat* you? All I did was come over to look at the other creatures that are being created by God and I give one look and you scream like a bald monkey that I’m going to *eat* you? Waaah ha ha hee hee ho ho ho who who who hoo hoo hrrrmph mph mprrmph! Sorry, it’s just, *you crack me up!*”

Arizona looked up. All around him creatures were baying, trumpeting, howling, neighing, screaming, purring, barking, and making all the other animal noises that there are.

“Silence!” said the Voice. **“I am now going to make my final and best creation and I need to work in silence.”**

About ten feet away from where Arizona was standing, the dust began to stir. Soon it took the shape of a man and began to fill with color. The bone and tissue of the body began to form and soon the body lay there, without life. The Voice then said,

“I shall now breathe life into the Man.”

Right above where the man was lying, the air began to move. Rustling and swirling, it leapt into the man's body, filling him with life. The man then moved. With a groan, he got up, facing away from Arizona. Arizona reached into his pocket and felt a strange rectangular object with what seemed like a button on top. Arizona pushed the button and almost instantly, the silver box surrounded him. Two seconds later he was whizzing away from the Garden.

CHAPTER III

“Noooooo!” Arizona yelled. “What did you do that for? I wanted to stay there, to see what happened. Why did you have to take me away right at the climax?”

“So, you were interested after all.” the Voice said. “I took you away from my Garden so that you could continue with your lesson and not dawdle there. Hold on tight, you are going forward in time.”

Arizona gripped the bar on the wall of the box, partly out of frustration and partly out of fear. As the box zoomed along, Arizona began to think.

“Wait a minute. If I can hear this Guy in this box while I’m not in the Garden, then it must not be digital effects. Weird...”



Several hours later, Arizona Fletch sat against the wall silver box. He was very bored.

“Man, I wish something would happen around here, for once.” Arizona complained. “I wonder where we’re landing next.”

At that moment, the silver box came to an abrupt halt, throwing Arizona against the opposite wall.

“Oww...” he said, picking himself up.

The door slid open and Arizona looked out. What he saw surprised him: a hill with a crowd of people surrounding it so that they could not see what the people were looking at.

“Uh... excuse me, umm... what’s goin’ on here?” Arizona asked an old man who was in the crowd.

“Do you not know? It is the crucifixion of the Messiah!”

“Messiah?” Arizona was confused.

“Don’t you even know about that? That man up there is the same Messiah which the prophet Isaiah foretold about!”

“Uh-huh. Yah, whatever; so that’s the Messiah. And let me guess: pretty soon the Tooth Fairy is going to come flying up to me and invite me to tea at three? Give me a break!” Arizona snapped at the man.

“You don’t believe me, then, man. Well, look for yourself upon the horrible sight.”

Arizona had not yet turned to see what the crowd was looking at and as he did, he gave out a little cry. Upon the hill, three crosses had been lowered into the ground. From them hung three men, which wasn’t what had surprised Arizona; crucifixion was the most common punishment for a capital crime in Ancient Rome. What *had* stunned him was the middle figure, a dark skinned man with nothing but a rag wrapped about his waist for clothing and a crown of long thorns jammed onto his head. His head was bowed, but as Arizona looked at Him, he raised it and stared deep into Arizona’s eyes. Arizona was surprised at what he saw in those eyes: instead of hate or anger, he saw love and compassion. Arizona was forced to tear his head away.

“Holy Smoke! Who in eternity is that?!” he gasped.

“It’s the Messiah like I just told ye, the Messiah of Isaiah’s prophesy.” the old man said.

Arizona reached down into his pocket, pressed “GO”, and whizzed away.

“That Guy was My son,” the Voice said. **“and He is the reason that *you’re* alive. He sees great hope in you, Arizona Fletch. Oh, and by the way, if I ever hear you speak that way about My Son again... do you see My point?”**

“Aye-aye, yes sir-ee, you got that Cap’n God sir, yo I am cool with that. Whatever you say, there, Cap’n.” Arizona got the point very well.



Arizona woke up from an uncomfortable sleep in the box. He hadn’t really explored the compartment that he was lying in much, so he looked around. Next to him were lying a couple of magazines, and above him was a red button that had stamped on it in big silver letters the word “COMPUTER”. Arizona was bored and more interested in the magazines than the button. He picked up the one that said *The History Channel* on the front of it. The main story in it was titled, **Missing Young Man from 1803 found Buried!** page 12.

