

L.M. BRICKWOOD

CHILDREN OF THE MOON



BOOK ONE

OF THE "REMEMBER THE FUTURE" SERIES

“Remember the Future”

BOOK 1

“Children of the Moon”

by L.M. Brickwood



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Children of the Moon

A book by L.M. Brickwood

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They appeared from the timeportal 1,493 years after the Alesian epoch. A thunderous roar behind the hill promised nothing good.

On turning halfway, Trevor saw a heaving wall of greenish seawater approaching in a distance. It was at least as high as a five-story building and moved eerily slow. Not slow enough, he thought.

“Back in, get back in. Get back,” he screamed, and pushed Chryseis and Katherine back into the timeportal, as they appeared in front of the quivering curtain. Trevor had the nerve to activate another harmonic level before jumping, although he didn’t know which button he had pressed.

“Flood!” he screamed. There was no time for anything else.

Chapter 1

A Trip To Remember

The parking lot of the little country inn at Carter Valley was packed with attentive school children. It was unexpectedly cool this morning. But, the weather could change rapidly in spring. A pale half moon stood high in the sky, unfazed by the progressing sunrise.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope we understand each other. Please keep in mind that under *no* circumstances is anyone to go near the escarpment. Stay on the footpath. I fully expect to see everybody safe and sound on top of the hill at lunchtime. The junior grades follow Dr. Naidoo and Mr. Van Straten. The senior grades line up to my left, right here. You will walk with Mrs. Meyer and Dr. Wilkins.”

Dr. Broadbent, principal of the ‘Pemberton Academy for Advanced Learning’, a renowned school for gifted children, made sure that his instructions were carried out properly. The columns started slowly moving uphill.

Three grade seven children hung back right from the start. Chryseis, her blond hair in a simple ponytail, was faking a sore ankle. She sat down again on a bench, watching the other kids pass by with a suffering expression on her face. Her friends Katherine and Trevor sat down next to her.

Up to now, things went according to plan.

Katherine MacDougal was from England and rather pretty with her long dark hair. She was in the top ten of her grade. But shy like a dormouse, as the self-confident Chryseis liked to tease her best friend.

Trevor Huxley came from Chicago and was twelve like Katherine. He attended Pemberton on a scholarship. His family was neither sympathetic to his needs, nor impressed with his intellectual abilities. A scholarship meant that they did not have to pay for their son’s education. Since his parents were divorced, it was probably more convenient, if he went to boarding school anyway.

Trevor loved to daydream. Then his thoughts would fly on sunrays beyond the grey clouds to the African jungle, or work on an alternative to washing machines. Cruise the Mediterranean Sea in a yacht, or travel back in time to ancient Rome. The contrast between the three friends couldn't be greater, yet they understood each other perfectly.

The three conspirators politely declined Dr. Wilkins' offer to stay at the little inn and wait for the other children to return in the afternoon. Chryseis screwed her face up in quiet suffering and whimpered a little.

"It just happened here, my foot rolled off that stone over there." She pointed to a spot on the ground. The teacher saw nothing unusual and scratched his long nose. Dr. Wilkins liked the eleven-year old Chryseis. Excellent student. Her mother, Professor Cromwell, wrote such interesting columns in the scientific magazine, which he enjoyed as a bit of light reading at bedtime.

"I'd really like to make it up the hill, sir." Chryseis said bravely "I'll just take it slowly." Would he buy the sore ankle? Katherine grew a bit tense.

But it worked. Dr. Wilkins gave the girl his most sympathetic look and impressed on her friends not leave her side and especially not to stray from the footpath into the hills. Then he walked on to help Mrs. Meyer herd some students back onto the footpath. Snapping curt instructions at those, who pretended not to hear him the first time round. He intended to keep an eye on the three kids, who started to slowly crawl up the hill behind the main group. Chryseis Cromwell was limping a little and had to lean on Trevor Huxley's arm. Dr. Wilkins joined the group and soon disappeared behind a rock.

