

3 Across Time

by Lael J. Littke



Before You Read

Before you read "Across Time," go over the words below. Make sure you know what each word means. This will help you when you read the story.

hotel: a place to stay when you are on a trip. You pay for a room at a *hotel*.

inn: a small hotel. We stayed at an *inn* for one day.

fireplace: a place where you can make a fire. Our house has a stone *fireplace*.

log: a piece of wood from a tree. Put another *log* on the fire.

Across Time

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Sarah looked out of the window of the car. It had started to rain. Now it was raining hard.

Sarah turned to her sister. "Karen," Sarah said. "We will have to stop soon. The rain is really coming down. It is hard for me to see."

Karen said, "Do you know where we are? Are we near Aunt Minna's house?"

"I do not know," Sarah said. "I just visited her once. That was a long time ago."

Sarah stared out of the window. She said, "I do not see any of the things she said to look for."

Now it was getting dark. Sarah felt cold. "We must stop somewhere," she said. "We will have to stay there for the night."

"You are right," Karen said. "I am getting tired. You must be tired too. And Aunt Minna does not expect us tonight."

Karen smiled. She said, "It would be great if there was a hotel just ahead. A big, beautiful place. One with very good food."

Sarah laughed. "No way!" she said. "But there *is* a little inn. It is around the next turn."

Karen was surprised. She stopped looking out of the window. She turned to her sister. "How do you know *that*?" Karen asked.

Sarah said, "I—I—I am not sure. I just *know* it is there. It is on top of a hill. The inn is white. It has a blue door. There is a big tree behind it."

Karen laughed. But then she saw a sign. The sign said *INN AHEAD*.

Karen looked to the right. There was an inn. It was on top of a hill! Behind it was a tree!

Sarah drove to the front of the inn. It had a blue door!

Karen looked at Sarah. "Tell me," Karen said. "How did you know the inn was here?"



Sarah said, "I really do not know. I have never been here before. Maybe I saw it years ago. Or I might have seen it in a picture. That must be it."

Karen suddenly felt frightened. "Sarah," she said. "Let us go. We can find some other place."

"No," Sarah said. "It is raining too hard. This will be all right."

Sarah knocked on the door.

A woman came to the door. She had long, gray hair. She looked very old.

"Come in," she said. "I have been waiting for you."

"Waiting for us?" Karen said. "What do you mean?"

The woman smiled. She said, "People come here when it is raining hard. Then they will stay at an old inn."

The woman let them in. She said, "My name is Mrs. Burns."

She pointed to some steps.



"Go up those stairs," she said. "You will find two rooms at the top. You can stay there tonight. You must be hungry. I will make something to eat. I will call you when it is ready."

The sisters walked up the stairs. Sarah went to one room. She started to open the door. Suddenly she stopped.

"What is the matter?" Karen said.

Sarah said, "It is strange. But I know what this room looks like. There is a fireplace in the room. There is a picture over the fireplace. There is a woman in the picture.

She is wearing a black dress. It is the kind of dress they used to wear a long time ago. The woman has a ring on her finger. The ring has a big red stone!"

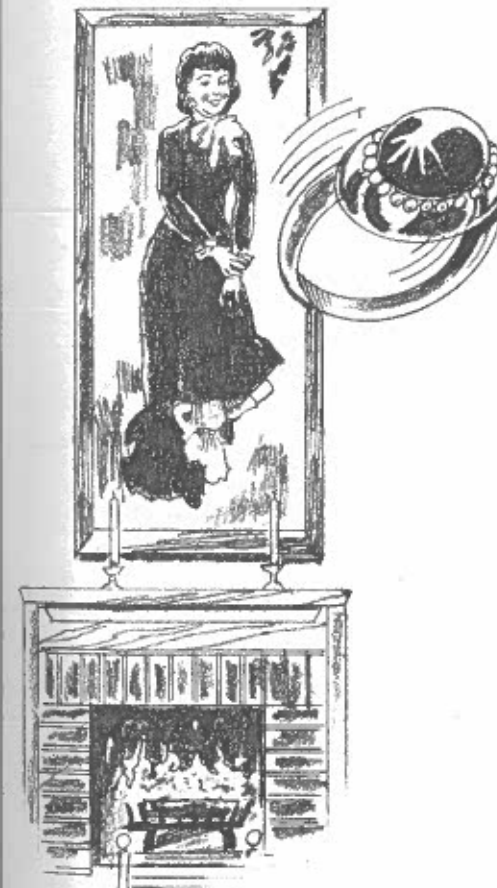
They opened the door.