“Hmm! that sounds interesting.” he said, flipping to the twelfth page. He began to read the article, which was this:

Missing Man from 1803 Found Buried Alive!

It is the year 1803. A young man walks down a path in a frightened pace. The bundle that is tucked carefully under his arm tingles a bit. As he jogs down the sidewalk with his head bent toward the ground, he doesn't notice the two pairs of eyes that are glaring at him from ten yards in front of him. Dark clouds cover the moon and it begins to rain, hard. Then the first lightning bolt strikes. The night gets colder. Thunder rolls across the sky. The man is getting closer to the eyes that are watching him from behind the building corner. Another lightning bolt streaks the sky, hitting a trashcan not twenty feet behind the man. The man begins to run. Suddenly right in his path leap two figures. They pounce on him and one stabs him with a knife. One of the figures grabs his bundle and the other throws him still breathing in to a pit, freshly dug, and buries him. As the two figures run off across the street, a lightning bolt strikes the package, causing it to explode, killing the two figures...

So goes the story of the young man named Michael Hobbes, killed on that fateful night in 1803. Everyone knew that it was just a ghost story to scare little children on Halloween. Everyone, that is, except one of our archeologists, Norton Klick. He dug back into the past to find the name of the town and when he did, he traveled to the ruins of the dark and dusty town of Arrowhead. He found the exact place in which Hobbes was murdered and dug, and dug, and dug until he found the body of a man. He took him back to his lab and through careful processing, he dated the body back to sometime in April of the year 1803, the exact same month and year that Michael Hobbes was killed. Through more scientific processing, he found that the body had first been stabbed with a knife made of iron and then was thrown carelessly into his earthly grave, still alive. This seems to fit perfectly with the story of Michael Hobbes and we believe...

"So the story is true!" Arizona said aloud. "My mom always used to tell me that story to make me go sleep. I never thought that it was true. Wait a minute..."

Arizona stood up and looked at the silver button. Then he remembered. This button opened a hatch that had a keyboard in it. He had entered some numbers into it when he had first entered the silver box. If only he could remember what they were...

"Wait! I don't need to remember the letters, 'cause I've got this map. Duh!" Arizona exclaimed, pulling a piece of parchment from out of the inside of his jacket. He unrolled the paper and looked at it. In the lower left hand corner was a number, the same number that Arizona had punched into the keyboard a few weeks ago, he guessed. The numbers were:

3 18 5 1 20 9 15 14 – 25 5 1 18, 4000

"HEY!" Arizona exclaimed. "If I match each of these numbers to a letter of the Alphabet, it might form a word. Now which number equals which letter... I know! I'll just try the famous A=1, B=2 and so on, code. Three equals C, eighteen equals...R, five equals E, one equals A, twenty equals T, nine equals I, wait a minute! this spells CREATION! Now onto the next word, twenty-five equals Y, five equals E again, one equals A again, eighteen equals R again, hey that spells the word YEAR. Now what is zero zero zero zero supposed to mean? **HEY! THIS SPELLS: CREATION- YEAR 4000! THE CREATIONISTS WOULD CALL THAT THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD!!!**"

Arizona was now very angry, because you remember, he was an Evolutionist. But now he had thought of something:

"Wait a minute here, if the coordinates that I entered in to The Machine (I guess that's what I'll call this silver prison) before I first started this whole adventure thing, spell something, than maybe there are some coordinates entered in the computer right now and maybe they spell something."

He stood up, turned around, and faced the "Computer Button." He pushed it and the hatch fell open. The coordinates that were entered into the computer at that time were these:

1 18 18 15 23 8 5 1 4 – 1 16 18 9 12 – 6 15 21 18 20 8 – 5 9 7 8 20 5 5 14 – 15 – 6 15 21 18

It took him a while, but Arizona finally figured out the coded numbers, which said: ARROWHEAD – APRIL EIGHTEEN O THREE.

“Oh brilliant,” Arizona said sarcastically. “now I’ve got to go save some dope’s life because he can’t save it himself. Well, this God person can put me in the time zone but He certainly can’t make get out of this box!”