"Okay, so what now?" Chryseis recovered remarkably fast. "I'm going to get lame for real, if I keep this up much longer." She rubbed her ankle.

"See, how the path kind of forks up there to the right?" Trevor pointed to the right with his chin. He had already mapped out the area.

"Yes?!"

"There are a couple of boulders on that raised platform, overlooking the valley." Trevor was convinced that it was the ideal spot for their experiment.

Unfortunately rather close to the escarpment.

“We are not supposed to go anywhere near the escarpment!”

Katherine felt uncomfortable to go against Dr. Broadbent’s explicit orders. Detention wasn’t any fun.

Trevor and Chryseis were more courageous.

“It can’t be helped. It has to be away from electromagnetic interference as much as possible. We’ll be careful. Here at least, the others won’t see us for a while until they arrive at the top of the hill. By then, we are back on the footpath as good kids should.” Chryseis quipped. She was never short of an answer.

“Hmm, what if we can’t find a timeportal or timewarp or whatever?” Katherine was still skeptical.

“Then, we will have to try again next time round. Trust me, this won’t be the last school trip to Carter Valley.” Trevor said knowingly. But he was eager to go ahead with the experiment today. They had been preparing this for weeks.

“I got a link in the school garden last week, remember?”

Of course they remembered!

Trevor had told them afterwards that the entrance to the portal had looked like a holographic wavy curtain. And then he had actually jumped! But the experience hadn’t been altogether pleasant. What he had seen was the stuff of nightmares. Something with shiny scales. But it was tempting to try again. And they had introduced safety features this time.

Trevor was convinced that they would get an even better result today.

The three friends hadn’t planned on using the endless power source to travel back in time at first. It had all started as an exciting school project. Katherine’s project. But then, the idea for this experiment with time had kind of developed from there. Trevor took out a plain-looking, rather flat device, which fitted snugly in the palm of his hand.

The timeportal finder.

They had done a good job. A row of black buttons on one side for choosing the targeted time period. Three slightly larger red buttons on

the other side for memorizing specific reference points in time. Then a white button right in the middle, to activate the timeportal. A small display window indicated the number of years travelled relative to the present. Stickers next to the black buttons had figures written on them. Two stickers next to the red buttons were blank.

A masterpiece of a physics project. Now the device just had to work. Again.

“I made duplicates of the timeportal finder, attached to the integrated vacuum battery. So here and... here.” Trevor handed out the other devices. “One for each of us. If we lose one device or it becomes inefficient or damaged for some reason, we still have the others. I wrapped them into sandwich bags, just in case they get wet.”

“Good thinking, Trev.” Chryseis said and put the device into her pocket. She appreciated his practical approach.

“Now, the three virtual invisibility capes.” Chryseis opened the front pocket of her backpack. Thin black alicebands with a tiny box on top and a button on the side, the invisibility capes looked rather harmless. In case of an emergency, the button could be pressed and the cape was activated. Chryseis struggled to get them out, because the contraptions were entangled.

Katherine looked worried “Chris, hurry up! We mustn’t take too long.”

She helped her friend untangle the plastic alicebands. What if somebody saw them doing the experiment?

“All right then, here we are.” Chryseis said to Trevor “Let’s go.”

They put on the invisibility devices. Just in case.

One never knew what waited on the other side. It was better to be prepared. The plan was that in case of danger, they would activate the virtual invisibility capes and travel back through the timeportal as quickly as possible.

They had decided that it would not be a good idea to switch on the invisibility devices during the trip through the vortex. It might interfere with something and they didn’t want to take the risk. Quantum mechanics could be tricky.

'Timetravel...' the word echoed in Katherine's mind and then, 'I'll be breathing prehistoric air soon.' The thought was insane. This whole experiment was insane... downright dangerous. Katherine swallowed hard.

Meanwhile, Trevor chose a likely spot for a link, pointing his timeportal finder at one of the boulders.

Then he pressed the white button.