

TITLE: TIME LOOP TANGO

FADE IN:

EXT. FUTURE CITY – SKYLINE – NIGHT – YEAR 2147

A sprawling mega-city glows with neon and holograms. Hover-cars stream between towering skyscrapers. Digital billboards flicker with ads in a dozen languages.

On a rooftop balcony, ALEX RIVERA (30s, scruffy, clever eyes) tightens the straps on a high-tech backpack. A sleek, glowing wrist device – the CHRONO-WATCH – hums softly on his arm.

He looks out over the city, takes a deep breath.

ALEX

(to himself)

Okay, Alex. No pressure. Just fix time, save your family... and be back before breakfast.

He taps the watch. A holographic INTERFACE pops up, projecting dates and locations in the air.

INSERT – HOLO-DISPLAY

A branching timeline with red cracks snaking through it. At the center, a flashing warning: "CRITICAL PARADOX DETECTED."

ALEX (V.O.)

Grandma always said, "Don't play with matches. Or history." Guess I should've listened.

He scrolls the interface. A specific node blinks:

"ROME – 44 BC – TECH CONTAMINATION."

ALEX

Right. Step one: stop ancient Romans from discovering smartphones. Step two: don't get stabbed.

He presses a final command.

The CHRONO-WATCH FLARES. A swirling TEMPORAL PORTAL opens, distorting the air.

Alex winces.

ALEX

If I come back as my own grandpa, I'm uninstalling this thing.

He jumps in.

The portal snaps shut.

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INT. TIME VORTEX – CONTINUOUS

Alex tumbles through a tunnel of swirling light, glimpsing fragments of eras: dinosaurs roaring, knights charging, a rocket launch freezing mid-air.

His backpack tugs at him in zero-gravity.

ALEX

(yelling)

Note to self: add seatbelts to time!

He slams down into darkness.

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EXT. ANCIENT ROME – ALLEY NEAR COLOSSEUM – DAY – 44 BC

Alex crashes into a dusty alley, scattering baskets of figs. A ROMAN VENDOR yells in Latin, shaking a fist.

ROMAN VENDOR

(in rapid Latin, furious)

Alex holds up his hands.

ALEX

Uh, sorry! My Latin pack didn't finish downloading.

He taps the CHRONO-WATCH. It emits a soft tone.

WATCH (V.O.)

Monitored translation enabled.

The vendor's words glitch mid-sentence and re-render in accented English.

ROMAN VENDOR

You clumsy goat! These figs cost more than your toga!

Alex looks down. His normal clothes have morph-shifted into a ROMAN TOGA DISGUISE, courtesy of his temporal field.

ALEX

Hey, at least it's breathable. Look, I'll, uh... buy a fig?

He awkwardly places a small glowing coin on the cart. The coin reconfigures into authentic Roman currency.

The vendor eyes it, then grunts.

ROMAN VENDOR

You're strange. But your money is not.

He pockets the coin. Alex backs away.

ALEX

(strained smile)

Strange is kind of my thing.

A distant ROAR rolls over the city—the sound of thousands cheering.

Alex turns and sees it: the COLOSSEUM, freshly built, looming over the city like a stone crown. Banners whip in the wind.

ALEX (V.O.)

History smells way more like sweat and olives than the textbooks said.

He flicks his wrist. A small HUD appears in his vision, tagging points of interest.

A red marker hovers over the EMPEROR'S BOX inside the Colosseum.

"TARGET: UNAUTHORIZED TECHNOLOGY DETECTED."

ALEX

There you are. Little paradox seed.

He starts toward the Colosseum, blending into the crowd.

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EXT. COLOSSEUM – ENTRANCE – DAY

A huge line of ROMAN CITIZENS snakes into the arena. Vendors shout about roasted meat and wine. Guards scan the crowd with suspicious eyes.

Alex slips into line, keeping his head down.

A young boy, LUCIO (10, bright-eyed), stares at Alex's watch.

LUCIO

What is that on your arm?

Alex quickly covers it with his toga.

ALEX

Uh, medical bracelet. My doctor says I'm allergic to being stabbed.

Lucio laughs.

LUCIO

You're funny. Are you a gladiator?

ALEX

More like... a very confused tourist.

Lucio's MOTHER calls from ahead.

LUCIO'S MOTHER

Lucio! Stay close!

Lucio wave-grins at Alex as he's pulled away.

LUCIO

Good luck, Tour-ist!

Alex gives a little salute.