At that moment, with Arizona crossing his arms, The Machine landed. The doors opened, but he didn’t even look outside. Suddenly, out of the wall came a huge boot that kicked Arizona in the rear and out of the “prison.”

“Owww...” Arizona groaned as he picked himself up out of the dust. “So this is Arrowhead, huh? Pretty dark and dusty... just like the magazine and my mom described it. Huh.”

The town of Arrowhead was exactly as Arizona had explained it: dark, dusty, and incredibly hot. Across the street, Arizona saw a figure pacing along the sidewalk with his head bent down. Arizona ran up to the corner of the building the person was walking past. As the man came to the corner, Arizona pulled him behind the building and placed his hand over the man’s mouth so that he couldn’t make a sound. He whispered into the guy’s ear, saying,

“I know who you are, Mr. Hobbes and if you will keep quiet, I’ll take my hand off your mouth. My name is Arizona Fletch. I’m from the future, which I’ll explain later, but I just want to let you know that there are two men around the opposite corner of this building here. Now, in a few minutes, a bolt of lightning is going to hit this trashcan, charging it with a huge amount of electricity. Now, can I have your socks?”

“Here you go, Mister... what did you say your name was?” Hobbes said.

“Fletch. Oh great! they’re made of wool. Now, there’s one thing that I need to know: is this building still in use?”

“No, they’re going to tear it down tomorrow.”

“Good, now if I just tie these socks together and tie this one end around the can handle... there... and the other end around the drainpipe... there! we’re set!”

“Set for what?”

“Just watch. The lightning bolt’s electrical charge is going to hit the trashcan, run through the sock, up the drainpipe, and will light the building on fire. Now, I know that the two men are going to freak out and run across the street. As the building lights on fire, I’ll throw my car keys (I’ll tell you what those are later) into the street. When the men run across the street, another bolt of is going to strike the keys and the men, and kill them both. Now let’s get behind this building. Hurry get back and press flat against the wall. Here we go.”

At that second, the bolt of lightning hit the trashcan and the electricity lit the building on fire. But instead of running across the street, *the men ran the opposite direction!* The burning building lit up the back of the shop that Arizona and Hobbes were leaning against. As the men turned back, cursing and swearing, one of them saw Hobbes and his newfound friend (friend because Arizona had just saved Hobbes’ life) and yelled to the other. The evil pair began to run towards the other two, Arizona told Hobbes:

“These men wanted to kill you, so they may want to still do that. Here, take one of my guns. You may need it.”

As he and his young friend faced their rivals, Arizona noticed that each of the men had pulled out a revolver.

“Uh-oh. It looks like we’re going to have a little bit of a gunfight.” he said, smiling.

In less than two seconds, four shots had been fired. Each of the men had been hit in the leg and Arizona was hit in the head. The last shot was aimed at Hobbes, but had missed. Arizona shot once more at one of the men and then everything went black.

When he finally woke up, Arizona’s head was throbbing. Sitting next to him was Michael Hobbes, reading a Bible.

“Where... where am I?” Arizona gasped.

“You are in my tent at my site in which I am digging up a colossal imprint of a skeleton of an unknown creature.” Hobbes said, putting down his book. “Now, lie down. Last night, you were shot in the head and, before you blacked out, you shot at and killed one of the men. I killed the other and carried you here. I had a few of my men check out the men and they found out their names: Eli Hamwood and John Mackrel. They also found out that these two men were planning to kill me, just like you said. Here, I won’t keep talking on and on: would you like a drink?”

“Yah, sure. Thanks. Umm...d...did you say tha...that you were digging up a...a...d...dinosaur imprint?”

“A what?”

“Oh, that’s right, that word hasn’t been invented yet. Anyway, does the impression have a huge tail and a long neck?”

“Yes, that’s exactly it! How did you know?”

“Well, as I said last night, I’m from the future and as it’s apparent that you do, I don’t believe in the God of the Bible. Anyway, I’m building a museum a couple hundred years forward in time and I have a lot of these dino, I mean, creatures in it, so I know exactly what you’re talking about. Well, I think that can get up now. Can I go see your animal imprint that you’re digging up?”

“Of course. Follow me.”

CHAPTER IV

A few minutes later, Arizona and Hobbes were standing together on a ridge above Hobbes' dig site. Below them lay a colossal imprint of an Allosaur fossil. It looked to Arizona as if the Allosaur had been fossilized and then taken by someone very carefully so that it left a clear impression in the ground, which was now hardened mud. Then the imprint was covered over through years and years of sand building up over it.