There was a fireplace in the room. Over the fireplace was a picture. A woman was wearing a black dress. On her finger was a ring. The ring had a big red stone.

Sarah and Karen looked at each other. They did not know what to think.

Just then they heard Mrs. Burns's voice. "The food is ready," she said.

The food was hot. It was very good. Sarah and Karen ate. Mrs. Burns talked about the inn.





She said, "This inn is very old. It has been here for more than 100 years."

Sarah said, "Who is the woman in the picture?"

Mrs. Burns smiled. "Why, dear, that was *me*. It was me many years ago. I was much younger then. Did you see the ring on my finger?"

"Yes," Karen said.

"I gave that ring to a woman. Her name was Judith. She was going to marry my son."

Mrs. Burns stopped talking. She looked very sad.

Mrs. Burns went on. "But my son died suddenly. Judith **disappeared**. And so did the ring. No one has ever seen them again."



Karen asked, "Did the ring mean much to you?"

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Burns. "It has been in my family for years. I would love to get it back."

Sarah said, "It is getting late. And we must leave early tomorrow. We are looking for our aunt. Her name is Minna Todd. Do you know her?"

"No," said Mrs. Burns. "But you will find a store along the road ahead. Ask at the store. They know everyone around here."

"We will do that in the morning," Karen said. "It is getting late. We should really say good night."

Sarah was very tired. She fell fast asleep that night. In the middle of the night, Sarah heard a voice.

"Judith," said the voice. "Can you hear me, Judith?"

Sarah looked up. There was a woman in the room! She was the woman in the picture! Mrs. Burns had said she was that woman.

Sarah said, "I can hear you. But my name is not Judith. My name is Sarah."



The woman said, "I knew you would come back. I am so glad that you did. I have been waiting for you. I have waited a long, long time."

The woman came closer to the bed. "Where is the ring, Judith?" she asked. "Tell me. Where is the ring?"

"What ring?" Sarah said. "And my name is not Judith. It is Sarah!"

"*Think!*" said the woman. "Where is the ring?"

Suddenly Sarah got up. She moved to the fireplace. She reached up to the picture. She put her hand behind it. She found a place there. She pulled something out.

"Here is the ring," Sarah said.

The sisters got up early the next morning. Karen said, "I was so tired. I slept like a log. Did you sleep well, Sarah?"

"Yes," Sarah said. "But I had a strange dream. I dreamed I was someone named Judith."

"Judith?" said Karen. "Mrs. Burns told us about someone named Judith."

"Yes," Sarah said. "Mrs. Burns was in my dream too. She was the woman in the picture."

Karen laughed. "You sure can imagine things, Sarah," she said. "Now we should be going. Let us see if we can find Mrs. Burns."

Sarah and Karen went downstairs. They looked around. But Mrs. Burns was not there.

The sisters put some money on the table. Then they got into the car. They drove away from the inn. They found the store Mrs. Burns told them about.

They asked the man there about Minna Todd.

"Minna Todd?" he said. "I know where she lives. It is not far from here."

He told them the way to go. Then he asked, "Did you stay at the inn?"

"Yes," Karen said.

The man said, "Then you met Mrs. Burns. It is funny. She came by early today. She said she was going away. She said she did not have to stay here anymore."

"Going away?" Sarah said.

"Yes," said the man. "And she was wearing a ring. I never saw her wear it before. The ring had a big red stone."

"A ring with a big red stone!" Sarah said.

Sarah started to say something. She was going to say, "I gave Mrs. Burns the ring in my dream." Then Sarah stopped. It was all too hard to believe. She did not say a word.



TELL ABOUT THE STORY.