The line moves. A GUARD steps in front of Alex, blocking his way.

GUARD

Ticket.

Alex blinks.

ALEX

Ticket. Right.

He taps the watch subtly. The HUD flashes: "FABRICATING AUTHENTIC ENTRY TOKEN..." A small stone token materializes in his palm, engraved with Roman numerals.

He hands it over.

The guard eyes it, tests its weight, then nods and steps aside.

GUARD

Next!

Alex exhales and enters the arena.

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INT. COLOSSEUM – STANDS – DAY

The roar of the crowd is deafening. Sand swirls in the arena below as GLADIATORS clash weapons, shining under the sun.

Alex edges along a stone corridor until he finds a spot in the stands with a clear line of sight to the EMPEROR'S BOX.

Up there, under a decorative canopy, JULIUS CAESAR reclines, surrounded by senators and attendants.

But one figure stands out: a SHADOWY MERCHANT in a dark cloak, nervously clutching something small and glowing.

Alex zooms his HUD onto the object.

INSERT – HUD

A modern SMARTPHONE, disguised with crude metal casing.

Alert: "TEMPORAL DEVICE DETECTED. ORIGIN: 21ST CENTURY."

ALEX

There's the virus.

He scans the box. Standing near Caesar, whispering to him, is BRUTUS, early 40s, thoughtful eyes.

ALEX (V.O.)

Think, Rivera. History says Brutus stabs Caesar. If the phone changes that—

On the HUD, a ghostly overlay appears: Caesar surviving, Rome's timeline fracturing into neon Roman skyscrapers, legions with laser spears.

"TIMELINE DEVIATION PROJECTION: 97%."

ALEX

Then my future turns into Cyber-Rome. Hard pass.

He looks down at the arena. A GLADIATOR is knocked flat, sword skittering across the sand.

Alex's brain lights up.

ALEX (V.O.)

If I can get into the box, I can grab the phone before Caesar plays Candy Crush with history.

He darts away from the stands.

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INT. COLOSSEUM – UNDERGROUND CORRIDOR – DAY

Dim, torch-lit tunnels. The roars from above rumble the ceiling dust.

Alex creeps along a narrow hallway, passing CELLS with gladiators and caged animals—a lion snarls behind bars as he goes by.

ALEX

(to himself)

Smile, kitty. I'm not on the menu.

His HUD maps a path upward: "SERVICE STAIRS TO IMPERIAL BOX."

He rounds a corner—and nearly collides with BRUTUS, who is descending the stairs, deep in thought.

They both stop.

BRUTUS

Watch where you walk.

Alex freezes, then sees an opportunity. He lowers his voice.

ALEX

Marcus Junius Brutus, right?

Brutus narrows his eyes.

BRUTUS

Do I know you?

ALEX

Not yet. But you're about to know something important.

Brutus steps closer, suspicious.

BRUTUS

Speak quickly, or I'll have the guards—

Alex raises both hands.

ALEX

You and your friends are planning something with Caesar. A... sharp conversation?

Brutus stiffens.

BRUTUS

You are bold, stranger.

ALEX

Look, I don't care what you do—*provided* you do exactly what you're meant to. But right now, there's a bigger problem.

Brutus hesitates, curiosity winning over anger.

BRUTUS

What problem?

Alex taps his watch. A tiny hologram projects between them: a miniature Caesar in a toga, holding a glowing rectangle, grinning as legions behind him wield energy swords.

ALEX

Someone is about to give Caesar a device that shows him futures, secrets, power beyond your wildest imagination. If he sees it, if he understands even a piece of it, everything changes.

Brutus stares at the hologram, face paling.

BRUTUS

Sorcery.

ALEX

Science. But let's go with "bad sorcery."

He makes the hologram vanish.

ALEX

If Caesar keeps that thing, you might never get your chance. Or Rome becomes something worse. I just need to get it away from him.

Brutus studies Alex for a long moment.

BRUTUS

Why should I trust you?

Alex sighs.

ALEX

Because I already know how this day ends. And I'm not here to stop it. I'm here to make sure it ends the *right* way.

Brutus's gaze hardens.

BRUTUS

The right way.

He considers this, then steps aside, gesturing up the stairs.

BRUTUS

You have one chance, stranger. If you lie, I will feed you to the lions myself.

Alex forces a grin.

ALEX

Motivating. Thank you.

They start up the stairs together.