"Man I'm hot!" Arizona exclaimed, wiping his forehead with a handkerchief. "Where are we, besides in your dig site, what continent, country, and city are we in?"

"Right now, you are standing in the middle of the Sahara Desert, in Africa, twenty point five six three miles from the city of Adrar. The reason that we are not burning up right now is that I have had sixty-seven two hundred foot deep wells (with canopies and coverings so that there is no way that sand could get in them) dug all over my camp. Twice every week, three hundred gallons of water arrive here as a refill for the wells, along with enough food to last all of my men on reasonable rations for a week and three hundred gallons of gas. But all of them are such gluttons and they eat so much that I need trucks to come with more food two times a week. I also have set up the tents so that each of them has an air conditioner (which I designed myself) in it. Each of the tents also has a gas heater for the night when its gets cold and a small 'kitchen' with a small coffee maker, a gas cook stove, a few pots and pans, a table with two chairs, and four sets of silverware, plates, mugs, and cups. The tents also have two beds, each with a bedside table with a lamp and an alarm clock on top of it and with a small bookshelf/cupboard with a Bible in it underneath it. Each of the beds has a layer of sheets plus two blankets, one is *really thick* and the other is thinner. The tents *also* have double-layered, zippered doors so that sand can't blow into the tent." Hobbes told Arizona with a smile on his face.

"Wow! Mr. Hobbes, I must shake your hand and congratulate you." Arizona said as he did so. "You have so excellently planned your little dig that I am thoroughly impressed. Whenever I plan a dig, I never do it this carefully."

"Well, anyway, let me take you down to the imprint of this... what did you call it? Oh, yah, *dinosaur's* head. There's something that I want to show you."

When they got to the head of the Allosaur, Hobbes walked down into its impression.

“What are you *doing*?! You’ll ruin your impression!!!” Arizona shouted down to him.

“Oh, that’s alright. I already had my men make a mold of the entire dinosaur, so we can walk down into it. Come on!” Hobbes yelled back.

“Oh. Okay. Here I coomme!!” Arizona said as he slid down the side of the imprint. When he got down to where Michael was standing. He was pointing at something in the dinosaur’s neck.

“Look here. See how the neck is cracked right here and is barely held together? Also look at how the neck is also bent way back. Now, come over here.”

They walked for a while along the inside of the impression until they came to the legs. Inside each one, Hobbes showed Arizona how the legs of the Allosaur were bent back in the same direction as the neck. They also walked into the tail imprint and Hobbes showed Arizona how the tail was pointing in the same direction as the neck and legs.

“See what I’m showing you? Doesn’t it look like the dinosaur was killed and carried along by a huge amount of water? Sounds kind of like the flood of the Bible, huh?” Hobbes said.

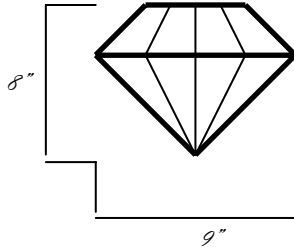
“Well, I see what you’re trying to tell me and it really makes me start to believe in this Creation stuff. Every thing that I’ve seen this week has given me overwhelming evidence for the God of the Bible. Maybe it’s time for this Evolutionist to turn his heart to the Lord. Will you pray with me?” Arizona told him.

“Why sure, I’d love to! Here let me start, Dear Lord, Thank you for all that You have done and provided. Today we come before You to ask that You would let Mr. Arizona Fletch into Your family. I pray that You will lead and direct Arizona along the path that You chose. Lord, I will now let Arizona ask You to let him into Your family. Arizona...”

“Umm... dear, God, uh, yah, uh, hi, yah, hello, um, please let me into Your, uh, family and help me to obey You. I’m sorry for all the, uh, bad things that I’ve done in my life and I’ll, uh, try to make up for them. Um, goodbye, I mean, amen.”



Later, as Arizona sat in his tent looking at the map, he noticed something. The map showed a picture of a giant jewel, with the following inscription written below it and below this was a plan of where to put the jewel when you get to its resting place:



This is the Jewel of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the same tree which Adam and Eve took from in Genesis 3:6. It has been told that the many descendants of Adam and Eve guarded this jewel, which supposedly had been found by Adam and Eve buried in the tree. They had supposedly stolen the jewel and had handed it down through the years. Suddenly, it was lost and has never been found. But you will need it to reveal the whereabouts of the Allosaur.