Put an X in the box next to the right answer. Each answer tells something (a *fact*) about the story.

- The sisters stopped at the inn because
 - a. Aunt Minna said to stay there.
 - b. they heard it was good.
 - c. it was raining and they were tired.
- The inn was
 - a. a big, beautiful place.
 - b. on a hill by a tree.
 - c. far away from the road.
- The woman in the picture was wearing
 - a. a short coat.
 - b. a red dress.
 - c. a red ring.
- Sarah thought she dreamed that
 - a. someone kept calling her Judith.
 - b. she met Aunt Minna.
 - c. she went to a store.

<input type="text"/>	x 5 =	<input type="text"/>
NUMBER CORRECT		YOUR SCORE

END EACH LINE.

Finish the lines below. Fill in each empty space with one of the words in the box. Each word can be found in the story. There are five words and four empty spaces. This means that one word in the box will not be used.

Long before there were hotels,
people stayed at _____₁. The
inns were not very _____₂.
They had just a few _____₃.
You got a bed for the night and
something to _____₄.

picture	inns
rooms	eat
	big

<input type="text"/>	x 5 =	<input type="text"/>
NUMBER CORRECT		YOUR SCORE

SHOW WHAT WORDS MEAN.

The words below are printed in **dark letters** in the story. You may look back at these vocabulary words before you answer the questions. Put an X in the box next to the right answer.

1. Sarah stared out of the window. The word *stared* means
 a. looked at closely.
 b. did not see.
 c. opened up.
2. Aunt Minna did not expect them that night. The word *expect* means to
 a. think someone is coming.
 b. like someone very much.
 c. tell someone to go away.
3. The ring disappeared years ago. Something that has *disappeared*
 a. is small.
 b. cannot be seen.
 c. can easily be seen.
4. Karen said, "You sure can imagine things." When you *imagine* things you
 a. lose them.
 b. look for them.
 c. make them up.

x 5 =
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

THINK ABOUT THE STORY.

Here is how to answer these questions. First think about what happened in the story. Then work out the right answers. This is called *critical thinking*.

1. It was strange that Sarah
 a. could not see in the rain.
 b. was very hungry.
 c. knew there was an inn just ahead.
2. It was also strange that Sarah
 a. knew what the room looked like.
 b. fell fast asleep.
 c. was going to visit her aunt.
3. Which one is true?
 a. The inn was 200 years old.
 b. Mrs. Burns said, "I have been waiting for you."
 c. Karen did not sleep well.
4. We can guess that Mrs. Burns left the inn because she
 a. had to buy food.
 b. was too old to work there.
 c. got the ring she wanted so much.

x 5 =
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

SPOT PARTS OF A STORY.

Stories have **characters**, a **plot**, and a **setting**. (See page 3.) Put an X in the box next to the right answer.

1. What happened first? (**Plot**)
 a. Mrs. Burns made food.
 b. The sisters came to an inn.
 c. The sisters saw a sign that read *INN AHEAD*.
2. What happened last? (**Plot**)
 a. Mrs. Burns made food for Sarah and Karen.
 b. The man said Mrs. Burns was wearing a ring.
 c. Mrs. Burns told them about Judith.
3. Which best tells about Mrs. Burns? (**Character**)
 a. She looked very old.
 b. She knew Aunt Minna.
 c. She had short, dark hair.
4. Where does most of the story take place? (**Setting**)
 a. in a store along the road
 b. at Aunt Minna's house
 c. in an inn

x 5 =
NUMBER CORRECT YOUR SCORE

THINK SOME MORE ABOUT THE STORY.

Your teacher might want you to write your answers.

- Why do you think the story is called "Across Time"?
- Why do you think Mrs. Burns was going away?
- Sarah thought, "It was all too hard to believe." What did she mean?

Write your scores in the box below. Then write your scores on pages 122 and 123.

TELL ABOUT THE STORY
+
 END EACH LINE
+
 SHOW WHAT WORDS MEAN
+
 THINK ABOUT THE STORY
+
 SPOT PARTS OF A STORY
=
 TOTAL SCORE: Story 3