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INT. COLOSSEUM – EMPEROR’S BOX – DAY

Opulent cushions, gold ornaments, servants pouring wine. The spectacle of combat plays out below like a brutal ballet.

Caesar lounges, amused, as the SHADOWY MERCHANT bows low and presents the disguised smartphone on a small tray.

MERCHANT

Great Caesar, a wonder from lands beyond the horizon. A device that captures light and memory.

Caesar leans forward, intrigued.

CAESAR

A mirror?

MERCHANT

More. It can hold your image forever.

Alex and Brutus enter the back of the box. Brutus moves to his usual position, blending in. Alex stays slightly in the shadows, eyes fixed on the device.

The HUD flashes red: “CRITICAL MOMENT.”

Caesar lifts the phone, confused by the smooth surface.

CAESAR

No reflection.

The merchant taps the screen. It lights up with icons. Caesar jerks slightly, then laughs.

CAESAR

It awakes.

He pokes at an icon with a little camera on it. The phone's camera opens, showing Caesar's face.

He startles, then grins wider.

CAESAR

See? It holds my image already!

He lifts it to take a selfie.

Alex tenses.

ALEX (V.O.)

If he saves one picture, the device logs his face, starts building data. That's all it needs to begin syncing with every tower it can find in a two-thousand-year radius.

Time feels like it slows.

Alex springs into action, stepping out.

ALEX

Wait!

Everyone turns. The guards move instantly, swords drawn, blocking Alex.

GUARD

Who are you?

Caesar eyes him, intrigued rather than angry.

CAESAR

Let him speak. He ran into lions' jaws to interrupt my moment.

Alex glances at Brutus. Brutus gives a tiny nod, standing neutral.

ALEX

Great Caesar, that device is cursed.

The merchant scoffs.

MERCHANT

Lies, my lord. He is jealous of your favor.

Alex steps closer, pressing against the swords.

ALEX

It steals souls.

Caesar raises an eyebrow.

CAESAR

Steals souls?

Alex taps his watch. A hologram flickers above the phone: Caesar's face, projected in shimmering light, repeated a thousand times.

ALEX

See? It captures you and scatters you. Pieces of Caesar everywhere. How will the gods know which one to welcome?

Caesar's smile fades, unease creeping in.

CAESAR

You speak with a serpent's tongue.

The merchant panics.

MERCHANT

My lord, I can explain—

Alex seizes the moment. He lunges forward, grabbing the phone out of Caesar's hand.

The guards shout, swords lifting.

Brutus steps between Alex and the nearest guard.

BRUTUS

Hold!

Silence falls, thick and dangerous.

Alex holds the phone up, arm extended over the edge of the box, above the roaring arena.

ALEX

You want to trust this? Watch what your "wonder" becomes.

He squeezes the phone. The CHRONO-WATCH sends a surge of energy into it. The screen flickers, then shows a rapid montage: burning cities, twisted timelines, Roman banners on skyscrapers, endless war.

Caesar pales.

CAESAR

What is this?

ALEX

A future that doesn't belong to you.

The phone SPARKS violently in Alex's hand.

WATCH (V.O.)

Warning: paradox device destabilizing.

ALEX

Perfect.

He hurls the phone down into the arena.

The device hits the sand and EXPLODES in a burst of blue-white temporal energy.

The crowd gasps as a shockwave ripples across the arena, momentarily distorting everything like a heat haze.

Alex's HUD flashes: "TEMPORAL DEVICE DESTROYED. PARADOX: PARTIALLY RESOLVED."

He exhales, relieved.

Then, the watch flashes red again.

"UNINTENDED SIDE EFFECT: ASSASSINATION PLOT DIVERGENCE DETECTED."

Alex looks at Brutus, then at Caesar.

Brutus is staring, shocked, his hand hovering near his hidden dagger—but uncertainty clouds his face.

ALEX (V.O.)

Oh no. I scared him off the plan.

Caesar looks shaken, but a twist of arrogance returns.

CAESAR

Perhaps you have saved me from a false gift. Or brought ill omen into my house.

He stands.

CAESAR

Guards. Seize this man.

The guards close in.

Alex glances at Brutus, whispers:

ALEX

He still has to fall. You know that.

Brutus's jaw clenches. His eyes flick to Caesar, then back to Alex.

Time feels heavy.

BRUTUS

(quiet, to Alex)

If I do nothing, what becomes of Rome?

Alex's HUD shows branching possibilities: Caesar living long, power consolidating, democracy fading faster.

