

HEATHER AND THE ETERNITY CAVE

Once upon a time... no, no, no, that's how every story starts. This is a special story, a special story about a special girl. That special girl's name is Heather. Heather has chestnut brown hair that sweeps over her face and barely shows her sea green eyes. A mischievous smile always plastered across her face, the moment this girl was born she was bound for trouble.

At age ten, Heather was a handful. She took long walks in the meadow and didn't bother to tell her parents. After the fifth time she did this, it seemed as though her parents weren't searching anymore. "As long as she's back by dinner," they would say. One crisp autumn day in Heather's mystical old village, which Heather would joke was barely held up by duct tape, Heather went out into the meadow with just her tool belt and a wicked grin.

Heather enjoyed going into the meadow alone. She enjoyed skipping through the tall grass in a slight breeze. Heather knew every forest, brook, and creek in the entire meadow. Feeling extremely content, Heather hiked through the meadow as wind whipped at her long hair. Heather soon came across a cave, the dark and spooky kind, a cave she had yet to see.

Now, look at it like this: You see an ominous, spooky and dark cave that appears out of nowhere. What do you do? Hmmm.... Tough choice. So of course the adventurous child marched straight into that cave.

It was dark as Heather entered the cave, pitch-black. She couldn't see a thing! So Heather quickly lit a flame on a fallen piece of lumber with a match from her tool belt. Once the cave was illuminated, it showed three paths. One led down into an abyss; another led into a rocky wall up; and the last one went straight forward. Heather contemplated her options. Then, with an adventurous cry, Heather charged at the third path. Of course, Heather didn't notice the glowing rocks above her head creating a clear message: **WRONG CHOICE.**

Heather seemed to walk forever through that passage. After a while, Heather realized that she had to get home, and fast. So Heather spun on her heels and walked forward looking for the exit that should be there. But... it *wasn't*. Heather spun in a full circle twice looking for where the exit would be, *should* be, but there was no exit to be found. Finally Heather ran forward in a panic, hoping that she couldn't see it because it wasn't visible in the distance. This time Heather did notice the rocks lighting up behind her. She backed up, trying to get a closer view. It simply read: **THE ETERNITY CAVE.**

Heather's mind raced, although even that seemed to take ages. The eternity cave? What was that supposed to mean? And no matter what it meant, Heather doubted it was good. Heather needed to get home. Dinner was at six, or maybe dinner was at seven, time was hard in the cave. Heather looked at her watch. Instantly, it combusted on the spot, glass flying, as Heather scrambled for cover. She was, for once, at a loss for words, and for thoughts. Heather had never believed in crying. She thought it was a waste of time and effort. But now, she felt all she could do was watch as tears slid down her face. With no way to control it, she finally snapped.

A little while later, Heather regained control of herself. "If I keep this up, I'll sob to death before I starve." She stood up and her clever and devilish mind got to work. So the message said "the eternity cave." That would probably mean this is the eternity cave. And eternity means all the time, but what if, in this case, it meant no time? All of a sudden it seemed to click, as if gears were whirring inside her brain. Because it takes time to find the exit, Heather processed slowly, without time, there is no exit. But if there was time, there *would* be an exit! She had bypassed the lock, the final key. Heather smiled mischievously. It was time to make some time!

Heather was lucky she was adventurous. In school, she had learned a lot about building and insisted on getting a tool belt. When her Mom and Dad gave her one, she never went

anywhere without it, including to the meadow. Heather always stuffed building magazines into her belt. She rummaged as fast as she could, remembering one about making accessories, with how to make watches in there too. She pulled out a magazine and.... It was the one! She skimmed the pages as fast as humanly possible, until she found a headline that read, “How to Make a Watch” with explicit instructions underneath. Heather got the necessary equipment (that she always kept in her tool belt) and got to work.

Finally, with sweat on her brow, Heather picked up her new gleaming watch. She wrapped it around her wrist. The clock struck five as an enormous light filled the cavern. Then the light winked out, and the exit stood, standing strong, as though it had always been there. Heather wasted no time. She ran out the exit, out of the meadow all the way home. When she closed the door behind her at her house, she collapsed on the couch. “Everything okay?” her mom asked. “Yeah,” Heather smiled one of her mischievous smiles. “I just had a long day.”

The End