Thinking about this for a minute, Arizona then sprung up and ran to Hobbes' tent.

"Where is it?" Arizona demanded.

"Where is what?" the surprised Hobbes asked in return.

"The jewel, I mean, the parcel that you were carrying on the night that I saved your life. Where is it?"

"Why, its right here." Hobbes said, unlocking a cupboard and taking out a brown paper wrapped object. "What do you need it for and why is it suddenly so important?"

"You'll see." said Arizona, unwrapping the bundle, while taking out the map. "I was looking at this map, which I found wrapped around a dinosaur bone back in my time, and it shows in this corner here that there is a specific jewel that I need for my little 'quest.' And it appears that this, hmm... I seem to be having some trouble getting this open... oh there we go! and as I was saying this package appears to be it and it looks as if that I am right!."

Arizona threw the wrapping paper off the item and held up the Great Jewel.

"Holy Cow!" he exclaimed. "It's beautiful! I never saw such a gem! Its shine is so blinding!"

"No kidding!" Hobbes said. "I wouldn't be surprised if it actually burned a hole in the ground where its glare hits it."

"Michael, that's a brilliant idea! When here, read this." exclaimed Arizona, showing Hobbes the description of the Jewel and what it was supposed to do.

“See! that is this Jewel! That is why it is so important! Now, do you have a piece of scrap wood that I could use?” Arizona said.

“Here you go.” said Hobbes, picking up a piece of wood from the ground beneath his feet and handing it to Arizona.

“Thanks! Now watch...” Arizona said, pulling out his pocketknife and drilling a hole in the center of it. He took the jewel and stuck its point in the hole. On the ground he made a small pile of dried grass and twigs. Picking up the wood with the Jewel in it, he positioned it so that a large portion of the sunlight focused right on the head of the diamond. The light passed right through it, causing its glare to immediately ignite the grass and twigs.

“Fabulous!” Hobbes exclaimed. “Amazing! We can use that gem, oh yes we can! But now, with the excitement of that nearly gone, I can tell by your face, Arizona, that there is something that you wish to tell me. What is it?”

“Well, you see here in this lower right hand corner how there is a picture of a tree and under it is this caption: The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. That’s the tree that Adam and Eve took from in the book of Geneses, right? And look here, up here in the upper left hand corner, a riddle in the form of a poem which says this: *Heat the back of the iron bar that a lying creature used to set the world ajar. Iniquity and death, it is true, filled the world when we touched you.* Notice also how these two things are the only things not included in the box which the map is in. Do you think that they might have some connection?” Arizona inquired.

“Why, yes! I would never have noticed that! Excellent observation! If they do have a connection, I think that we should first figure out the riddle’s answer. Now, let’s start with the beginning, *Heat the back of the iron bar.* Well, that does not make any sense at all; so let’s move on, *that a lying creature used to set the world ajar.* A lying creature, a creature usually means an animal, so...”

“So maybe it means the Serpent from Geneses!” Arizona exclaimed. “If that is what it means, than that would explain the first part. Instead of, *Heat the back of the iron bar,* it becomes *Heat the back of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.* What’s next? Oh, *that a lying creature used to set the world ajar,* which becomes, *that Satan as a serpent used to set the world ajar.* That’s the only riddle part in the entire poem. Altogether, the riddle’s answer says: *Heat the back of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which Satan used to set the world ajar. Iniquity (or sin) and death, it is true, filled the world when we touched you.*”

“There is one thing though, Arizona, that I still wonder about; who is the “we” and who or what is the “you”?”

“That is simple, Michael. The “we” is the Human Race; the “you” is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

“But what is the purpose of this riddle?” Hobbes said.

“I don’t know, but I bet that I can figure it out. Let me look at our facts: we imagine that the riddle and the picture of the Tree fit together somehow and we have figured out the riddle’s answer. I believe I have figured out what I suppose is the answer to how these two things fit together: when it says *Heat the back of the iron bar,* or, *Heat the back of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil,* I believe that it means to apply heat to the back of the picture of the Tree. Let’s try it.” Arizona told him. He took the plank of wood with the jewel in it and put the map on the ground, back up. Arizona took the jewel and pointed it so that the beam of sunlight was focused right next to where the map lay so that some of the heat from the shaft of light fell on the corner and not directly on the paper (Arizona knew that if the beam fell on the map that the

paper would burst into flame). As the light hit the ground, letters appeared in the corner of the paper.