ALEX

Worse than you fear.

Brutus nods once, a man sealing his fate.

He steps forward, hand sweeping out—not toward Alex, but toward Caesar.

The famous phrase hangs in the air, unspoken yet echoing through history.

Brutus's dagger plunges.

The other conspirators move as if pulled by gravity, the inevitable playing out.

Alex closes his eyes.

ALEX (V.O.)

I'm not here to stop history. I'm here to stop the things that don't belong inside it.

Caesar falls, stunned betrayal in his eyes. He reaches out, almost toward Alex instead of Brutus, then collapses.

Chaos erupts. Screams, scrambling, blood on marble.

Alex hits a button on his watch. A TEMPORAL BUBBLE flickers around him and Brutus, muting sound, freezing blurred figures around them in slow motion.

Brutus looks at his bloody hands, then at Alex.

BRUTUS

Will they curse my name?

ALEX

Some will. Some will call you a defender of the Republic. Time's funny like that.

Brutus straightens, accepting.

BRUTUS

Then let time judge me.

Alex lowers the bubble. Sound crashes back in. Guards rush, senators flee.

Alex steps backward toward the exit.

Brutus calls after him, voice cutting through the chaos.

BRUTUS

Who are you?

Alex pauses.

ALEX

Just someone making sure the right story gets told.

He turns and disappears into the fleeing crowd.

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EXT. ROME – STREET NEAR COLOSSEUM – DUSK

The sun dips low. The city buzzes with rumors of Caesar's fall.

Alex leans in the shadow of an archway, catching his breath. His watch glows softly.

WATCH (V.O.)

Primary paradox resolved. Temporal contamination removed. Timeline deviation reduced to acceptable variance.

A small photo appears on the HUD: his GRANDMA, much older, laughing in a cozy kitchen, holding a tray of pizza bagels.

Alex smiles, eyes softening.

ALEX

Still there.

He leans back against the stone.

ALEX

All right, Grandma. Crisis averted. We're good, right?

The watch blinks stubbornly.

“SECONDARY ANOMALY DETECTED.”

ALEX

Of course.

He taps the alert. A new node lights up on the timeline.

“JURASSIC ERA – BIOLOGICAL DISRUPTION.”

Behind the text: a faint image of a dinosaur... wearing what looks suspiciously like a digital collar.

Alex squints.

ALEX

What in the time-traveling pet shop is that?

A small hand tugs on his toga. He looks down.

It's Lucio, the boy from earlier.

LUCIO

Tour-ist! My mother says we must go home. There is shouting about Caesar.

Alex kneels to his eye level.

ALEX

Things are going to change. Your teachers will talk about this day a lot.

Lucio frowns.

LUCIO

Will it be good?

Alex thinks.

ALEX

It'll be... complicated. But people like you? You're why it's worth keeping the story on track.

Lucio smiles faintly, not fully understanding.

LUCIO

I will remember you.

Alex taps the watch. A tiny light flickers and projects a soft star above Lucio's hand for a second, then fades.

ALEX

And I'll remember you.

Lucio grins, eyes wide, then runs back to his mother.

Alex watches him go, then checks the watch again.

ALEX

All right. Dinosaurs with gadgets. That's a new one.

He sets a destination.

WATCH (V.O.)

Warning: Jurassic Era contains large hostile fauna.

ALEX

So does rush hour. Open the door.

The portal swirls open again, lush jungle sounds echoing faintly through it.

Alex stands at the edge, one last look at Rome.

ALEX

(softly)

Rest in peace, Caesar. Try not to haunt me.

He steps into the portal.

It closes on Rome, leaving only the fading noise of a city rewriting its future.

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INT. TIME VORTEX – CONTINUOUS

Alex hurtles through swirling light again, but this time, he's grinning.

ALEX (V.O.)

Temporal anomaly number two. Hopefully fewer daggers, more friendly lizards.

His backpack rattles. A pizza bagel wrapper floats weightless beside him.

He snatches it, stuffs it back in.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, Grandma. No littering in the timestream.

Ahead, the vortex narrows, showing flashes of thick jungle and massive shapes.

WATCH (V.O.)

Arrival in Jurassic Era in three... two...

Alex braces and laughs.

ALEX

Let's dance, dinosaurs.

The screen WHITES OUT as he crashes toward the next adventure.

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FADE OUT.

TITLE CARD: "TIME LOOP TANGO – TO BE CONTINUED"

THE END