

When the Sides Meet

Written by Dylan M.

My name is Conor Borade.

I live in 2032, 4 years after the Rock came.

You may be wondering what the Rock is, so I'll just tell you right now.

Four years ago, in 2028, a huge barrier (an estimated 300 kilometers tall) just kind of showed up, dividing the world in two. Doesn't seem too bad, right?

Wrong.

The barrier is so tall, no plane can get over it. A few spacecraft have been sent out, but it's not enough to supplement billions of people trapped on the southern side of the world. We're running low on fuel, and within a month, we'll be completely out.

Which is why I'm here.

You see, for 2 years, I've been continuing the work of my scientist grandfather, who passed away in 2030. He attempted to make a device that would *completely incinerate* the Rock, but he failed to finish it. Thankfully, in his will, he taught me how to finish it.

And now it's done.

The barrier will finally come down.

You see, the device doesn't look like a ray gun or anything. It looks more like a projector than those sci-fi shrink rays.

No time to think about that now. I have work to do.

I sling my pack over my shoulder and walk the 19 miles to where the Rock is. It's really lucky that it's this close to where I live in southern California, with the price of oil astronomical.

When I arrive, there's a number of people there. It's become kind of a local tourist attraction (local; again, oil prices to blame). I unload the contents of my pack and set up the device. There's no security here; who needs security when an impassable border is already in place?

I type in the security code and start the 60-second countdown. There's no one in the way, and I plan to keep it like that. As the seconds pass, I fill with excitement. After all these years, the wall will finally come down! This day can't get any better....

Oops. Never mind.

I see someone walk into the path of the projector and stop moving. The countdown reaches 45 seconds. I can't let some random guy ruin this!

I walk up to the young guy and ask, "Hey man, can you please move for a little bit?"

"I will in a few minutes, I just need to finish writing this."

A few minutes? With 30 seconds left, I don't *have* a few minutes!

I shove the guy out of the way pretty hard.

"Hey! Who do you think you are?" he says as he stumbles to his feet and pushes me back.

20 seconds left. I don't have time for this!

I get a head start and charge tackle the guy. When he gets up, I just push him back down. I know it seems mean, but it's for everyone's good!

Some people saw our fight and are heading over, and I realize what to do. I pick up the projector and run to another spot.

It's almost over. 5...4...3...2...1...

A flash blinds me and everyone else near me.

A couple seconds later, I see it. This can't be true. It's working!

The Rock starts to shake, first a bit, then violently. Soon, the rock explodes into tons of tiny fragments that disintegrate seconds after being formed. The ground shakes with the rock, and suddenly, it implodes!

Minutes pass before my vision is again restored, but when I look, there is no rock.

There's people looking in awe...from the other side!

Within the timespan of a second, people are celebrating wildly, with people screaming, crying with joy, and hugging strangers. My mind is clouded with thoughts about what has happened in the past 5 seconds.

It *worked!*

I saved the day!

Two weeks later, I drove up north to meet my parents for the first time in 4 years; they couldn't have been happier to see me! In short, that's all

the time I have, so I'm going to wrap up this story here; the story of how I ended a global crisis.