“Hurry! Write those letters down! Quick Hobbes! *Fast!!!*” Arizona yelled to Hobbes. Michael pulled a pad of paper and a pen out of his shirt pocket and wrote down the words that the paper was displaying. Just as he finished the last letter, they disappeared.

“Where’d they go?!” Hobbes said.

“It seems as if the lemon juice that these letters were written with have disappeared. The map is very old you know. Did you get all the words down in your notebook?” Arizona answered.

“Yes. Here they are...”

“Thanks. Now what do they say?” Arizona read these words aloud:

Look for the answer at the Granod’s Head
Where many herbs were killed and dead.
As the light will beam,
At that point, there lies the key.

Where the yee is found,
That’s where answer is held.
The search will begin where the lab-leey breaks
Watch out for Snakes!

“What in eternity can that ever mean?” Arizona said. “I don’t get a word of that.”

“Well, let’s start how we started on the other riddle: the first line. *Look for the answer at the Granod’s Head.* Granod’s Head. What’s a Granod? Do you know?” Hobbes asked.

“I don’t know. A name, city, mixed up word. How should I know?” Arizona told him.

“Did you say ‘mixed up word’? That’s it! It’s a jumbled up word! Now let’s think...”

“Hmmm... oh! I know, though you probably don’t, the word is *Dragon’s*, which would make sense, because apparently you have to *Look for the answer at the Dragon’s Head.* Wait just a minute... if we were to look at the ‘Dragon’s Head’, then *we would have to look at the Dinosaur’s Head!* And *that* would make sense, because look at the next line, *Where many herbs were killed and dead.* That would make sense because Allosaurs eat *plants!*”

“Well, if that’s the answer, then let’s go.” Hobbes said.

CHAPTER V

When they got to the head for the second time that day, Arizona pulled the notebook out of his pocket.

“Well, next line: *As the light will beam, At that point, there lies the key.* Whatever can that one mean? It makes no sense than the first line did earlier.”

“*As the light will beam*, hmmm... hmmm... that sounds like the beam of light that the jewel sends forth as light passes through it! I’ll bet that if we shine the jewel’s beam on the ‘yee’ or ‘lab-leey’, we’ll find the answer to this clue and the beginning to the next. But first we need to unscramble ‘yee’ and ‘lab-leey. Do know what those words actually are, Arizona?” Hobbes asked.

“Well, ‘yee’ can only be ‘eye’ and if you think about it, the riddle initiates that ‘yee’ and ‘lab-leey’ are synonyms, which, if we unscramble the letters, ‘lab-leey’ becomes ‘eyeball’. So obviously we need to shine the light of the jewel on the eye. Excellent work Hobbes!” Arizona told him.

“No, no, I really must congratulate you, my friend. You have the mind; I’m just tagging along behind you.”

“Uh-uh, no way is that true! You’re the search king. You get the praise.”

“You.”

“You.”

“**You!**” the two debaters said simultaneously.

“Well, never mind. Let’s just get to work, huh.” Arizona said.

“Good idea.” Hobbes answered. This time, Hobbes held the jewel up and Arizona bent down to see what it would do. The second that the beam hit the eyeball’s pupil, Arizona and Hobbes heard a creaking sound and a trapdoor opened under the eyeball, barely big enough for one of them to fit through and perfectly camouflaged with the red-brown hardened mud around it.

“Hello...” Arizona said, “what the devil is this?”

“Wow. I didn’t know that was there. ” Hobbes said.

“Apparently. Well, no time for chatting. Let’s go.” Arizona said, preparing to jump into the opening.

“Wait a minute Arizona! You don’t know what’s down there!” Hobbes told him, grabbing at his sleeve. But Arizona had already jumped. **THUD!!!**

“C’mom, Hobbes! It’s only about five feet so you’ll have to watch your head!” Arizona yelled up to him.

“Okay. I’m coming.” Hobbes said as he jumped.

As he landed, Arizona pressed something up against his chest.

