

Sam collected the time discarded along the path he trudged towards the old brick building. He scooped up lost hours from people scrolling on their phones. At the bus stop, while people moaned about the weather, he gathered spare minutes and packed them in the glass jar nestled within his satchel. He walked the stark corridors, inhaling the musty smell of the nursing home. Shoulders squared, he pushed open the heavy door. "Gran, I've brought you extra time." He poured the glittering contents over the frail woman. Her eyes snapped open, and she grinned. "Where are we going today, Sam?"



At the end of last year, I sat down and put together a list of 52 writing prompts I've collected over the years. Some of them spark fun ideas that are difficult to condense down to 100 words. At other times, I mull over the list and am uninspired.

This was one of those uninspired weeks. I've been battling migraines, which leave me drained and lethargic. Most of my brain power went to editing my current manuscript and attempting to pay attention in the half dozen meetings I've had this week. Thursday, while ignoring a ringing phone (I detest talking on the phone), and synching my writing program, an idea flitted into my peripheral. It floated there while the phone rang again (the dentist on the phone is a terrifying nightmare), and I stumbled through my morning routine. I played with the idea and the words, shaping them to fit the confines, but they lacked the depth I wanted to infuse them with.

Somewhere between trying to dry bedding, and finally answering the phone, I'd yet to land on any particular spark that brought my imagination to life. So, I asked for a story idea. The suggestion given was to create a story about a boy with a magical hourglass that permits him to save time and give it to lonely residents in a nursing home. I wondered what a lonely person would do with extra time. Would they feel more lonely or make friends?

I decided if I could collect time, I'd use it to take someone special on an adventure with me, and so I created Sam. I imagine he has a strong bond with his grandmother, and whether the collected time grants her more life for another adventure is up to you. Secretly, I think it does. I imagine them causing a significant amounts of mischief, and the nurses never finding out.

The Reluctant Author.