“Here.” Arizona said as he put something into Hobbes’ hand. “It’s a flashlight. Flick the switch and it will produce light out of one end.”

“Okay.” As they flicked the lights on (Arizona had one too), they saw that they were in a tunnel. It looked as if it would go on forever. As they walked along, they came to a turn in the tunnel. When they went around it, they came into a huge cavern. The cave had stalactites and stalagmites sticking up all over the place. Behind one of them came a man, the same man in the brown raincoat who had been following Arizona.

“Who are you and how did you get here?” Arizona asked him.

“I think that you know me, Arizona Fletch.” said the hooded figure, pulling out a gun. “You and your friend Michael Hobbes there, can just sit down against that stalagmite, if you value your lives. Arizona, if you would like to find out who your captor is, then just hand that jewel over.” Arizona gave the man the jewel and told him,

“You won’t get away with this. Now tell me who you are.”

“Oh ho! Arizona, I’m surprised. With all your deduction skills, I should think hat you would know the answer to that question. But since you are obviously too lame to figure it out, I’ll show you, *Arthur Rutherford Fletch*.” The man threw off his hood, showing that he was Joe, not only Arizona’s lab crew captain, but also his best friend.

“What!!! *JOE!!!* I can’t believe it! You, you were my best friend. Why would you do this to me?” Arizona said, shocked.

“Because of what you’ve done to me for our entire ‘friendship’. You have neglected me and used me, not caring for anyone but yourself. *That’s* why.”

“But, Joe, you don’t understand. I’ve changed since I left.”

“Oh give me a break; no one can change their attitude *that* fast, you the least. And besides, I’ve heard that before, except I was stupid enough to believe it then.”

“But, but... well, now that you’ve captured us, what are going to do with us, fiend.” Arizona fumed.

Joe began to tie Arizona and Hobbes to the stalagmite and told Arizona. “Well, I hadn’t thought about that, but now that you bring it up, there’s an explosion that is going to bring your “precious Allosaur” to dust in about two minutes. With that in mind, I think I’ll leave you here for

a quick and painful death by fireball. Ha, ha, ha ha ha ha ha ha!!!” Joe’s laughter faded into silence as he walked down the hall Arizona and Hobbes had just come from.

“Two minutes, eh?” Arizona told Hobbes, “That’s not too bad, especially since I just untied myself.”

“What? How’d you do that? Even a master magician couldn’t escape these bonds.”

“My dear Hobbes, haven’t you learned what to do when someone is tying you up? No? Well, all it takes is just you flexing your muscles and making yourself as big as possible while the person is tying you. That way, when you’re all strung up, you can escape. There, now that you’re free, let’s run.”

Arizona and Hobbes bolted down the corridor, just as they heard a huge explosion. “Hurry, the fireball is going to hit us any moment now. See that little opening to that room up ahead? Let’s get inside there and *press against the wall!*”

Just as they dived into the room, the fireball sped by them. As soon as it was past, Arizona pulled out the map and looked at it. It showed a picture of a huge underground cavern (obviously the one that they were in at that moment). Besides the opening that they were in, there was another secret, hidden room that was connected to the passage.

“Obviously Joe knew that he couldn’t out run the fireball, so he hid in that room. I’m going in there to find him and straighten this thing out.” Arizona thought.

“C’mon Hobbes. I know where Joe is. Let’s go get him. But wait first, why don’t we get some of this char on us just to make him think that we’ve ‘passed through the fireball and lived’.”

“Good idea. I can’t wait to see the look on his face when we walk into the room.”



As Arizona burst into the cavern, he came to an abrupt halt, for there in front of him was a huge pit, one hundred yards across and with a bottom that Arizona could not see, even with his flashlight on. When he looked down and saw the one-and-a-half-foot ledge that he was standing on he backed up and turned around. As he did so, Hobbes smashed into him as he came running into the cave. Arizona fell backwards, smashed his head against a rock, and rolled unconscious into the hole. Down he fell, down, down, unwary of anything around him, enclosed in darkness, through the seemingly endless shaft. After two hours, the bottom of the pit appeared in the light of his flashlight as a dead garden, filled with dead grass, a stone walkway, and a wall. Arizona hit the path and did not move after that. His broken body lay there and would lay there forever. Arizona Fletch was dead.